



SHRIMPERS TRUST

NEWSLETTER – Volume 2 Issue 24



THE INTRODUCTION – Editor Robert Craven

I regularly like to start my Newsletters by reflecting on the state of Southend United's season so far, and this issue is no exception.

I have been pondering what the last month has taught us about what the Shrimpers' predicament will be come May 2008, and I suppose October and the start of November has perhaps proved that Blues are just below the level that will be required for promotion in six months' time.

This is no new declaration for me – I have been looking at a top ten finish and the cusp of the play-offs since the season's outset, but a good run of five matches unbeaten away from home and another five games unbeaten in the League after the reverse at Brighton & Hove Albion perhaps gave some false hope.

There has not proved to be an awful lot of quality in Coca-Cola League One this year, which maybe hints at Blues having an outside chance of going up.

Think back to the manner in which Crewe Alexandra and Gillingham were swept aside – it would have been embarrassing for the away supporters. But these are poor sides.

Lee Bradbury's parting shots in a Shrimpers shirt were the three goals he netted against Cheltenham Town in the Carling Cup, and they will be back on Saturday in the League. These words may come back to haunt me, but the match could be the perfect opportunity for Matt Harrold to score his first goals in the League for over a year.

Southend do have an awful lot of quality in midfield – Mark Gower, Nicky Bailey, Alan McCormack and Kevin Maher would walk into most of the other clubs in this division, and it has been a measure of United's strength in depth that club captain Maher has had a spell on the sidelines.

At the back, too, there are players that other clubs would be envious of. Peter Clarke and Adam Barrett are a committed, determined pair who will sweat blood for the cause, whilst Steven Hammell possesses a fine left foot and Lewis Hunt has been in the form of his life over the past five weeks.

When Darryl Flahavan returns from injury, Steve Tilson will have a tough decision to make regarding the former Southampton trainee and Steve Collis as a goalkeeper.

But it will up front, scoring goals, that will determine United's final position. Blues have played five teams that can be adjudged title contenders at this stage of the season, and have lost all five.

Leyton Orient, Tranmere Rovers and Carlisle United have all spent time at the summit of the League table, and they all left Roots Hall with one-goal wins.

Sides of that quality will score goals against you, so you need to score more than them, something Blues have been incapable of.

There were chances in all three matches to take the lead, but these went by the wayside against organised defences, even, in the latter two cases, with Leon Clarke in the team.

Clarke's goals have been important, but it remains to be seen whether he will turn out to be a so-called 'flat-track bully', the sort of the forward that nets for fun against the teams at the foot of the table but cannot contribute when it is really necessary.

He will need good support as well. Harrold has contributed by working hard and bringing players into the game, but either he or his strike partner must be scoring goals regularly to make sure that he is worth a place in the team.

Gary Hooper has been given an extended run, but he seems unsure of his place and lacks conviction at times. Charlie MacDonald is well worth a proper look – and if he comes off, then who knows what will happen?

This is an excellent opportunity for me, on behalf of the Shrimpers Trust, to thank all of our members for the backing that it gave Southend United in its quest to gain Planning Permission for a new stadium at Fossetts Farm.

The process edged towards its conclusion as the previous newsletter went to press, and there were a significant number of Trust members who gave up their afternoons to join marches on the Civic Centre to support the plans.



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The initial prognosis appears to have been reasonably good, with favourable statements having been made, but we eagerly await firstly the plans being handed over to the Secretary of State around December 7th, and then the decision being rubber-stamped some five or six weeks later.

This is a long and laborious process, but it is one in which Southend United supporters, and Shrimpers Trust members in particular, can be proud of the role that they have played.

Much as we all love Roots Hall, even the most rose-tinted spectated of fans realises that the ground, in its current state, cannot stand up to the rigours of football in the top two tiers of English football, a standard that the Shrimpers aspire to.

Therefore a move to Fossetts Farm is imperative to the continuing success of the club both on and off the field. The next couple of months look set to be unbearably tense, and I'm sure that Ron Martin could do without the area's local newspaper, the *Southend Echo*, stirring up recent issues surrounding other business interests.

