

Southend United Supporters Club



Chairman & Hon. Treasurer:
Trevor Bashford
45 Audley Road
Great Leighs, Chelmsford
Essex CM3 1RS
Tel: 01245 362742

Hon. Secretary & Press / PR Officer:
Clare Crammond
51 Walsingham Road
Southend-on-Sea,
Essex SS2 4AL
Tel: 01702 469959

Vice Chairman:
Richard Coxell
20 Redcliff Drive
Leigh-on-Sea,
Essex SS9 1AY
Tel: 01702 712339
e-mail: coxell@easy.net.co.uk

Hon. Membership Secretary:
Kathryn Medcalf
26 Wansfell Gardens
Thorpe Bay
Southend-on-Sea
Essex SS1 3SW

Honorary President: Sir Teddy Taylor MP

SUSC NEWSLETTER NUMBER FIVE

GOODBYE Norma Jean, Goodbye England's Rose and now Goodbye.....Barry Conlon. Clown-Ion, Con-man, the epithets flew thick and fast when it came to the £90,000 signing from Manchester City, who by the end of last season had become a cult hero simply by managing finally to open his goals account in a home game. There was potential in the lad, but I fear not as much as Alvin presumably saw. And, whisper it, apparently there were one or two off-field 'flaws'. If we have made £10,000 on his sale to York, fair enough. Now let's hope, for Alan Little's sake, that replacement Mr. Tolson will now do the business and not turn out to be another part-time player, part-time crock.

With a mere 18 days to go to the start of the new campaign, I am firing this out on July 20, it would be nice if that £10,000 profit and a bit more besides was splashed out on the two players Little quite rightly insists we still need. There was a hell of a sight more cack than class in the Third Division last season and getting us just that bit of extra quality in midfield and at left-back could mean the difference between escaping the dead zone and digging out the maps for Slough Town and Kidderminster Harriers.

I know we want to be upbeat before the new kick-off, but a 4-1 drubbing by Gravesend and Northfleet hardly seemed to smack of a new golden age looming on the horizon. Not that friendlies are much of a guide to the future - or much of an attraction these days with the emphasis more on run-outs for all than competitive action. I watched Essex deliver the last rites to Middlesex at Southchurch Park on Friday and in the Old Southendians and Southchurch clubhouse it was amazing how many people were talking about Blues and the prospects for 1999-2000. Yet nobody reckoned the Norwich 'match' that night worth a cup of cold p.....orridge, let alone worth attending. At least we won that one. I wonder what Col U and Co will bring in the four-team tournament - hopefully not trouble!

Right, down to the nitty-gritty of SUSC NEWSLETTER NUMBER FIVE. First off, the new mascot. As previously reported, moves were afoot to investigate the replacement of the terracotta eiderdown with a Rolls-Royce shrimp from Angela Hallam, creator of Marvin the Moose (Cambridge Utd) and Sky Blue Sam (Coventry City). Then it materialised that two fans had simply got together and manufactured, with John Main's blessing, a new shrimp being designed to make us all proud. The king of crustaceans has subsequently made its debut and, though pride may not have been everyone's reaction, it seems fair to say that the grotesque eiderdown can now safely be lobbed on the nearest available bonfire. Our vice-chairman Richard Coxell's verdict on the latest fluorescent pink entity was 'surreal'. But if it is getting talked about, great. Cyril the Swan, Wolfie and the Bristol City pigs have shown that mascots can bring big publicity. What whoever is inside our shrimp must be told is to bring it to life, to get the fans going. A mascot that just disappears into the background is a complete waste of space. A letter has gone to Angela Hallam thanking her for her assistance.

Our committee meeting on July 8 heard that a conditional discharge was the verdict on the Rochdale One. What a very sorry tale that has proved. We hope it will not be repeated for any more of our members in the coming season. I noted that another of our brethren who ignored warnings to the contrary and ran on the pitch after the Hartlepool

finale copped a £200 fine plus £50 costs. In other words, the money for a season ticket with change left over has gone down the drain for a moment of pure stupidity. Like it or not, laws at football grounds are now rigidly enforced. So take on the boys in blue or overdose on firewater at your peril in the months to come.

We have given up on ever getting the courtesy of a reply from Plymouth over the Home Park argy-bargy. But clearly we are not the only club with a gripe against officialdom that gets out of hand. The Independent Supporters Association and the Football Supporters Association are both considering numerous complaints from around the nation on all manner of issues.

