



Tuesday 5th October 2021



Southend 1 – Eastleigh 0



Soooooooooooooooooooooooooooo our casino manager has been at it again! Drawing squad numbers out of a paper hat, he contrived to make six changes to the team that played against Solihull at the weekend. A desperate throw of the dice or a carefully considered move? Depends, one supposes upon how you view the guy. But it worked!

Yes, nine games into the season and we've finally won for the second time. Yippee!!

But it was a struggle, and so, whilst it was quite some considerable relief to finally get another victory under our belts, it was an uphill climb for the majority of the game. Eastleigh went for it right from kick off but we struggled to even find first gear for at least the first 30 minutes or so. Possibly Browns late selection of his team (The players were only told 90 minutes before the game) and his therefore necessary brief explanation of the tactics to be employed, froze brains. But at times we looked like kids chasing a ball around a school yard rather than a professional football team. Just what do we do in training?

Our search for new players has been well documented as indeed so has been the crying need for an attack minded, creative, midfielder. As a curtain wall in front of our defence, those occupying that area of the pitch at the moment do an adequate job. But when it comes to fielding a ball to one of our forwards, either the ability or imagination just isn't there. Accordingly, whilst we stood up well to Eastleigh's continued attempts to break us down, it was very much a game of their attack against our defence for the majority of the first half.

Up in the Thunderbirds nest, feathers were flying as Mike finally lost patience with our tappy tappy, pass it backwards, play. Yells of "Kick it forwards" flooding from his vicinity like a river in spate. He was also urging our midfield to advance at least 20 more yards up the pitch as we were sitting far too deep and just inviting them onto us. Albert, sucking on his favourite sweets, (Cough candies), was being strangely quiet though, as indeed so too was the other Brother Grimm, Boycie. Add into these unusual circumstances the happy fact that Marlene was making absolutely no attempts to loosen the Vulcan death grip that was the only thing keeping her vocal cords in check, and some sort of an explanation is required.

Simples ... they were all on their very best behaviour!

The clan that envelopes Albert, the Greens and Del Boy has tentacles that extend beyond the immediate environs of Tracey Island. Denzil's humble yokel beginnings were well documented in earlier match reports when some of you may recall him being referred to as 'Village' or 'Old Slocum' on account of his habit of chewing straw and being dazzled by any lights whose power source was electric rather than gas or reed. Well, they've tried to keep it under wraps but finally it is time to reveal that some of the family reside in very close vicinity to where Denzil was first dragged up.

Admittedly, the distance they maintain between themselves, and Albert definitely has it up sides. Unfortunately, though it also has the drawback of separating them from civilisation to quite some degree. Accordingly, when an enterprising neighbour, having witnessed his dog playing upon a treadmill, tore down a barbed wire fence and then combined hound energy with the now loose wiring to create sparks, a whole new world opened up for both himself and the sleepy villagers.

This summer's Euro's came as a particular cultural shock to them. So much so in fact that a certain daughter of the parish got quite caught up in it all, despite not knowing that the game even existed before due to strange family circumstances. Now though, she wanted to experience a match for real.

And, as the lass in question was none other than the Green's granddaughter, only mild confusion arose before something could be sorted out for her. And that is why she was now sitting next to the Thunderbirds desperately trying to look as if she had nothing whatsoever to do with us. It was brave attempt on her part too, but as more experienced supporters close to us in the West Stand have been trying to do the same for years, her attempts to look cool and composed whilst under such pressure were doomed to failure. Still, she tried.

Something that Blues, having taken on board Mike's furiously expressed advice, were also doing as they experimented with the strange concept of 'moving up-field'. Crossing the halfway line was still proving to be quite a barrier for some, but there was no denying that the ball had discovered another hemisphere to bounce about within. Eastleigh were beginning to look uncomfortable.

Then, just before the break an unusual event occurred as the referee had to hobble off injured. At first, we wondered if he had just disappeared down the tunnel for an urgent toilet break. But no, although taking some time over it (Left toe goes in that sock, right boot on that foot) another representative from the shallow end of the gene pool eventually came on to replace him. His opening moves were not at all auspicious.

Doubts that he was even a football referee at all, quickly arose as he pointed the wrong way, rugby style, whenever awarding a free kick. Shoving his rather unconvincing attempts to portray himself as one hell of a sick Grand Daddy, Boycie swiftly put him to rights. This seemed to help steady the new boy for whom receiving abuse was obviously a familiar theme and thus therefore somewhat comforting. Nevertheless, he still seemed somewhat relieved to blow the halftime whistle a few moments later.