Of course, we all hope and pray that Ron had nothing to do with these misdemeanours, and that the *Echo* story is nothing more than a storm in the proverbial tea-cup, but should there be any substance in the story, the Shrimpers Trust must be ready for every eventuality.

The building of a new ground at Fossetts Farm will also be imperative to Ricky Duncan's continued excellent work with the Youth Department at Southend United.

I have spoken to Ricky on a number of occasions, both representing the Trust and through my work on programmes for F.A. Youth Cup matches, and he is firmly of the belief that the Shrimpers require Academy status to produce the level of players needed in the Coca-Cola Championship.

To reach this level, the move to Fossetts Farm must come off, so that is yet another reason to back the move.

Academy status will allow Southend United to regularly come up against clubs of the stature of Arsenal, Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham

United, and not just merely in pre-season friendlies.

The results that Blues' Under-18s side recorded against Charlton Athletic, Millwall and Ipswich Town showed that the youngsters are ready to make the step up, as is the recent trial that Medi Abalimba enjoyed with Manchester United.

Ricky, along with coaches Luke Hobbs and Mark Bonner, has set up tremendous links for the Centre of Excellence. It would be great to see that enhanced to Academy status.

This Newsletter is accompanied by a set of Raffle Tickets for our Christmas Draw, at least if you have received it via post. Don't fear, if you have got the email version, the Raffle tickets will be winging their way out in the post to you to.

The Christmas Draw is always one of the Trust's biggest sources of income, year-on-year, so we very much appreciate the work that our members put in to sell tickets to friends and family.

We cannot reiterate how important it is for you to continue this hard work this season, with the Trust making regular donations to Southend United's Youth Department and also considering further donations to the Football Club's physiotherapy section.

We cannot do this without your continued support, and the way in which Southend United's Centre of Excellence has improved in recent years, under the tutelage of Ricky Duncan, but with the assistance of Shrimpers Trust money, has been incredible.

It is testament to the hard work and graft of Ricky, his backroom team and also the financial support afforded to them by the Trust and now by the Club via the Blues Lottery as well.

You can continue to help us raise money by backing schemes such as Quid-a-Goal and the 100 Club, but also through the Christmas Draw as well.

Many thanks once again for all of your financial help this year, even if it just through membership – it helps us to help Southend United F.C.

Up The Shrimpers,

Rob



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SHRIMPERS TRUST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2007

After the formal business of the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 18 October, Shrimpers Trust members were given the opportunity to carry out a Question & Answer session with Paul Brush and Dean Austin, two of Southend United's backroom team.

The duo, who are the Club's assistant manager and reserve team coach respectively, gave up over an hour of their time to answer questions from the floor about any number of aspects relating to the Shrimpers. The very best of the conversation can be found in this article, which first appeared on our website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk.

Paul Brush began proceedings by discussing the recent injury to Darryl Flahavan: *"Darryl Flahavan will be out for around ten days. He has strained the opposite side of his back to his previous injury, but we are hoping that he will be back in contention for the match against Carlisle United at Roots Hall. At the weekend we will go into the match without a substitute goalkeeper."*

The next question surrounded the recent employment of Austin as reserve team manager. *"We've known Dean for a while now,"* the former West Ham United player explained. *"Of course, he would have been a huge help last year, and Southend don't have the finances of a year ago, but we are pleased that he is here now."*

But even with the former Crystal Palace defender on board, there are still further sections of the set-up that Brush would like to improve. *"Video analysis is something we would like to introduce, and we may have to recruit students from colleges to help us out with this. We would like to look at all set-plays – players need to be shown what has happened, not just told. We'd also like to employ someone to look at the footage for individuals, so that we can home in on different pieces."*

Discussion turned to the relevance of reserve team football at Southend United. *"We have had everyone fit for the past two weeks, and Dean has had to play different formations for people to have time on the pitch. It is helpful for young players, and for us to look at their futures, especially the second-years [scholars] when they are coming up to March for us to decide on their contracts. Some will play better as it is much more technical in the reserves than the crash-bang-wallop of the youth team. I spoke to Dean earlier today about three or four youth-teamers playing in each game."*

