

SUSCT NEWSLETTER 32

CHRISTMAS comes but once a year – and so does your opportunity to help out the Trust in a big way. Your lottery tickets must no longer be your priority. Instead, your SUSCT Christmas Draw tickets need to become the objects of your devotion.

E-mail readers of NEWSLETTER NUMBER 32 will be having sent, and postal recipients will find enclosed, three or four books of tickets depending on whether you are an individual or family. We would be most grateful if you would sell them all on our behalf as soon as you possibly can.

Preferably, that means buy them yourself – and definitely do NOT just forget about them. Whatever method you choose, offloading three or four books of draw tickets should not be beyond the wit and capabilities of ANY of our members. There is precious little effort involved, just a tiny bit of thought – with big prizes again for the winners. And the more we can sell to Southend fans, the more chance of one of our own copping the £1,000 top-whacker this time when the draw is made against Rushden & Diamonds on Boxing Day. Second prize is £500, third £100, with the usual clutch of extras for fourth downwards.

So please do your best. This is a major fund-raiser and a way in which EVERY member can contribute. All your sold ticket stubs (names written LEGIBLY would be nice), plus, of course, the cash involved, should be returned to Terry Jeffreys at 32 Herondale, Basildon, Essex SS14 1RR, by no later than Saturday, December 22. You can also catch him in the Shrimpers Club pre-matches, in the Far Post Bar post-matches and at most away games. Or any committee member will happily channel your funds to Terry for you. Should you require more tickets, he will be delighted to direct them your way – and there will even be a small reward for whoever's sales hit the highest heights. OK, go for it – and many thanks in advance. We are relying on you. ALL of you.

Donna Fillary has once again done the draw groundwork and similarly reigned supreme over our latest Quiz Night. If it went like our previous battles, everyone will have enjoyed the evening. Her efforts as Trust Fund-Raising Officer have put a fair few bob into the coffers since she took on the role and it is a real shame that pressure of work – caused simply by her job success – means she can no longer continue in the role. However, we are lucky to have Kevin Feasey taking over and we are sure he will do us equally proud.

Well, we have hardly set the world alight since I was last battering the keyboard. In fact, it was getting to the stage where if things had got much worse we might have had to do an Orient and call in the Wizard of Odd (ie a local nutcase) or an Oxford, who summoned the city's archbishop, to attempt to lift whatever curse has been hampering our progress towards the Third Division's upper echelons. Then again, the Wizard of Odd did such a great job at Brisbane Road that Tommy Taylor got the tin tack within a matter of days. We are five points off the play-off zone, seven from rubbing noses with Dagenham & Redbridge. A few thousand bottoms must continue to twitch around the Roots Hall stands.

Anyway, on to the officialese. The executive committee has met twice of late. Firstly on October 16 in the comfortable surroundings of the Blues Lounge, secondly upstairs in the earthier environs of the Spread Eagle on November 6. There follows a pick-and-mix selection of details from both gatherings for your delectation.

The Christmas Draw was a key issue under discussion. But you now know all about that and are probably about to go selling at this very minute.

OUR proposed New Year's Eve 'bash' has, regrettably, proved about as popular as 'The Premiership' at 7pm on a Saturday evening. The costs involved do not make it viable with only a small head-count and therefore this event has been given the heave-ho.

Anyone wanting details of the Trust Fighting Fund – especially those keen to make a donation – can get all the information they need from Paul FitzGerald on 01702-478373 or at pfitz666@aol.com It seems United have been a bit wary of the ‘Fighting Fund’ tag, but we see no reason to change it. No implicit threat is involved and United have been made aware that the fund is in no way linked with any ongoing attempts by certain non-Trust members to summon a club EGM. That is nowt to do with us, guv.

The ‘92 grounds in 92 hours’ fund-raiser due next April will be used to help Essex Air Ambulance, as well as ourselves, and Kevin and Theresa Wellham were due to meet one of the EAA’s representatives to discuss what support levels they can offer. They are right behind the project, with the grand finale due on April 13 when Blues are scheduled to entertain Shrewsbury. As well as the trip for those actually taking part, we also hope to arrange some other related competitions which will allow all our members to get involved and the Trust to enhance reserves. We will be looking for assistance, too, from all the clubs to be visited and rival fans’ groups.