We've sadly become used to Denzil and Boycie pulling out their mobile walkie talkies faster than a pair of gunfighters in response to such a signal. Their fingers itching to discover amazing things like what the weather in Southend is at the moment, what TV programmes they are missing or if the torch facility still works. It's a sad ritual that gets repeated by people all around the ground for some unknown reason. Conversations, vocal, not digital, regarding the game having long gone the way of the Dodo.

So, imagine if you will, the unedifying picture of Albert attempting to haul out his brick of a communications device in one fluid manoeuvre. Doesn't really work does it! And so neither did his attempts to look 'happening' in front of our young guest. Still, it brought a smile to her face and her attempts to stop giggling were pretty impressive too.

Blues looked to have more about them as the second half got underway. The anchor ropes keeping them moored to the harbour wall of our penalty area were still evident though. However occasionally there would be a burst of spray off the wet pitch as one got tightened; the crew aboard the tethered vessel struggling to host the 'Blue Peter' and so sail away to explore further horizons. Shoals though, in the form of an official who had rediscovered the fun to had when armed with a whistle, lay in the way of any such ambitions. As so too did our inability to steer the ball by any compass heading other than those known to Denzil.

Pre-match, we had been able to pass crisply and accurately whilst warming up. But come show time, that ability just seems to evaporate. So, is it lack of ability or maybe simply confidence? The Blues Voice seemed to be just as confused. One moment singing out support, the next yelling out for Ron to go. Our match against Chesterfield on Saturday was scheduled to be televised. However now it appears that B.T have had second thoughts. Possibly fearing the amount of colourful language that there would be at that game, they have decided to feature another match instead. That equates to lost revenue guys, money that the club so desperately needs. So please think twice before engaging mouths in future.

Lack of the Blue Voice having any forethought was also evidenced when they decided to invade the pitch with a banner declaring their lack of any love for Ron. Fine to do so before the game, possibly too at halftime, but during it? Really guys! That was almost as stupid a move as Ron's little visit to the terracing at Solihull.

Protest by all means. But put some thought into it first. Undoubtedly your irresponsible actions will now result in the club incurring a fine. Just what we really needed! And, even worse, your timing really sucked because we were just finally beginning to exert some influence over the game. Building up a series of attacks that were making Eastleigh's defences really creak. Your activities put at risk our players concentration at a critical time in the game.

Fortunately, we still managed to score despite you wandering, looking lost, up and down in front of the West Stand. A great goal that unfortunately some missed (Hopefully yourselves included) thanks to your flaming great banner blocking the view. It also held up the restart, causing some to fear that the officials were considering stopping the game due to your interference. Just great, we finally look like winning at home and you stupidly put that in danger!

Obviously, you do have valid points to put across. Rather frustratingly though, they are doomed to fall upon a barren pitch and will continue to do so just as long as you concede to Ron the upper moral ground. Figure out some way to remove the support of that platform from him, and you could then well be in firmer, more productive, territory.

Here endeth the lesson and one can only pray that you have taken some notice of it because three precious points were at stake. Our visitors, having been allowed 'extra' time to calm down and so reset after our goal, were now back in the driving seat and putting studs to the metal. Literally! Annoyed at being behind, in a game that they probably should have been winning, a few of their players were starting to lose it.

Which wouldn't have been that much of a problem save that our subby ref never had it in the first place. So, when one of their players took a full-blooded swing at Dalby, in clear view of everyone in the ground, we all expected to see red along with it. But after extensive talks, even longer than any conducted by the U.N before they decide to, as always, do nothing, the weak-kneed coward copied their example. Their manager whispering sweet nuffins in your ear hole had nothing to do with it at all. Did it ref!

Still, that farce had the effect of restoring Albert to as close to normal as he ever gets. Boycie and Marlene though still carried on performing likkle angel impressions. Their grandparently, cherub like, faces glowing in the floodlights as the game entered the eight minutes of extra time that had been awarded. Now normally we would spend it, deep in our own half and hanging on like mad to our precious one goal lead. But for once, we instead continued going forward, not seeking a second goal, but rather the corner flags.

Eastleigh didn't like this for some reason. But there was very little that they could do about it. Murphy and Dalby (Very able substitutes for Kargbo and Akinola who had failed to impress) employing their skills to great effect and almost always thwarting their attempts to just whack the ball back into our area as quickly as possible. Accordingly, it was rather a relaxed period of play and one that should have ended up with our players receiving unaccustomed applause from all around the ground.

Unfortunately, and rather sadly, instead they had to rush off the field to avoid becoming entangled up within the mob who had raced onto the pitch from both the West and South stands just as the game had ended. More intent upon protesting about Ron than celebrating our rare victory, their actions just added to the sour taste that was already in many mouths following their earlier remonstrations. Strange priorities guys, but each to their own.

Come on you Blues !