The current second-string boss expanded on his colleague's words: *"It is a balance, and we are trying to find it. We have had ten or eleven professionals playing and that's not what I want. They think reserve football is not important. I get satisfaction from seeing youth-team players coming through. We played a reserve game at Dagenham & Redbridge the other week and we had three or four Under-18s, and they really impressed me."*

"The day-to-day youth team details are all dealt with by Ricky Duncan," Austin continued, *"but he speaks with me or Paul for 30 mins or three-quarters of an hour every day – the other day, I was on the phone to him for an hour-and-a-half. Ricky is very good, and I trust his judgement. When we speak to him, he will put names forward of the players that he thinks are doing well. We are trying to say to him that we want three outfield players in every reserve game now."*

"We look at training as our first guide," Brush interjected. *"How do they handle the senior players? Not in terms of ability, but emotionally and socially. If a senior player has a go as opposed to one of their mates, how do they react? How do they pass and what is the mental reaction?"*

The pair were then asked their opinion on Michael Kightly, who left Southend for Grays Athletic before making a switch to Coca-Cola Championship side Wolverhampton Wanderers, winning three Under-21 caps during only his second season at Molineux.

"Sometimes an environment applies to a player and Michael Kightly possibly had to go to Grays like I did when I went to St. Albans City," Austin mused. *"I still speak to Michael, and it was a reality check for him – he had to liven up. He has grown up, and he is better physically, he is quicker and he is stronger. Sometimes they have to go out on loan, but I know that Ricky is very encouraged by what is coming through now."*

His fellow member of the Shrimpers' backroom staff concentrated on the positive developments at Roots Hall: *"Franck Moussa and Peggy Lokando should be very good, and maybe even exceptional. You have to remember that Peggy was only 18 last month and Franck is 19 in January."*

"It is pressure to say that things are expected of them," Brush continued. *"Even at the age of 16, young players can be unsettled by publicity. The difference between 16-year-olds and 18-year-olds is incredible for a variety of reasons. Some will get injured, and then their rehabilitation isn't good enough. Tom [Hopkins] broke his arm and then his hand but he just wanted to play in the next game."*



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Austin expanded upon this point: *“Youth team players are not made like they were. It is a generation thing. I’ve said it to Luke Thurlbourne; he’s been out and missed college, and I told him he had to decide if he really wanted to be a football player. He said, “Yes, yes, yes,” but you have to have a desire; you have to have a mental capacity. You can drink yourself into oblivion once you’re 35.”*

As the conversation moved towards the number of foreign players in the English game, the pair gave further optimistic statements: *“Chelsea have just signed a 15-year-old Dutch lad for €120,000, but the two English boys they brought in from Leeds [United] could potentially cost them over £5 million,”* Brush said. *“I have seen those two lads at Chelsea in the reserves five or six times, and I can assure you that I would take Franck and Peggy over them any day of the week. Somewhere at the top clubs we have to start bringing domestic talent through,”* Austin added.

He was then quizzed about his public fall-out with Kerrea Gilbert at Roots Hall in the Shrimpers’ most recent reserve match. *“Words have been said between Kerrea and me, and that’s it. That’s the end of the matter.”* His colleague took up the baton, explaining, *“Kerrea has been back in training today. Players must realise that they have to have the right attitude. At the moment, Lewis Hunt is the best right-back at the club as he is the one that’s in the team. If he keeps on getting forward as he has in the past couple of matches, then the competition will have made him better.”*

“As a club, you have to keep on improving,” Brush continued. *“It is hard with loan signings as often those players are inexperienced. Players in the Premiership don’t want to come down into League One, and you can only really get a young player like Leon Clarke in dropping one division.”*

However, Blues will be extremely selective when it comes to making temporary, or even permanent signings. *“If we bring someone in, we want them to improve the team. We wouldn’t do it if we were obliged to play him in the side, but we have hopes of them getting into the team. In central midfield, the squad is as strong as at any times in Southend United’s history,”* Austin declared. *“We have 20 players all capable of playing each week,”* Brush concluded.

