

# Southend United Supporters Club



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## S.U.S.C. NEWSLETTER NUMBER SIX

Come out of your depression. Cancel that counselling appointment. God is good. Yes, you are getting SUSC NEWSLETTER NUMBER SIX ahead of schedule.

Now what have you done, you may be asking, to deserve at least the equivalent of five numbers and the bonus ball coming up on the lottery? Simple. You have waited patiently for the chance to ask Alan Little everything from how he plans to get us promotion by May to the colour of his jimmy-jams. And now that moment has arrived.

Spread the word, brother. His chief executiveness Peter Storrie has deigned to agree that the United manager should face the fanfares and the flak at the SUSC Question and Answer session on THURSDAY, AUGUST 26 - kick-off 8pm in the Shrimpers Club. Let's trust that the venue favoured by the power/s that be is big enough to hold all those who will presumably want to attend this momentous gathering. Tickets will be £2 for non-SUSC members and £1 for members - what better incentive to sign on the dotted line on the night and hand over that pittance of a £5 membership fee. Usually all the entrance money raised goes towards our funds, but not this time. No, Mr Storrie has decreed that a proportion should go towards the charity that the club are backing. As long as we know it is not the same one to which Vic and John Adams gave so generously.....

The football club's original bright idea for the Q & A symposium was that it should have been part of a proposed lounge suit dinner back on August 5. Cost? A mere £20 a head or a bargain £250 if you could cobble together a table for 10. It sounds just the sort of plan that only someone totally in touch (not!) with the spending power of the average Blues fan could have dreamed up and lack of interest (surprise, surprise) saw that one consigned to the scrap-heap.

I am sure there will be one or two searching posers at the inquisition for Mr Storrie (or Peter Storrie as his first column was bylined in the error-riddled club programme against Plymouth), as well as Alan Little. I would certainly have one if work commitments and a colleague's leaving do did not mean I unfortunately cannot make it on the 26th.

I signed off NUMBER FIVE with a little warning about the ex-West Ham overlord. He has a reputation for throwing his weight around - as in the fiasco of the notorious Hammers bond scheme. So it did not really faze me when the following unfolded on the night of our home Worthington Cup clash with Oxford. I do not have a season ticket because I cannot guarantee to attend every evening game and occasionally sit in the East rather than the West Stand. However, in the West Stand there are three or four seats I prefer to occupy - chiefly because there is no stand roof support beam or TV gantry ladder blocking my view. So, as usual, against Oxford I turned up at the ticket office 45 minutes before the start to purchase the seat I wanted. There was NOBODY else at any of the windows. But when I requested the ticket, I was after, I was informed by the young lad at the counter: "I can't do that." Asked why, the horribly inevitable answer duly arrived. "We have had orders from Peter Storrie." My response was such it can be revealed only after the 9pm watershed. Suffice to say that the lad finally agreed to find me my ticket - and it took him all of about three seconds. Now if I had turned up five minutes before kick-off or there had been lengthy queues, I could quite have understood. But, as usual, the edict has been handed down to minions from above with no effort.

forethought whatsoever. Storrie may still believe he is a big fish. But he is now in a very, very much smaller pond. GET REAL, man. Our hardcore support is 3,000 not 30,000. You cannot afford to start getting diehard supporters' backs up after being in the job at Roots Hall about two minutes. Or are you trying to undo all the bridge-building John Main has appeared to favour in the wake of Jobson's departure? Hopefully, we will find out on the 26th - and I look forward to my next ticket purchase against Mansfield!

Another crucial moment in time for your diaries is THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30. That is the date set for getting brains in gear and thought processes on line to tackle our next quiz night. The venue will be either Boots and Laces or the Shrimpers Club - we will let you know a.s.a.p. On this occasion, via Kathryn and Clare, we shall be staging the event in conjunction with the St Christopher's Special Needs School and North Bank Utd FC. One survivor from our last event is our quizmaster, Mr Guy Rickard, whose cheery demeanour, quirky quips and teasing posers make him such a hit with any audience. (Was that all right, bruv?) Let's have a HUGE attendance for that one. Your committee met on July 29. Membership renewals and new card distribution were reportedly bang up to date. Any problems, contact the usual suspects - though with Kathryn and Clare currently baring all in a Med hot-spot that may take a while longer than usual.