GET YOUR BADGES 'ERE

Terry Jeffreys has done a tremendous job in getting the new SUSCT 2001-02 enamel badge together. These are now available from Terry at his match day locations (see above) or from Terry or Chris Berry on the away coaches. They are a snip at £2.50 each, with their standout Sammy the Shrimp motif, and will offset beautifully anything you happen to be wearing from string vest to Armani suit, bikini top to Versace ball gown. Get ‘em ON! You can order by post from Terry, too, from his aforementioned Basildon abode, but remember to enclose a *stamped, addressed envelope*. Terry will also get you sorted if you are having problems receiving your newsletter or wish it in future to be sent by e-mail (contact terry.jeffreys@btinternet.com)

Theresa reported that membership stands at 842. Junior members can convert now to SJS membership for an extra £2.50 and get all the relevant benefits. You will not get them if you choose not to convert, but will have to wait until you are automatically switched when your membership next comes due. Is that clear boys and girls?

Paul is continuing to put together his definitive SUFC shareholders’ list, aided by club provision of the names they have (further details below in the Liaison Group rundown). If you have shares and want to ensure your name is listed, contact Paul at the e-mail address / telephone number touched on earlier. We were disappointed at the Echo coverage given to Paul’s Trust statement on Fossetts Farm. It got the familiar twisting by being used as a news story rather than on sport. Still, at least it woke up Delancey’s Colin Wagman, who decided the tone was negative enough to galvanise him to attend the Q & A session with Ron Martin. In fact, we even switched the date for him, from Sunday October 21 to Monday October 29. We felt the evening showed United are basically stuck at present with few encouraging options. Come on down David Sullivan and the topless Pulse Cheerleaders? It could prove to be any port in a storm and we plan another fairly quick meeting with council chief George Krawiec for their tack on the current position. You will find a potted Q & A report further on.

AGM November 29, AGM November 29, AGM November 29.

There has been enthusiastic discussion on further funding for Blues purchases. A yea was given to £60 for large kit bags and a further small amount for 10 yellow training bibs. We began our Player of the Month awards at the Macclesfield game with a pre-match trophy presentation, £50 to a charity of the winning player’s choice plus a donation towards an accumulating fund for additional SUFC ‘goods’ buys. Two further substantial items are under consideration.

We have so far been offered a half-price Supreme coach for a future game following the Oxford shenanigans. That has been deemed not good enough and Chris remains on the case.

NEXT on to the October 24 Liaison Group meeting. Paul was unable to attend, so this resulted in a one-to-one between Jeff Allen and Geoffrey King. Remember, if you want the report in full rather than just these abridged notes then ask Jeff to send you a copy on jeffallen@bluevonder.co.uk

The new super-duper security camera is due any time, so beware. Final details on the loyalty and concessionary cards are being worked out, with reference first to how a similar scheme is operating at Bradford City. The on-line ticketing system is at the 'logistical negotiations' stage. There will be a charge of up to £2.50. As agreed, and as we had no objections, the football club have received a list of our members for marketing purposes only, while we have received in return their full SUFC shareholders list.

The Southend Junior Shrimpers has received a very enthusiastic response following publicity and mailshots. Rosemary Berry and her team are really doing a great job. If you have kids who support the Blues – and how could they support anyone else – the benefits of membership are immense. Among them are: Personal membership card and number; free SJS pin badge; free birthday West Stand family enclosure tickets to an SUFC home match; £5 off every Frankie Banks Soccer School; greater discounts on all SUSCT away coaches; the chance for members to be an away match mascot when they travel by SUSCT coach; club shop member's discount; regular SJS functions and events supported by SUFC; prize draws; monthly colour newsletter 'The Mighty Shrimpers' (including competitions, etc). Courtney Wood, 14, landed the mascot's job at Exeter, but, sadly, missed Tes's 69-second goal as he was still getting changed! For all further SJS info contact Rosemary on theberrys@arfdun.fsnet.co.uk or ring 01702-558978. The official SJS launch will be at the fixture v Lincoln on Saturday 1st December, when all children will again be admitted for a mere £1.

(Anyone expecting this newsletter in colour? You're joking.)

AGM AGM AGM AGM ATTENTION PLEASE AGM AGM AGM AGM

The SUSCT AGM will be held in the Shrimpers Club on Thursday, NOVEMBER 29 at 8pm. This is YOUR chance to air your views on the Trust and to vote for those you wish to see as its officers and holding places on its decision-making executive committee. If you wish to be considered for office yourself, nominations must be sent in in writing to Trevor Bashford, 45 Audley Road, Great Leighs, Chelmsford, Essex. CM3 1RS by no later than the morning of November 22. At least two current committee members, Martin Penton and Martin Cranmer, will be standing down. This AGM is FOR MEMBERS ONLY. You may be asked to show proof of membership, so, if you have one, BRING YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD with you. This is an important occasion. Let's see A THROG there.

