



Welcome to the latest edition of the Newsletter. As usual I hope that you enjoy reading it. Please pass it on to friends and relatives to show them that we are much more than a travel club.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Our first ever Bingo Night was a great success with a good turnout and a profit in excess of £800.

Sue is looking to organise another one before the season is out, possibly in March.

The next event is the Quiz Night on Friday, 21 February, starting at 7. 30. Teams of up to 8 people can enter at a cost of £5 per person. Food and drink will be available from 6. 30. To enter a team contact Sue on 07730 497745.



Please note for all events, Marion and Harold always require items for raffle prizes and funds raised all helps towards supplying the Football Club with much-needed equipment.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Your Committee are concerned that, despite our wonderful season on the pitch, membership numbers are down and 49 of last season's haven't as yet renewed.

If you are reading this and are one of those who haven't, can you let either Graham or Lynden know the reason why, as we would dearly like to know.

Also if you know of anyone who is no longer a member can you ask them to contact us. It would be a great help to us in planning for the future.

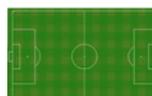


Our next trip is on Boxing Day to Portsmouth, where I always enjoy going. There have been some excellent games there over the last few seasons and the atmosphere in a packed stadium is electric. Departure time from Adams Park is 11.00 and the cost for adult members is £18. The usual discounts for seniors and juniors apply, as does the £5 surcharge for non-members.



Another reminder now regarding the proposed weekend trip to Lincoln in April. Anyone interested please let Rena know so she can sort details out with Roger Mott.

For all trips Rena can be contacted on 01494 520179 and Graham on 07876 267301 (no texts though) or see them in their booth in the corridor of the Vere Suite.



I just don't know what to say anymore about our astounding season so far! For Lynden and I who were there on that fateful day in January 1968 when we lost to the little Anglian Combination side City of Norwich Schools Old Boys in the Amateur Cup, on what was just a pitch in a Military Barracks, this is Dreamland! We are not only rubbing shoulders with, but beating some huge clubs. Long may it continue!

I am not going to single anyone out as it has been an all-round team effort on the part of Gareth, Dobbo and the management team and the entire playing squad.

We now face a hectic Christmas schedule against some of the very best and it will be interesting to see where we are, going into the New Year. I still think four games in such a short time is too much though.



The one disappointment has been our exit from the F. A. Cup, missing out on a televised match in the next round and then a trip to Watford. There have been a few milestones reached since my last newsletter, with



Anthony Stewart making his 200th appearance.



Nick Freeman making his 100th appearance.



Alex Samuel making his 50th appearance.



Adebayo Akinfenwa scoring his 50th goal in a light and dark blue shirt.

Well done to all concerned.



With Lynden and I moving to Flackwell Heath recently, I have been going to see some of their Tuesday evening

matches and was surprised to see



Dean Morgan now turning out for them after starting the season at Beaconsfield. He is carrying a bit of weight these days. It will be interesting to see how long he stays there.

Other ex-players who have come to my notice performing in non-league football are:



Marvin McCoy (Dulwich Hamlet),



Chris Zebroski (Chippenham Town),



Scott McGleish (Edgware Town),



Jason Banton (Romford),



Paul Hayes (AFC Sudbury)



Stuart Beavon (Mickleover Sports).



On the managerial front, Martin Kuhl, who was assistant to Gary Waddock, has taken up the reins at Staines Town.



Five years ago on the last Saturday before Christmas we made the long journey up to Accrington for a League Two fixture. We returned home with a point after a 1-1 draw. Paris

Cowan-Hall gave us an early lead with a superb shot from 20 yards that curled past the keeper in the eighth minute. The Blues then wasted chances to increase their lead before Stanley equalised four minutes after the interval. Our line-up was :



Ingram, Jombati, Jacobson, Scowen, Mawson, Pierre, Cowan-Hall, Murphy (Rowe), Hayes (Holloway), McClure, Wood. Paris played two more games over the holiday period before joining Millwall in the New Year.

On the corresponding Saturday ten years ago we were at home to Oldham Athletic for an eventful League One clash. After Oldham had missed a sixth minute penalty, John Akinde gave us the lead three minutes later. However, he then blotted his copybook midway through the first half when he was dismissed for raising his arm against an opponent. Goals either side of the interval then saw the visitors edge in front. Substitute Matt Harrold came to the rescue with a late penalty after John Mousinho had been tripped in the area.

The line-up was: Shearer, Hunt, Woodman, Mousinho, Westwood, Oliver, M. Phillips (Pittman), Doherty, Akinde, Davies, Betsy (Harrold). The attendance that afternoon was 4,160.

Twenty years ago there was no game on the Saturday as we actually played Bristol City at Ashton Gate on the Friday evening in a Division Two (now League One) encounter. Although the game finished goalless it wasn't without incident, with both sides having chances to win it. The second half turned feisty with several yellow cards being dished out. There was a mass brawl in the 66th minute, while, two minutes later, Andy Baird was sent off after his second booking. Our line-up was: Taylor, Lawrence, Ablett, Cousins, Bates, Simpson, Carroll (Bulman), Ryan, Baird, Devine (Senda), Brown.



Burning question- Why do matches not kick-off on time these days? Years ago, games started dead on 3 o'clock and ended at 5. 40, with ten minutes for the half-time break. Now that interval is often getting on for twenty minutes and games don't finish until almost 5 o'clock, although of course all of the time-wasting and gamesmanship everywhere has brought about some of that. As far as I am aware at Football League level, players, management and match officials get to grounds around 1:30 and the team-sheets have to be in by 2 o'clock. So what on earth goes on to delay the start? It is more understandable at non-league level, especially midweek when players have to travel from work, but I can't see any excuse for the higher level. Has anybody any thoughts on the matter? Is it symptomatic of modern society, as it seems to be the same when you go to any form of entertainment these days.

In closing, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Who knows, it could be a very special one for the Club!

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 or have anything they would like to see included please contact me on 07484 723982 or dfinch105@btinternet.com.

Dave Finch (Editor & OWWSA Committee Member)