

## HISTORY OF BANGSAR MAGIC FC

It all started when we were 10 years old playing outdoor games such as rounders - chopping with tennis balls. There was also badminton in the lanes between two semi-detached houses and the best was definitely playing football on the streets of Bangsar Park.

Many at times, we would play pass 8pm and that was when we would hear our mothers shouting "Come back home, now!! It's past 8pm and you have school to attend tomorrow!!!"

By the age of 12 we made new friends on the other side of Maarof, which is Bangsar Baru. We used to play football on the field at the Bangsar Sports Complex owned by DBKL. We used to play till after sunset as the rays from the flood lights of the tennis courts would significantly improve our view in the darkness.

Whenever there was a bad turn out for football, we would join our seniors for a game of hockey on the volleyball court – and these guys were good. When the field was closed for resurfacing, we played at a park located at Jalan Bangkung next to our primary school SKBB and made more friends.

So, we basically had friends from Lucky Gardens, Bangsar Park, Bangsar Baru and Bukit Bandaraya. The best part was that we were truly 'muhibah' as we were all of different races and religions.

We called ourselves 'Bangsar Boys'.

We met every evening until we moved to secondary school. Most of us were scattered in the different schools in KL. I was in SMBB along Lorong Maarof. We would still meet unless there were activities after school hours.

During the 90's, when we were in lower secondary, there was a lack of sports experts who could help us develop as more focus was given to the upper secondary students.

Therefore, we started organizing an inter class league on Saturday mornings at the Padang Masjid Damansara. At this young age, we already had a mindset of entrepreneurship, providing jerseys, medal and even trophies for this league. We used to walk to and from this league games and wash up at Zul's house next to the mosque – his father was an Imam. Then there was Apek who would ride his motorbike and provide us with light refreshments.

Once we started attending morning school sessions in Form 3, we quickly realized how waking up in the weekday mornings were so difficult. However, on Saturdays, we were up and out of the house by 6.30am even before our parents had even considered waking up.

We were very close to each other. We would always anticipate the festive seasons as we get to gate crash our friend's homes. We needed no invitation and would really feast on the variety of food. For Christmas and the New Year, we would all crash at my place.

Halfway through Form 3, I left to Johor to pursue sports. There, I was involved in a variety of sports such as handball, sepak takraw, nine events in track & field and also football. I was involved up to the state level. However, the time came when I could not progress any further due to family commitments. I then came back to KL to attend college.

Once back, football sessions at Bangsar Sports Complex were still always the place to sweat it out. Soon, we noticed that the brothers of our seniors were playing hockey in a local league under the sponsorship of the BBRA (Bangsar Baru Residents Association). We started to fiddle with the idea of having our team sponsored to join a football league.

Not too long after, were given the opportunity. We were playing in the KL Division 3 League with the name BBRA. During the first season, it was really competitive but there were occasions where there was magic – world class plays and goals would happen and we would go on to win or draw games in the last 10 to 15 minutes of the games.

This gave me an excellent idea to call ourselves "Bangsar Magic".

After the second season, the number of players slowly reduced due to respective work commitments. Football sessions at the Bangsar Sports Complex still went on partially also to recruit younger players.

After some time, many of us moved abroad for further studies, including myself. When we were back, we were only able to meet up during birthday functions, festive celebrations, weddings and even funerals. By then, the field was in poor condition due to the lack of proper maintenance.

We were concentrated on our professions such as accountants, doctors, business owners, IT specialist etc.

One day, while I was jogging near the Bangsar Sports Complex, I noticed that some construction was in progress. Not too long after that, I saw a brand new steel cage futsal court with good artificial grass and flood lights.

I experienced a light bulb moment and decided to contact the boys to have a session. Calls and messages were made and the boys from the hood came marching out for the reuniting of Bangsar Magic after an absence of 10 years. That legacy had returned and it was truly a moment to remember. The group had now become bigger with the addition of friends of our existing players.

One day, when I was in church, a fellow member approached me after the service and talked to me about what I was doing and whether I would be interested in conducting sports training (running & football). I was up for it and volunteered myself. I became involved in the Brickfields Community Football Programme (BCFP) under the Tamil Methodist Church KL. We provided football training for under-privileged kids from around the Klang Valley on a voluntary basis. I also took part in a few running events and half marathons such as the Penang Bridge International Marathon, Malakof, Nike, Standard Chartered KL Marathon etc.

I was then advised and given the opportunity to take up Professional Coaching Courses under FAM and AFC. There was also the opportunity to join several professional coaches to conduct coaching clinics and leadership courses in certain parts of Asia such as the (National Physical Centre in Myanmar, Ansan in South Korea and Bangkok). I also had the opportunity to attend the World Cup 2014 in Brazil.

While all this was happening, I also put in effort to bring back Bangsar Magic with all of us being in our 30's by now. Everyone chipped in some funds to buy jerseys for all our players. These jerseys would go on to be used for our regular 11 aside friendly games with several other teams.

We get together during the weekends for our usual kick about and during the festive season, we have potluck sessions where the wives would prepare simple snacks. Many of our players have already started their own families – living away from their parents but still remaining in Bangsar.

As three years went by, I would frequently think of the type of life experience in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Everyone seems to be living a hectic lifestyle and healthy living seems to be a thing of the past. With technology people seem to be glued to their devices most of the time – even on the dinner table. Kids have to attend school, tuition and a long list of other things to the point that they don't have that experience of childhood the way we used to have in the past.

So I asked myself why don't we have our own football club to nurture young talent in football together with the inclusion of life values.

I summoned Faiz (PM's Office), Ashvin (Chartered Accountant), Najib (Business Owner), Dev (Devi's Corner Restaurant), Roswel (Int Entertainment), Eugene (Ex-Cobra, Business Owner) and Das (Technician) to sit in the committee which would run this club.

I shared with them my vision of registering Bangsar Magic Football Club as a professional club. In 30 years, when we are hitting 70 years old, we would be sitting on this committee table while at the same time, our children or grandchildren would be actively engaged in sports and healthy activities. We would also benefit by keeping our aging minds sharp and all these under one roof – a social sports club like Bangsar Magic Football Club.

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