We have spent £96 on four new goalkeepers jerseys for Darryl Flahavan, which were due to be returned to us for auction at the end of the season. Trouble is, one was back in our hands after its first appearance in the LDV date at Stevenage. Somehow FlahavAn was spelled FlahavEn, it could not be changed and thus was a write-off. Never mind, though, what a collector's item! It was due under the hammer at the Quiz Night – as was a commemorative first-day cover from United's 1,000th game against Bristol Rovers on 24th November 1972. A big thank-you to Sheila White for that donation. Sheila has also suggested that we urge United to put Frankie Banks forward for an MBE, or similar, for all his years of service to the club both on and now off the field. This we are only too delighted to do.

Current club smoking policy will remain as it is.

If you have a season ticket, make a note of the new set-up. If you arrive at a home game without it, you will no longer be able to gain admission via a stamped complimentary ticket. Why? Well, I'll give you three guesses. Because, as usual, some people have been abusing the system and, consequently, have now wrecked it for

everyone else. In future you will have to buy a normal ticket and then claim a refund within seven days, showing your season ticket when you claim.

And so to the much-vaunted Q & A session starring Ron Martin and Delancey's Colin Wagman, with Rob Newman as the welcome sideshow.

I must admit I burst out laughing when the security men flanking Wagman plonked themselves down. I think even they quickly realised no one was in any danger – unless it was to be from another bout of being led up the garden path. Anyway, an outline of what occurred.

Wagman began by regaling the assembled 170 or so with the familiar tale of woe concerning how Delancey came to be entangled with SUFC. He insisted it was only once they were involved with Martin Dawn plc, John Main et al within South Eastern Leisure that the full extent of our liquidity problem – in other words, Vic had rendered us hyper-skint – became apparent. The club was bailed out by land purchase, with Roots Hall etc leased back and John Main (last seen vending poppies pre-match v Macclesfield) put in charge. But with United still bleeding cash, Wagman insisted it became clear that our John, nice guy that he was, was not the man to turn the situation around. So enter Ron Martin. Wagman got more personally involved and only another £1.6m injection allowed us to get past a League grilling and start last season. 2001 began badly, but “the finances of the club have improved dramatically in the past year.” A lot of this was down to Dave Webb's intervention on the playing side and the weeding out of the big earners providing small returns. Wagman declared: “Running a Third Division club at a £1m-a-year loss is untenable. At £300,000 it is possible to keep the club alive.” Current loss is £200,000, though Wagman remains confident United can yet break into profit. Ron revealed we need 6,000 gates at £15 a head simply to level up. (So 2,889 on Friday will have done us a power of good!!!)

As soon as questions began via MC Jeff, it soon became clear that, finally, Fossetts Farm as envisaged looks a dead duck, despite Ron's continuing optimistic noises. Plainly not everyone found the plans as enticing as we did. However, Wagman made veiled references to irons in the fire over future development – he was just not at liberty, surprise, surprise, to say what they were. And any profit returned will not be as great. Ron stated: “Lansbury do not want the stadium on their site and it seems no amount of money will persuade them.” Compulsory purchase of land would be opposed by Lansbury and could take a tribunal three or four years to resolve. Lansbury seem to believe they can make more money from their own plans for the Fossetts Farm area than they can with any stadium development.

Delancey own 76% of the club, the training ground and Roots Hall. Their hope is the share price will eventually rise and they can sell up. “We are transitory,” admitted Wagman, “not trying to make the club a Manchester United.” (Fat chance!) Unfortunately for us, buying football clubs is not regarded as a big money-spinner at present. Delancey investors expecting their usual 20 per cent return look to have a lengthy wait ahead of them. But as Ron reminded the audience: “The club is not a going concern without the support of its main creditor – Delancey.”

Wagman insisted he had never threatened to take the football club away from its supporters, but expressed a distaste for criticism of the current status quo. “Backstabbing and bad publicity are not going to help us.” He then came into conflict with Paul FitzGerald, who put him on the spot about potential conflicts of interest. Both Wagman and Ron insisted that today you could not separate business and finance from football. It was the one time Wagman actually looked rattled.

AGM November 29, AGM November 29, AGM November 29.

