



Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022



**Southend 0 – Dagenham & Redbridge 3**



Sooooooooooooooooooooo did you boo or did you clap the team off the pitch at halftime?

Perhaps instead you simply groused into your halftime cuppa and blasted a couple of our players' first half performances? As a paying customer, disappointed with your purchase, you are of course entitled to express your dismay. But, and a big but here, do you also cheer and urge the lads on when they need your support. Or do you simply sink into your seat and watch others do that work for you?

Too many of our 'fans' are only far too ready to turn on the team at the very first opportunity without ever putting anything like the same energy into supporting them. Why?

It's not anything new. Many will remember back to the days when it was almost a tradition to throw your seat cushion out of the East Stand as the players left the pitch after a defeat. Other stands were, and still are, just as guilty of committing such misdemeanours, if only in a more vocal form. The question as to why though still hovers.

Presumably people come to a game to enjoy the match, its atmosphere and, hopefully, a positive result. None of those things are guaranteed though. Indeed, it would be rather boring if they were. So, is it just that some people can't cope with life's little setbacks or does it run deeper?

Certainly, watching on as Dagenham outplayed us all over the pitch, it was a very painful reminder of where we were four or so months back. But that was all it was. It was not as if the team were not trying. It was not a case of us just being content to rest upon our forks and watch the grass grow. Every one of our players was trying their hardest to turn things around but, against a team that seem to hold the black spot over us at the moment, it was never going to happen.

But imagine how you would you feel if, as you sit at your desk or put in a shift at your workplace, every time you made a small mistake, so your ears got besieged by yells of criticism and put you down? How well would you continue to perform? Yet many feel free to do just that. Rather than try and encourage the lads to keep on going and not drop their heads, they bray. How can that ever be called support?

*Incidentally strongly phrased words of advice to match officials fall outside the scope of this report. Such creatures deserve every ill word, snarl or criticism, constructive or otherwise, that is thrown at them!*

It does have to be said though that an equal, or possibly greater, number of people wear their blue hearts so openly on their sleeves that any wound causes them great distress and pain. Such persons are therefore liable to momentarily give vent to their frustrations in a non-positive way. Even so, just as soon as an opportunity presents itself, they are amongst the first up on their feet and cheering the team on.

Accordingly, they are excused from this censure, which is directed at those who just sit, silent as a statue, in their pews awaiting their crowing moment. Their only response to a goal scored by anyone

other than ourselves being one of granting themselves licence to yelp out cries of disapproval. Far, far better, such individuals simply remain at home than poison the air at Roots Hall.

A tad harsh you might be thinking, and you'd be right. It's meant to be! No one is above reproach but our team have performed miracles to get us to a position of safety in this league having put together a fantastic run of almost 14 games without defeat. Everyone with a brain knew that such a run would eventually have to come to an end, and so for us to put in such a disappointing first half performance should not have come as a complete shock.

Equally Daggers have scored at least three goals against us every time we have met them this season. A statistic that reflects, only too plainly how poorly we perform against them. A few years back, the situation was completely reversed, and we used to run up cricket scoreboards against them. Rarely indeed have the points been shared over a season. So, if our tremendous run of results was going to come to an end, who were the most likely executioners?

This is not meant as any sort of an excuse. Our display in the opening 20 minutes or so of the second period showed only too clearly what could, and perhaps, should have been. The ease and simplicity of their third goal though put paid to all of that. So, upon reflection, and given that their also hit the woodwork on at least two occasions in the first half, we were fortunate to not suffer a heavier defeat.

Life is all about putting something in, to get something out. If all you contribute is venom, then don't be overly surprised if life bites you back. If however, even when totally gutted at the way your team is playing, you still contribute something towards helping them to turn things around, then you can truly call yourself a supporter!

Come on you Blues!!