



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.

CHAIRMAN'S report

To say that this has been in many ways an interesting season is a massive understatement. Last August all the 'professional' experts had the Club prime candidates for relegation. Look at us now! So far so good, but there is still a long way to go until the season ends.

Off the field we have had the uncertainty created by the potential sale of the Club to an American businessman and company, with the voting process, meetings and contracts, etc. At the time of writing this, we have still not had the legal processes completed and signed. The Trust therefore still owns the Club. Rob, Missy and Pete Couhig though have already brought in some welcome and innovative ideas and we look forward to the future when all is completed.

Throughout all this turmoil we in the Official Supporters Association have continued with our main objectives which are to look after the interests of our supporters and to support the Football Club. As you are all aware, we continue to fulfil our pledge to run at least one coach to every competitive away match and we do this most efficiently. We hope they you will continue to use this quality service in the future. As members you benefit from a substantial discount on the non-member fare and a guarantee of a refund if matches are cancelled before the kick-off (which non-members do not).

You will have seen from recent announcements that we have purchased an ice machine for the medical staff at the training ground to assist with the recovery of injuries to the players. Earlier this

season we also paid for the electrical installation and software to enable the big screen to be used again. This means this season alone we have supported the Club to the extent of £8,000. It is with some immense pride that this means that since we were formed we have contributed in excess of £100,000 to the Club.

All this has been made possible by the fantastic support provided by you, our members, over the years by attending our fund-raising events. A massive thank you all and we look forward to seeing you at future events.

Keith Blagbrough (OWWSA Chairman)

SOCIAL EVENTS

There is good and bad news. First, due to the success of our bingo night we are staging a second one on Friday, 20th March. It will be in the Vere Suite, starting at 7.30 and will follow the format of the previous one. The cost is £10 for 10 games. As usual Harold and Marion will run a raffle, so they are always on the lookout for prizes. Food and drink will be available from 6.30.

The bad news concerns the Annual Dinner. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to agree with the Club on the price and menu, so it looks like it will have to be cancelled. If so, we will plan on holding it early next season when hopefully things will have settled at the Club.



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.



Providing on the number interested in going Rena and Graham will run a coach to the Berks and Bucks game at Hungerford next Tuesday (25th). So go and see them in their normal booth. Following on from this is Doncaster on the 29th. Departure time from Adams Park is 9.00 and the cost is £23 for adult members. Usual discounts apply for seniors and juniors, while it is £28 for ALL non-members. For all trips Rena can be contacted on 01494 520179 and Graham on 07876 267301 (no texts though) or see them at the ground



We welcomed a new member, Pete Brown, recently and I was informed that he attended the 1966 World Cup Final at Wembley, plus all of England's games there in the tournament. As, obviously, numbers who went are decreasing year by year I thought that I would find out more about him. He has certainly had a varied time of it footballwise throughout his life. Due to his father's occupation in local government Pete has lived in Norwich, Carlisle, Sale, Dover, Rickmansworth and, finally, Hazlemere.

Everywhere his father encouraged him to follow the local teams. He saw his first game at Carlisle's Brunton Park, then it was Maine Road where he witnessed the legendary keeper, Bert Trautmann, in action. After the move south to Dover, there were trips to London when City were in town and a stay at his aunt's house in Eltham. His Father also took him to Wembley for the 1958 FA Cup final when Bolton beat a patched up Manchester United side 2-0 (they had lost eight players in the Munich air crash). He later saw United win the European Cup at Wembley in 1968 when they beat Benfica 4-1 (Lynden and I also attended that game).

His most memorable match at Dover was an FA Cup game against Peterborough. He also saw them

win the Kent Senior Cup against Margate. Like the Berks and Bucks Cup it was a prestigious tournament in those days. The Crabble Ground was also used for county cricket, with Kent playing there twice a season. His father used to help with the preparations of the wicket there.

Next in line was Watford, where later on his daughter was a mascot for their game against Manchester United one season and a meeting with Graham Taylor, who Pete describes as a lovely man. The majority of his working life was spent in dealing with all aspects of Council Housing and a move to Hazlemere followed 43 years ago.

Gradually he started to take an interest in the Chairboys, with occasional visits to Loakes Park with his son. His first game was in 1985 and the infamous FA Cup game with Colchester that started the rivalry between the two sets of supporters. He became a more regular supporter with the move to Adams Park, as have his son and daughter (both now grown) up.

Pete list's his favourite players as Jo Jacobson, Matt Bloomfield, Paul Hyde, Jason Cousins, Paul McCarthy, Dave Carroll, Steve Guppy, Keith Ryan, Simon Stapleton and Steve Brown.