(The following day Paul had a 40-minute clear-the-air phone conversation with Wagman, who, while hardly gung-ho about Fossetts Farm, still feels some pressure on the council may help. Could our planned meeting with council big chief George Krawiec reveal some breath still left in the Fossetts body? Errr, don't bank on it.)

The £400,000-a-year leasing costs on the Hall are set at around 10% of the overall £4m debt and the club has “no tangible assets.” On the lease money payments, Wagman stated: “There is no commitment to writing it off, but no one in our company sees a way of getting the money back unless we hit oil!” Sadly, this is not Dallas. Right now it looks like Roots, Fossetts or bust. Basildon is out.

By this point, Jerry Moss had dozed off and was presumably dreaming of a foaming Theakston’s Old Peculiar. Others were wondering how come some club advertising posters had managed to come up with Kiddminster for Kidderminster? But, in fact, now it was time for our new manager to take the spotlight.

FIRST off, nice to see Rob in the job. Names like Ray Lewington and John Hollins were supposed to be in the hat, while I did tell you Spud was a non-starter. Rob has a hell of a task ahead of him with little experience to call on. The Trust wishes him all the best and will back him whenever it can. Just as we did Dave Webb, who left with a rambling justification for his exit that I will not even try to translate here.

The main point Rob made was that he is looking to add some further experience to our line-up. That does not mean journeymen or “has-beens” looking to see out their careers, but players around 27 or 28 who still have five or six good and productive years left to give. How much such gems might cost – or be paid for – was not dwelt on.

And that, apart from some generalisations, was that. Oh, and the club has sold 1,647 Blues shirts this season so far. Not bad. Clearly there is still a long way to go before United can ever feel on solidish, let alone genuinely firm, ground. But, for now, it seems all we can do is keep pinning our faith on those in control and take it on trust that their agenda genuinely does have no ulterior motive to it. There have since been some damaging allegations doing the rounds that have got United seriously fired up, along with claims that Lansbury will soon be the new paymasters. The crunch is surely coming.

Sorry there is so much heavy stuff this time round – and more follows. Chris Berry will, as usual be taking bookings for the upcoming trip to Shrewsbury – and possibly a rush FA Cup replay trek to Luton – on the usual numbers: 01702-558978 or 07703-898698 or via e-mail. Chris has done a mighty job of organising our coaches from the day he took up the task. However, the Scunthorpe journey left him, and the Trust, as browned off as we have ever been. This was again caused by the selfishness of those who book seats and then fail to turn up at their nominated pick-up point without making any attempt to contact Chris and let him know they will no longer be fronting. We made a substantial and needless loss, when we should have broken even. No shows this season total 40 for our 11 away games so far and Oxford was by far the worst with a disgraceful 12. Now, after numerous warnings in previous newsletters, it is time to name names. There are no excuses for such thoughtlessness – or is it bone idleness? Whatever the ‘excuse’, we are calling time on it.

A £5 surcharge will be levied without exception on all those who transgress in future, with an opening wake-up call for the following: Danny Sanders, you have booked THREE times and not turned up; Chris Hurrell has missed the bus twice, as has Grant Rowland. Other absentees on one occasion have included a member very closely connected to a fans’ website and a non-member very closely connected to a Trust committee man. From NUMBER 33 onwards I shall name every no-show who has not made contact to cancel.

AGM November 29, AGM November 29, AGM November 29.

On the plus side, Mr Berry’s copious records allow those loyal travelling regulars to reap the benefit with even bigger discounts. Our top 10 tripsters have done the miles to get £20 off an away journey of their choice, £15 for juniors. They are Phil Cox (10,526 miles), Brian Cotgrove, John Wallis, Mark Wallis, Dean Allen, Lewis Green, Chris Petty, Sarah Thomas, Trevor Bashford and Barry Bettis. Those in positions 11 to 20 can claim £10 off (£7.50 for juniors) and that means Roy Keyes, Paul Grange, Nick Hanshaw, Howard Perry, Andy Skinner, John Coyle, Rebecca Keyes, Gary Horn, Peter West and Claire Smith. It is £5 off all round for the current 21 to 30: Lee Smith, Jeff Sharp, Adrian Green, Theresa Wellham, Bobby Harvey, Donna Fillary, Gemma Peck, Steven Smith, Hazel Wayland and Peter Wayland (5,820 miles). Well done.

IN addition, in the weeks ahead there will be a full coach discount of from £1 to £3. So if our coach or coaches are fully booked and fully boarded, there will be money off. But that money will automatically be lost if just ONE person fails to show without prior warning. I will then name that name (or names) and those who have lost out can then 'sing the praises' of the guilty to whoever it may be in person. You are on a winner by using SUSCT away travel, on a loser by abusing it.