On the subject of loan signings, the pair were tight-lipped about Leon Clarke’s potential switch from Sheffield Wednesday. *“I was there for much of the negotiations,”* Austin revealed. *“It is a three-month loan with a view to a permanent move. I would like to think that we would have the first option on Leon if he does leave Sheffield Wednesday,”* although there was no news of a pre-contract agreement. *“They’ve only got 17 fit senior players, so it only takes a few injuries to forwards...we’re pleased that they’ve won a couple of games! Nothing can happen until January,”* Brush said.

Brush and boss Steve Tilson have been criticised for dithering on substitutions, and that led to the former stating, *“There is no policy on substations. Last year we probably used substitutes worse than other teams in the division. More often than not, we’ll make a change when someone is tired. It’s down to the manager, and he is loyal to his selections – that’s the way he is. We have done it a little bit earlier this year; Dean has told me that it’s not easy to play five or ten minutes and get into the game or impose your technical ability.”*

And as the evening came to an end shortly after half-past nine, former Leyton Orient Brush gave a frank account of his experiences 27 years ago: *“The 1980 F.A. Cup Final was the worse day I’ve had in my footballing life. I probably warmed up for 80 minutes, and all I’d ever wanted to do was play at Wembley Stadium. Luckily I got to play against Liverpool three months later in the Charity Shield. My experience is one reason why I can’t handle telling players that they won’t be in the side.”*

The Shrimpers Trust would like to thank those who attended and asked questions of Paul Brush and Dean Austin, to whom we extend our gratitude for agreeing to attend the session. You can read a full transcript of the Question & Answer session at www.shrimperstrust.co.uk, as well as looking back at previous AGM guests such as Ron Martin and Geoffrey King (2006) and Ricky Duncan (2005).

Outside of the Question & Answer session, the AGM also saw Terry Jeffreys leave the Trust committee, where he had served as Secretary for many years. Former Travel Co-ordinator Chris Berry also formally resigned, as did Lee Tanner, another valued committee member. We thank all three for their hard work and commitment to the cause over the years.

There were also some changes ratified at Trust board level. With Terry’s departure, a vacancy arose for Secretary of the Trust, a position now held by long-time Chairman Trevor Bashford. Paul FitzGerald, for so long Trevor’s trusty right-hand man, becomes Chairman, with Bryan Woodford elected as his Vice-Chairman and joining the board accordingly. You can read more about all of the Trust committee on our website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk.



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THE SHRIMPERS TRUST KIDS

Blues' Youths Under-18s Results

Sat 06 Oct | Youth Alliance Cup | Swindon Town (h) | L1-2 | Lindie

Match Report: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=397

Sat 13 Oct | Youth Alliance Cup | Yeovil Town (a) | W3-1 | Lindie, Priest, Thurlbourne

Match Report: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=402

Sat 20 Oct | Youth Alliance Cup | Bristol Rovers (h) | W2-1 | Henry 2 (1 pen)

Match Report: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=406

Sat 27 Oct | Youth Alliance Cup | Oxford United (a) | W2-1 | Thurlbourne, Jones

Match Report: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=409

Wed 07 Nov | F.A. Youth Cup | Croydon Athletic (h) | W3-1 | Hopkins, Henry 2

Match Report: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=412

Sat 08 Sept | Football League Youth Alliance | Rushden & Diamonds (h) | L-2

Match Report: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=414

Despite a defeat at either end of the month, four consecutive victories in between has given rise to an increase in confidence surrounding Southend United's Under-18 side.

After a 2-1 Boots & Laces reverse to Swindon Town, it appeared unlikely that United would progress to the latter stages of the Youth Alliance Cup. A wicked deflected shot off of 15-year-old defender Ade Osifuwa gave the Robins the lead, but James Lindie levelled on 38 minutes, hoisting Stuart O'Keefe's pass over the goalkeeper. Rhys Henry lacked conviction when confronted with chances to score in the second half, and a long range effort robbed Blues of a draw twelve minutes from the end.

Finally, a week later, the Shrimpers recorded their first competitive victory of the season, again in a match in Group 2 of the Youth Alliance Cup. Having travelled down to Yeovil the previous night, Blues' Youths were straight out of the blocks, James Lindie touching home on three minutes. Just after the half-hour, United conceded a soft equaliser, but further efforts from Richard Priest, with a driven effort from 25 yards, and Luke Thurlbourne, firing through a crowded box, before half-time sealed the 3-1 win.