His highlights include the Wembley finals, Dave Carroll's goal against Welling at Adams Park and his repeat against Preston at Wembley and Glyn Creaser's bicycle kick in the last minute against Bury. Also the good people of Leicester applauding us after our FA Cup win there and the League Cup win at Charlton.

Welcome to OWSA Pete.



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.



As could probably be expected the hectic holiday schedule, with games against four of the division's strongest sides, took its toll. However, as I write this, we are still hanging in there amongst the big boys and it's amazing that already we are free of any relegation problems. You would have certainly welcomed that at the start of the season! Our home record is by far the best for several seasons and, if we could just add a few more goals to our game, then our away form would pick up. The performances of Fred and Paul Smyth at Bolton looks promising for the rest of the season, so fingers crossed.

Congratulations are in order as



Joe Jacobson recently played his 250th game for us



Dominic Gape played his 150th.



Also the big fella upfront is one goal away from



Nathan Tyson's Tally of 53 (the most for us as a Football League club).



I have noticed some of our ex-players featuring regularly on the highlights on television lately.



Kortney Hause is establishing himself at the heart of Aston Villa's defence after moving there from Wolves,



while Kadeem Harris' move from Cardiff to Sheffield Wednesday seems to be working out well.



Another in form is Randell Williams at Exeter. Every week he either scores or creates goals.



On the managerial front, Alex Revell has taken over at Stevenage after the departure once more of Graham Westley, who had a short spell at Loakes Park as a player during the 1987-88 season. With the Boro being adrift at the foot of League Two he has a thankless task for them to avoid the drop back into non-league



Five years ago, on the corresponding Saturday to this (22nd) we made the long journey up to Carlisle for a League Two fixture. We returned home with all three points but, after going 3-0 up with goals from Aaron Pierre, Fred Onyedima and Matty McClure, we were made to sweat as they reduced the deficit



with two goals in the last twenty minutes. Our line-up at Brunton Park was : Ingram, Jombati, Jacobson, Bean (Murphy), Mawson, Pierre, Onyedinma (Ephraim), McClure, Hayes (Craig), Bloomfield, Wood. Onyedinma was in a rich vein of form after joining on loan from Millwall, who had recently signed Paris Cowan-Hall from us.

Five Years previous to this it was another loanee on the scoresheet as Millwall came to Adams Park for a League One fixture. This time though it was Reading's right-back Julian Kelly, who was making his debut for us. His shot from outside the area a minute before half-time proved to be the only goal of the game to give us three welcome points as we strove to avoid relegation. The line-up was: Heaton, Kelly, Woodman, Bennett, Westwood, Mousinho, Betsy (Ainsworth), Keates, Harrold (Pittman), Revell (Phillips), McLeod. Kelly continued to impress in the next seven games before picking up an injury that kept him out until the last game of the season. He never really made the grade at Reading but was more successful at Lincoln and Notts County.

Twenty years ago it was a visit to Brentford for a Division Two (now League One) encounter. The game finished goalless thanks mainly to keeper Martin Taylor, who made a string of second half saves, with our solitary reply coming from Jermaine McSparran Our line-up at Griffin Park was: Taylor, Lawrence (Rogers), Vinnicombe, Cousins, McCarthy, Simpson, Carroll, Ryan, McSparran (Senda), Devine, Brown. The game was the last for us by no-nonsense defender Matt Lawrence. After recovering from an injury sustained in the game he signed for Millwall.



Are you like me totally confused about the laws of the game now. Recently in a game on Match of the Day an attacking player was wrestled to the ground in the penalty area by two defenders right in front of the referee, yet neither did he, his linesman or VAR deem that as a penalty. This occurs at most corners these days and goes mainly unpunished. At a recent away game though, Giles Phillips, was penalised and red-carded for the most innocuous attempt at a push and a spot-kick awarded. Can any referee out there explain because it defies any logic to me.

Also why is it that a defender can stick his arm out to block a shot at close range in the area and it is deemed ball to hand and not an offence? Being cynical I believe they are deliberately conning the officials by making it appear so. And how about some of those ludicrous offside decisions by VAR. I bet managers are getting players to trim their toe-nails before going out to play! Why on earth don't they let the referee look at the monitor as they do in every other country? It used to be a simple game but the powers that be have overloaded the rule book, although they still haven't cut out all the dreadful gamesmanship that is rife in the game these days.

As usual the views on anything footballwise 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)