



Welcome to the first edition of the season. I hope that you enjoy reading it. If so perhaps you can pass it on to anyone who is not a member.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Following on from the news that John and Sandie Derben had resigned, Suzanne McCloud and Michelle Phillips have been co-opted onto the Committee. Suzanne is taking on Sandie's post of Social Organiser so we urge you all to give her as much support as possible. Also, in the interim, Keith Blagbrough has stepped into John's shoes as Chairman. He will continue as Chairman and Treasurer until the AGM, when a new incumbents needs to be voted in. There has also been another resignation with Jenny Priest leaving us. We thank her for all of her past efforts. This means that yet another space is available on the Committee and we welcome any proposals to join. We need to carry on the good work that has been done over the last few seasons.

On that subject, your Committee have recently paid out almost £3,000 for equipment that the Club needed both at the ground and the training ground.

A. G. M.

This will be held in the Honours Lounge on Thursday, 18th October at 7:30 pm and will be in two parts. The first is the formal proceedings and, due to the

above resignations, we need nominations for Chairman, Treasurer and general committee members. These should be made in writing to the Secretary, Lynden Finch, by the 4th October and must be proposed and seconded by fellow OWSA members.

There will then be an interval with refreshments followed by an open forum with Trevor Stroud, Michael Davies and a member of the Team's management staff.

MEMBERSHIP

Please note that anyone who has not re-joined and are planning on doing so, due to the new Data Protection legislation, everyone has to fill in an application form.

SOCIAL EVENTS

This is to inform you that the date our Race Night has been changed to Friday, 2nd November and will be held in the Woodlands Lounge as the Caledonian Suite is not available. Proceedings will start at 7:30 pm, although hot food will be served from 6:30, with the bar also being open then.

We are looking for sponsors for each race, at a cost of £50, and for individual horses at £5 each. There are 8 races containing 8 horses so we require a good deal of support with this. To enable us to get the race cards printed please contact



Suzanne by the 19th October on 01494 916117 or 07730 497745 or e-mail her at mccloudsue80@gmail.com.

TRAVEL

You cannot get more of a contrast than our next two away fixtures. First up, it's Portsmouth on Saturday, 22nd September. The coach or coaches will leave Adams Park at 11:00 and will cost £17 for adult members.

Then there is the ridiculous Tuesday trip to Fleetwood on 2nd October. The coach for this departs at 1:30pm and costs £34 for adult members.

For both trips the usual discounts apply for seniors and juniors, while there is a £5 surcharge for non-members.

Unfortunately these long midweek trips are scheduled without any thought given to the diehard supporters that go everywhere no matter what. It's disappointing that the clubs themselves don't care enough either.

R. I. P.

As I was compiling this newsletter I learned of the sad departure of Howard Kennedy, who finally succumbed to his long illness. Howard was part of, in my eyes, the best eleven to represent this Club. That was in the 1974/75 season, which was his first.

He was one of the many players that Manager Brian Lee signed from University and College football during his time at the club. In Howard's case it was Oxford. A midfield player, he replaced the wonderful Larry Pritchard, who had returned to Sutton, and went on to play 407 competitive games and score exactly 100 goals, featuring in two Isthmian League championship-winning sides and also an F.A. Trophy semi-final.

In that first season he also played a part in that wonderful F.A. Cup run from the First Qualifying Round to the Third Round Proper.

After leaving us he joined neighbours and close rivals Slough Town, where he scored 5 goals in 32 appearances, before returning to his Northern roots.

However he always kept in touch with the Club and was a member of the Ex-Players Association. Our condolences go to his family and friends. He will be sorely missed.

FROM THE PAST

Following on from the above, that 1974/75 season was one of the best that I have witnessed in all of my time supporting the Blues. Despite a total of 55 games played we only used 17 players throughout, one of which, goalkeeper Brian Steventon, played just the once. No pampered players who couldn't play



twice a week (there were also 21 friendlies during the season!).

The Isthmian League title was secured on a wet afternoon at Loakes Park when a late goal from the excellent Keith Searle gave us a 1-0 win over Dagenham and saw us pip annual rivals Enfield by goal difference.