Seven days on, Southend recorded another win, seeing off Bristol Rovers 2-1 at Boots & Laces, with Henry scoring both of the goals to kick-start his season. On 16 minutes, Luke Thurlbourne's free-kick was charged down by a Rovers hand, and Henry converted the penalty kick, although the Pirates quickly equalised, converting a right-wing cross. United piled on the pressure after half-time, and the winning goal arrived midway through the second period when Henry slid the ball across the goalkeeper from Priest's pass.

That left the trip to Oxford United to decide the Shrimpers' fate in the Youth Alliance Cup, where they required a draw to progress. A stop-start opening period finally came to life on 38 minutes when Thurlbourne's deflected effort spun over the goalkeeper into the top right-hand corner. James Lindie and Jamie Forshaw went close before Ronnie Jones showed quick footwork to skip past a defender and force the ball over the line to effectively seal progress. A header from a corner made it 2-1 a little later.

The F.A. Youth Cup began with a home tie against Croydon Athletic at Roots Hall. Despite all of their pressure, Blues went behind three minutes after half-time when Harrison Carnegie headed in a corner, but with chance after chance spurned, it was a relief when Tom Hopkins firmly planted Johnny Herd's flag-kick into the goal fifteen minutes from time. Croydon tired dramatically, and Henry, taking advantage of Reece Oscar spilling the ball and then chipping the 'keeper at the second attempt, completed the comeback in stoppage time.

However, all the euphoria of that win ebbed away three days later as Southend dominated a blustery fixture at Boots & Laces, only for Rushden & Diamonds to steal a 2-0 win with their only two real efforts, a header again from a corner and then a deflected free-kick heaping more League woe on Blues.

Once again the Shrimpers Trust would like to place on record it's thanks to Mark O'Keefe for additional match information supplied over the past month.



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SHRIMPERS TRUST SUFC YOUTH TEAM PLAYER OF THE MONTH

August/September | Richard Priest

Richard Priest was delighted to become the inaugural winner of the prize, scooping the award after a series of fine performances throughout the opening month-and-a-half of the campaign. *"I started pre-season well after a good end to the last campaign,"* he explained. *"But then I continued that into the competitive season and just kept it going, even when I was moved from the right into the centre."*

The teenager notched two goals in six games during the period, and one of those was an exceptional strike in the 5-2 defeat to Brighton & Hove Albion. *"I just got a bit lucky, I suppose,"* Priest modestly remembered. *"I cut inside and got a ricochet, and then I connected really well."*

Youth team boss Duncan also described how Priest's effort had contributed to winning the award. *"Richard is a very good technical player, and he worked hard on his game in pre-season. He looked sharp wide on the right at the start of the season, and then I brought him inside. He is stronger on the ball now, and you can see in his performances that he has come a long way."*

October | Stuart O'Keefe

"It feels really good to have won this award," the former Ipswich Town trainee revealed. *"I have been getting an opportunity to play, and people are also seeing what I am capable of doing."*

"I wasn't really expecting to be in the side to start with as we have a lot of second-years here, especially in my favoured position of central midfield. I thought maybe my chance would come after Christmas but the boss, Ricky Duncan, has slotted me in on the right-hand side of midfield, and it has gone really well," said O'Keefe, who has made ten appearances for the Under-18 side as well as making his reserve team debut in the FansFocus.Com Essex Senior Cup third round victory over Bowers & Pitsea.

Boss Ricky Duncan heaped praise on the teenager, who has now been at the club for twelve months following his release by the Tractor Boys: *"Stuart has been tremendous this season. At the start of the year he asked me what it would take for him to get into the side, and I said that it would come with hard work."*

"His chance has come on the right-hand side," Duncan continued, *"but he can play anywhere across the middle; He has a footballer's brain and is totally committed to his game. Technically he has no problems and Laurence Bloom, our conditioning coach, has been working with him to build him up physically."*

And O'Keefe has also been willing to put in some extra effort as well, as his coach described: *"Sometimes, you have to do things on your own, and Stuart has been willing to do extra work at the gym and also back at his accommodation. He performed well wide-right in the Senior Cup, and I was really pleased for him. He has worked really hard, and he is now getting into the reserve team as well."*

You can read more from Ricky Duncan both of the teenagers on our website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk.