Make a note, too, of a new planned pick-up point at Pitsea McDonald's. This is being put in place to avoid the mad dicing-with-death dashing across the A127 when we arrive back at the Jolly Cricketers.

Next up, for absent friends and masochists, the review of recent performances.

SWANSEA (H, 13/10, W 4-2): The benefit of Spud's coaching session shone through as we gave a first-half show of dazzling ineptitude in unseasonably sultry heat. The lads looked scared stiff of damaging Rob Newman's job prospects in his first game in 'temporary charge'. And their anxiety manifested itself in just getting shot of the ball – anywhere – at the earliest opportunity. Not even the equally dire sheep-worriers, whose fans clearly loved abusing their new sack-happy chairman, were going to let us off the hook. When they went ahead, surely I wasn't the only one to see the words 'Stalybridge Celtic' float before their eyes. Second half, different story. Maybe those great old '60s battlers Tony Bentley (ultra-solid full-back), Derek Woodley (flying, sunbed-tanned winger), Lou Costello (if it moves, kick it) and Peter Goy (solid enough keeper) left a few fighting qualities wafting around in the air from their half-time appearance. Our movement was much better, we genuinely threatened up front, Kevin Maher started to spread it about and the Swans all but caved in. Neat Tes header, great Barrington blast and two well-taken KM pens. If only he had done that at Luton. Three critical points.

STEVENAGE (LDV VANS, A, 15/10, W 4-1): Could have been a banana skin, ended up a cakewalk. Three ahead in 26 minutes thanks to Tes (we never want to see him on the right of midfield again), Mark Rawle and Carl Hutchings. Daniel Webb added the fourth late on, so that will have pleased dad. If nothing else, this performance proved we could do well in the Conference! Let's pray it never comes to that. In fact, we were so good that not even having Joe Ross officiating could alter the result. Adrian Clarke, eat your heart out.

YORK (A, 20/10, L 2-1): York keeper Alan Fettis got 10 out of 10 in the News of the World for his performance in keeping us at bay. Their manager Terry Dolan declared: "We really rode our luck." All scant consolation for more points chucked away. Mark Rawle kept up his goal-grabbing streak, but should have had more. Leon Cort's slip let in Lee Nogan for yet another strike against us before we surrendered the points midway through the second half. At the same time at Oxford, guess who was sending off two more players and ordering boss Mark Wright from the dug-out? It could only be Joe. Wright said: "That man should not even be refereeing in the Unibond League." Anyone disagree? Wright, for his truthful sins, is now on an FA charge.....

SCUNTHORPE (A, 23/10, L 2-0): The inevitable happened. Martin Carruthers scored, we went on to lose. Hardly the best start for Rob after being confirmed as our new occupier of the hot-seat. Not a performance that said: This is a promotion side. Unless you supported Scunthorpe.

AGM November 29, AGM November 29, AGM November 29.

KIDDERMINSTER (H, 27/10, W 1-0): The infamous 'Essex Girls' Day. One plus point was it attracted extra publicity and some welcome TV coverage. On the downside, the cameras were from ITV Digital, so I cannot imagine many actually saw it. To be fair, though, their Third Division programme gives the best coverage I have ever seen of our lowly world. Overall, well done to United for putting in all the effort for apparently scant reward. It probably put 500 on a gate that was still only 3,990. The Pulse Cheerleaders proved at half-time they operate a lot better on their own, while some of those 'United Ladies' looked well 'ard. I have also been asked if the raven-haired temptress sharing the mic with Jeff could take over on a permanent basis! Even the lads entered the spirit of things, by looking decidedly girlie themselves at times – especially in the second half. We could not have had a better start thanks to Tes's 'dummy' and Carl Hutchings' second-minute strike. But

apart from a couple of Mark Rawle close shaves we were fortunate we were playing a side with Kidderminster's abysmal away scoring record. A unique salute, too, to Hansen and Lawrenson – for giving us a home FA Cup draw against Luton. As long as there is no Joe You Know Who around this time. Credit to Ron, as well for the farsighted ticket pricing of £10 for adults, £ 5 concession and just £1 for children.

BRISTOL CITY (LDV VANS, H, 30/10, L 2-0): Forget the Millennium Stadium for another year. City finished the better side, even with a number of reserves, and we can now concentrate on what really matters.