Returning to Rochdale for a moment, their shirts and ours currently look to be the only ones in the Nationwide League manufactured by Rossco. Who, you may ask? In fact, Rossco is the brand name of Fairway Sports Europe Ltd, a company with worldwide tentacles that embrace entities as diverse as Arrow Sports Shoes and Uhlsport. The general consensus seems to be that our new apparel is quite acceptable and it is already being well modelled. As for Olympic, R.I.P.

SUSC funds remain in a healthy state and membership currently stands at 314 - with plenty of room for expansion. All relevant renewals have been despatched and if you are due a membership card it should by now be in your sticky little paw. Apologies for any delays that have been experienced, but a total revamp of the membership list has proved more tricky than anticipated for Kathryn and Clare. We hope to have added some more recruits at the Meet The Players Day on July 11 and aim to lure in more at future home games. For £5 it's a snip. Tell the world.

Alan Little's holiday, followed by John Main's vacation, means setting up the Little Q & A night has not been as simple as it should have been. But fear not. It is looming. As is the next quiz night, the date of which will be fixed at the committee's coming meeting on July 29. The 5-A-Side special remains under consideration.

If the new ground goes ahead as planned, it is clear parking and transport could be a problem. Richard has already discussed this with John Main, who wants suggestions from our members - park and ride schemes etc - as to how best to get fans to the environs of the current Boots and Laces site as conveniently as possible. It is hoped the council might be willing to provide extra land to help deal with the seemingly inevitable parking difficulties. Rumours continue to abound that if the scheme does not get the requisite permission and go ahead to schedule, we are in big-time trouble. So keep praying.

But at least we have paid off our creditors. For example, who could disagree that Ronnie Whelan was worth the £190,000 we had to hand over. The Yanks (Mike Lapper etc) copped £100,000, while Fairclough Homes got enough to stop them pulling the plug. Hallelujah!

We have had a quotation from Supreme for use of their coaches to away games next season, plus one or two others from rivals keen to tap into a potentially lucrative source of revenue. Currently it looks 99 per cent sure we will stick with Supreme, but it is not yet a done deal. Parents of Junior Blues who want their little darlings to travel with us unaccompanied can rest assured we will continue to 'mother' them as if they were at home. But any of our junior travellers who misbehave this season will quickly find themselves having to arrange alternative methods of transport. Be warned. Clare's search for an all-over tan means she will be unavailable to deal with bookings for Rochdale and Oxford. Anyone wanting to get in early for those two treks can contact Chris Berry, who has valiantly agreed to fill the breach in Clare's absence. His numbers are Southend (01702) 558978 or 0403-898698 (mobile).

Nice to see the club have forged a link with Southend United Ladies FC. It spreads the word and is another PR plus for John Main. They may even have a couple of players worth signing. After all, it would not be the first time we have had a woman in the side!

Trevor will be penning bits and pieces for our slot in the new club programme. Anyone with ideas or possible contributions worth looking at for publication should get in touch. Also on the communications front, Richard

now has a 'pro' helping Tony Cowell with the job of updating our SUSC internet website. Contributions or suggestions for that should be directed to coxell@easynet.co.uk Newsletter feedback can be imparted to me at nigel.rickard@the-sun.co.uk

We sent an e-mail of support to the Barnet fans who marched on Downing Street last weekend. Their new plans for a ground to replace Underhill have been thrown out by the Department of the Environment and they now have a year to find an alternative home or it could be Goodnight Vienna. It seems we will be back on the terraces behind the goal at Underhill this season, so my contact tells me. The seats are being removed and the terrace rebuilt. Sounds like a genuine ground improvement for once.

I have just received a list of the Nationwide League games on Sky TV up until Christmas. Surprise, surprise, Blues are not on! They must be waiting for our promotion push. The ONLY Third Division match is Cheltenham v Shrewsbury on September 12. Must be worth a letter of complaint to that smug git and Premiership sycophant Richard Keys.

The newsletter started with a farewell, so why not draw to a close with one. John Adams is off to start a house extension or whatever and Peter Storrie is in as the new chief executive. He is already well hands on at Roots Hall, it seems. And as any West Ham fan - are there some? - will tell you, making himself popular was never a priority. We must stay alert on that one.

The season will probably be under way by the time NUMBER SIX hits your doormats, so have a good one. I cannot say I am over-confident we will go up, but we have to be worth a few quid each-way. See you at Coral's.

NR

20/7/99

To Help - Not Hinder