As well as winning the monthly prize, both players are now nominated for the inaugural Tom Grace Memorial Shield for the Southend United Youth Team Player of the Year, which will be presented at the Shrimpers Trust's End of Season Review evening in May 2008.

The award is named after Tom, a Southend Junior Shrimper who tragically lost his life earlier this year, and is endorsed by both his family and youth team boss Ricky Duncan

If you make it down to Boots & Laces for a match, we would be interested to hear from you with any nominations for Man of the Match so that those individuals can be considered for the monthly prize. Please email info@shrimperstrust.co.uk with any suggestions.



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THE TRUST – What We've Done

Committee Meeting (05 November 2007)

The new-look Shrimpers Trust committee met up for the first time at the Marlborough Head on 5th November. One of the opening topics of conversation came from our counterparts at Swansea City F.C., the Swans Trust, who were eager to include us in their Family Fun Day at the Liberty Stadium on December 15th. The Trust has gone back to the Swans with a number of suggestions, and we hope to be able to make some announcements soon.

Southend United's Director of Commercial Services, Garry Adamson, has also approached the Trust about setting up a supporters' liaison group, involving committee members from the Trust and also regular supporters. This will be an important forum for debate surrounding issues that affect supporters, and further enhances the excellent work that Garry has put in since his arrival from Wycombe Wanderers.

Frankie Banks has also met with a number of representatives from the Trust regarding his testimonial. Phil Alsford and Darren Posnack, our treasurer, appear set to lead the arrangements for the occasion, which will hopefully strike the balance between Frankie's work with Football in the Community and the inspiration he has been to many schoolchildren in the Southend area, as well as the need for a high-quality fixture against top opposition. Please visit our website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk, for more information as it becomes available.

The Shrimpers Trust, and its fully liveried coach, will also be present at the Rayleigh Lights event on Thursday 29th November. We hope that there will be a number of members of Southend United's first-team squad in attendance as well, so please come and visit us between 4:30 and 6:30p.m. Meanwhile, we will also be donating a framed shirt to Great Ormond Street Hospital's event in Southend in April 2008 – more details on this will be available closer to the time.

Full Minutes of the Trust's Liaison Meetings with Southend United are available to download from the Shrimpers Trust website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk. The archive goes right back to the very start of the regular meetings, in September 2002, and includes minutes right up to September 2007

Quiz Night

There were over 100 people in attendance at our latest Quiz Night, held on Saturday 13 October, clashing with the Rugby Union World Cup semi-final win over France. This represents one of our most successful evenings in terms of numbers, and the Quiz Night managed to raise in excess of £600 for the Shrimpers Trust, so a massive thank-you to all those that came along. Our thanks also to the Rickard brothers, Guy and Nigel, so their questions and marking responsibilities.

Shrimpers Trust Events List

****STAR EVENT** Race Night**

Venue: The Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall | Date: Saturday 17 November 2007 | Time: 7:30 p.m. | Admission: £3 (this event is by ticket only) | Contact: Paul Yeomanson at the Shrimpers Trust Stand or via PayPal via the website at www.shrimperstrust.co.uk.

The first Race Night of the 2007/8 season will take place on Saturday, 17 November, on the evening of the Coca-Cola League One meeting with Cheltenham Town. If you are a local businessperson, why not sponsor a race? Contact Paul for further details. On the night, there will be further opportunities, other than simply betting on races, to win by becoming an owner, so make sure you come along to get involved – these evenings are always a great night's entertainment.

100 Club

The latest winners in the scheme, pulled out of the hat during weekly draws during October were are: Wally Despy, Graham Hart, Mike Roles, Linda Strachan, Phil Cox and John Clench, with each person pocketing £34.

You can still join in and put yourself in with a chance of winning the bumper Christmas prize of ten times the usual weekly amount. By setting up a standing order for just £5 a month, you put yourself in with a



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chance of winning over £30 at the present time – and the more people that sign up, then the bigger the weekly prize.