The club's Meet the Players day apparently went well. We made a small profit from our little corner, though it was agreed that next year we should be looking at participation on a rather larger scale.

Our 5-A-Side plans have been thrown by problems with staging it at Boots and Laces. Alternative venues are now under review as, after the success of 1998, we do not want this to go off at half-cock.

Wrinklier members could soon have a chance to dust off their boots as Northampton Town Under-35s want to tangle with us. If it is viable, it could be on. Richard Coxell will be replying to a questionnaire from the 'Coalition of Football Supporters', a new organisation seeking to encompass those fans caught in the gap between the Premiership clubs and non-league. That means our good selves. We will also be making a decision on whether or not to rejoin the National Federation of Football Supporters Clubs. Our only slight doubt, worthy body though they may be, is that they charge an annual £20 fee (fine) plus a capitation fee per member (pricey). We'll see.

Richard has got the club to agree to help out with our newsletter printing, so quality should be even better from now on. He has had a recent meeting with Messrs. Main and Storrie, details of which will be revealed in NUMBER SEVEN. Another of his pet projects, overseeing the updating of our website, is about to come to fruition as well. What a worker. No, I said worker.

I am banging this out on August 15 before heading to work. I shall be in a little red Nissan Micra (Coxell-style), courtesy of Southend Crash Repairs, thanks to a dozy OAP pulling across me at the Kents Hill Road traffic lights in Benfleet 10 days ago. She gave me no alternative but to ram her amidstips with my trusty Vauxhall Cavalier. Talking of travel and transport brings me naturally to the brave band of Blues faithful who ventured to Spotland in the Supreme six-wheel luxury wagon. Chris Berry had friction burns his hand was moving so fast across the page as he signed up fans at the Oxford clash eager to make the trip north. We roped in so many Trevor had to negotiate a vehicle upgrade. It meant a superb start to our away travel for the season and there is NOWHERE you can do it better. Pity the team let everyone down - 'no guts, courage or conviction', said Alan Little. Hearing of a second total eclipse in a week is not what we want.

Chris is now taking bookings for Oxford on the 24th (a Tuesday not a Saturday as the Plymouth programme stated) and Swansea on the 28th. You can contact him on (01702) 558978 or 0403-898698 (mobile). Supreme won the battle for our custom again in 1999-2000. The price was right, plus they have the best and most varied selection of coaches to suit our needs.

The Swansea trip would be a great chance for Sammy the Shrimp to mate with Cyril the Swan. OK, make friends then. The debate continues on our new mascot, though I think it is about as good as you could get. It just lacks one

thing - a spark of life. Whoever is inside it clearly needs a rocket up the proverbial. Our fluorescent pink pal should be on the pitch, geeing up the fans, giving people a laugh, running out with the team. It is currently far too docile. As for the ragbag lion, the sooner it is put down the better.

Our sponsored player for this season was decided by a democratic toss of a coin after the committee was split between Gary Cross (he has got the girlies gaa-gaa) and Mel Capleton (on proven ability). Gary came out on top, which pleased Clare, but sadly he had already been snapped up. So, all being well, we have switched our allegiance to Trevor Fitzpatrick. It would be really good to see him make major progress in the coming campaign with our backing. To me, Trevor looks a better bet than Yemi Abiodun, who appears a bit too lightweight to be partnering Neil Tolson. Tolson looked happier against Plymouth with David Morley alongside him. Thank heavens Little is not as averse to making changes as was Alvin or I fear we would not have picked up the very welcome three points against the Pilgrims.

It was interesting to see that Little has had a word with his squad about diet for 99-00. One player devoured a large burger before the friendly at Purfleet kicked off. His name will not pass my lips - as long as he performs!

Invitations to partake of our new prediction competition will be sent out shortly, giving you a chance to weigh up early form. With entries only £1, it has to be worth a gamble. Possibly more sensible than my £5ew on Blues to go straight up at 33-1. We live in hope, though it is probably 50s after the Rochdale calamity.

One final thought. The club programme may contain more than its fair share of spelling and grammatical mistakes, but is there any reason why all those in the South Bank should now be sitting in the Frank Walto Stan? Check it out.

NR.

P.S. I have just received a list of Tommy Mooney's three favourite soccer moments. 1) Signing for Southend Utd. 2) Roots Hall hat-trick v Oxford Utd. 3) Scoring winner at Anfield in front of 44,000. At least I think that's the right order.....