The highlight though was that F.A. Cup run. Starting with a 1-0 win at Marlow in the First Qualifying Round, we went on to beat Milton Keynes City, Chesham, Margate, Cheltenham, Bournemouth (after a replay) before reaching the Third Round for the first time and facing Middlesbrough. They were managed by Jack Charlton and were top of the First Division, now re-named the Premier League (despite Sky TV and the Media's views it wasn't formed in 1992!). An amazing performance by the boys in blue in front of a packed Loakes Park (attendance 12,000) saw us more than match our lofty rivals, who featured a young Graeme Souness. We almost snatched a late winner when Alan Phillips sent a header inches wide.

In the replay at Ayresome Park, another gritty display with John Maskell outstanding in goal, saw us lose to a single goal by David Armstrong in extra time. The crowd of over 30,000 gave us a standing ovation afterwards (one of my proudest moments).

We also reached the Final of the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup, where we met Thatcham at Chesham's Meadow Ground. However, after winning 4-0, we refused to accept the Trophy as a protest over the County Association's decision not to let us play in the prestigious London Senior Cup, which was an important tournament in those days and for which we were eligible to play in.

The only competition we failed in was the F.A. Trophy. It was our first appearance in it after all clubs at our level became semi-professional and the Amateur Cup was sadly abolished.

Drawn away to Ilford, we lost 3-0 with the above Brian Steventon playing. Although this turned out to be his only competitive appearance for us, he cannot be blamed solely for the defeat. The regular eleven that season who, in my opinion, would have graced the Football League were: John Maskell, Paul Birdseye, Gary Hand, Keith Mead, Alan Phillips, Terry Reardon, Steve Perrin, Howard Kennedy, Keith Searle, Micky Holifield and Tony Horseman. Of these, Holifield, Kennedy, Maskell, Mead, Perrin, Phillips and Searle all started 50 or more games. Apart from Steventon, Dave Bullock, Dylan Evans, Dave Alexander, Paul Griffiths and Graham Mackenzie also appeared.

Steve Perrin topped the scoring with 26 goals, while Tony Horseman (21), Keith Searle (19), Micky Holifield (12),



Howard Kennedy (12) and Dylan Evans (10) all reached double figures.

ON THE FIELD

We all knew that this season was going to be a bit of a struggle and so it has proved with just the one League win to date. However, I do believe with the recent addition of the younger players we stand a good chance of holding our own. Bryn Morris is looking good in midfield, while Jason McCarthy has picked up where he left off a couple of seasons ago. If we can only keep Scott Kashket fit for the season and put in more displays like the one at Bradford, which was the best display of football I have seen from us since the John Gorman days, then we can look forward with confidence.

In the League Cup, although the two results over 90 minutes were rather disappointing, we showed that we can keep our nerve with two excellent penalty shoot-outs. I look forward to giving Norwich a good run for their money and who knows we could well be in the Fourth Round for only the second time.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW ?

News of so many of our ex-players have reached my ears since the season started. First of all on the management side Gary Holt is in charge at Livingston, newly promoted to the Scottish Premier

League, while Ben Strevens is assistant-manager at Eastleigh and Ian Simpemba player-coach at Eastbourne Borough.

At the latter club, Sergio Torres is captain of the side. Others playing in the National League are Mike Williamson (Gateshead), Angelo Balanta, Keiran Murtagh and Josh Umerah (Boreham Wood), Will De Havilland and Stuart Lewis (Maidstone), Max Kretzschmar, back at Woking and among the goals after a season at Hampton and Richmond, and Tomi Adelaye, one of the pre-season triallists, is at Dagenham.

In the Football League, Bruno Andrade has gone to Lincoln after impressing at Boreham Wood for the last two seasons. He forms a useful spearhead there with John Akinde.

As usual the views on anything football wise are mine and not necessarily those of the Committee. If anyone has any comments regarding the content of this newsletter please contact me on 07484 723982 or dfinch105@btinternet.com

**Dave Finch
(OWWSA Committee Member)**