EXETER (A, 3/11, L 2-1): The number of goals we concede almost on half-time is criminal and cost us once again. We cannot afford to keep going ahead away from home – Bristol Rovers, York and now Exeter – and then chucking away the advantage. Tes is lethal at St James' Park – now he needs to be the same at the other 21 grounds we visit. We can still go up – and we can still finish in the Conference. A run of results one way or the other is shortly likely to decide which of these two options is the more probable. We must hope Alan Little works his magic as new Halifax chief to at least keep them below us.

MACCLESFIELD (H, 9/11, W 3-0): The day of the long knives, as Messrs Hunter, Risbridger, Holness, Harris, Broad, Capleton and Wardley get the push from no-nonsense Newman. Broad I feel sorry for. He and Leon could possibly have proved a formidable pair. Perhaps he got a bit too gobby – or was it an overdose of sauce? Risbridger certainly looked enthusiastic for his 90 seconds against Darlo, while Mel had a real purple patch before going into clanger mode and then breaking his leg. Holness never looked better than the TV actor he was and the rest simply were not up to it. Shame. Darryl was deservedly awarded the SUSCT Player of the Month trophy pre-match. He was really chuffed to receive it and his £50 will be going to the Southend Baby Care Unit. Pity there was no one about to give this great example to the game the salute he merited. Thanks, Sven, for the pitiful attendance. Mark Rawle and Tes gave their best display together yet to grab the goals, good to see Kevin Maher back and Rob's 'one-on-ones' looked to have had some effect. Yet once down to 10, the Silkmen should have been slaughtered. I wanted to buy my FA Cup ticket before the game, but, oh no. It had to be afterwards, keeping people freezing in the queues outside the ticket office until gone 10.15pm. Hopeless.

Why has Tes got no picture in the sponsors' section of the programme? Now his court charges have been dropped, he can surely be unveiled to the world in all his glory. I noticed that Michael Jackson, the bloke he was alleged to have roughed up, said outside court: "All I want to do now is promote my new album." He then walked off attempting to stick his nose back on.

Lots of new items and kit in the club shop, though the plain navy blue looks a tad dull to me. Last season's polo shirts were certainly better. Still, you pays your money.....

SJS president Terry Alderton is a brave man – and not just for taking on that post. He recently turned out in goal for Harrow Borough in the Ryman League and finished on the wrong end of a 5-1 thumping. Every goal conceded was an unstoppable rocket into the top corner – or that is what he said!

Does anyone believe we will soon be Southend City? The town is up against 41 other rivals trying to get Her Maj to bestow City status on them as part of next year's Golden Jubilee. Giant aspirations for somewhere that cannot even sort out a new football stadium. If we finish above C*****r in the race, we will have done well. But don't bet your street party on it.

A depressing sight hit me the other day. Driving up Eastwood Road, Leigh I passed a group of lads from my old school – West Leigh – returning from a spot of footie practice in Belfairs Park. Shirts on show included: 3 M***** U*****, 2 Arsenal, 2 Liverpool, 2 Hamsters, 1 England, 1 Brazil, 1 Inter Milan and 0 Blues. I shall be writing to the headmistress, Mrs Wolfe, to address this shameful state of affairs and suggest they all join the SJS pronto.

Remember Paul Roberts, the 80s/90s full-back who had a legendary love affair with the West Stand? The cockney cock-up merchant proved his treachery by later moving on to join Roy McDoughnut at the dregs of

Essex during their 'glorious' (for us) non-league days. He is now a cabbie and if his sense of direction on the road is as good as it was on the pitch I would steer well clear if you ever clock him.

I hope the likes of Leon Johnson and Danny Kerrigan, in particular, saw the recent article that stated footballers should not waste their time trying to move the ball to their 'stronger' foot before passing or shooting. It seems psychological analysis of the 1998 World Cup showed just how much players try to use only their preferred point of contact. But when forced to use the other, they were almost invariably equally successful, with almost 90 per cent of passes and shots on target. I am sure our movement towards the opposition onion bag would be a lot swifter if our boys bore this in mind – though, let's be honest, they often struggle when putting their 'best' foot forward.

And that is end of story. Any comment, comeback etc, as usual the address is nigel.rickard@the-sun.co.uk

NR (10/11)

PS 1. Best-dressed fan award: Jerry Moss for his George Smiley-style felt-collared coat v Macclesfield.

2. Strike? Give us a break.

3. Repeat after me: "I WILL sell my Christmas Draw tickets. I WILL attend the AGM."

AGM November 29, AGM November 29, AGM November 29.