To register your interest, you can still contact Alan Perry at alanperry4@hotmail.com or by calling 01702 476 458 and put yourself in with a chance of winning the weekly prize. Remember, the more people that sign up to the scheme, then the higher that prize will be.

Quid-a-Goal

Quid-a-Goal is back for the 2007/8 season, and we are still welcoming any pledges that members would like to set up. The money raised from the scheme this season will be solely directed towards Ricky Duncan and the Centre of Excellence at Southend United.

After the match against Rochdale in the F.A. Cup, we look set to have raised around £1,500 through pledges made by our members. Remember, you don't have to simply pledge a pound a goal, you can make it a little more interesting by sponsoring goals scored by a particular player or for clean sheets. All contributions are welcome.

Please get in touch with Alan Perry via the usual methods (01702 476 458 or alanperry4@hotmail.com) or download a form from our website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk to make a pledge for the 2007/8 Quid-a-Goal campaign.

****AVAILABLE NOW****: The Team We Call United DVD

The Shrimpers Trust made 'The Team We Call United' DVD available last December, and as last year, this historic DVD would make a wonderful Christmas present to any of our members. If you would like a copy of the recording, which was made by the Bushell brothers in the late 1960s, please visit our website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk or come to the Shrimpers Trust Stand in the Shrimpers Bar on a home matchday.

Buy.At Facility on the Shrimpers Trust website

With Christmas just around the corner, what better way to buy presents for you relatives than by visiting the Buy.At facility on www.shrimperstrust.co.uk and using a variety of well-known retailers whilst also helping out the Trust. Well-known names such as Amazon, Comet and HMV are all included – just follow the links from the homepage via 'Fundraising' and 'Buy.At' on the left-hand navigation bar.

Life Membership (total: 137)

This month we would like to welcome to **Phil Spooner**, the latest recruit to our ever-swelling number of Life Members. If you are interested in joining this select band, please contact Paul Yeomanson via email at info@shrimperstrust.co.uk or by meeting him at the stand in the Shrimpers Bar on any home matchday during the 2007/8 season. Postal applications can also be accepted via Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5380, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9FD.

The Shrimpers Trust would like to welcome the following new members this month:

Mike Baker, R. Brown, Sam Cairns, Miles Clarke, Robert Andrew Clarke, Ben Daltry, Peter Dawkins, Liam Fitch, Chris Hart, Melanie Hayward, Stephen Huckstepp, Nigel Jarvis, David Jones, Steve Kemp, Lindsay Kempen, Trevor Little, Richard Mander, Angela Mayhew, Anthony Mayhew, Sean McGhie, Kevin Neal, Frederick Neil, Steve Nicholls, Tony Owers, Wendy Owers, Yvonne Patten, Craig Patterson, Mark Pegram, Nick Pullen, Matthew Radford, Steve Raker, Ian Russell, James Sapwell, Les Scanlan, Earl Sealey, Leonard Sellers, Christian Seymour, Paul Seymour, Tony Sills, Kevin Smith, Ryan Stubbs, David Taylor, Mike Vasa, Paul Wilson, Sam Wilson, Matthew Winch and Mitchell Worley.

Please note that the Shrimpers Trust would like to know if any of its members' addresses change, or if they have a new email address so that newsletters and other correspondence can be sent to the correct addresses. Please send any details to PO Box 5380, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9FD or info@shrimperstrust.co.uk



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THE MATCHES – Blues In Review

sat 06 oct: tranmere rovers (h) 11-2 (league one)

After five League One matches unbeaten, Blues slipped a 2-1 reverse against Tranmere Rovers, dropping out of the play-off places in the process. It was also the first time that the club had been beaten at Roots Hall since the opening day defeat to Leyton Orient, though the fact that Tranmere were also in the promotion shake-up in the early stages of the campaign showcased a worrying tendency to drop points against the top teams.

Eric Odhiambo, in one of his final appearances before departing to rejoin Leicester City, really should have given his adopted team the lead when Leon Clarke slipped him through one-on-one with John Achterberg. Steve Collis made a couple of fine saves with reaction times imperative, but he could do nothing when Ben Chorley was left unmarked to head a corner into the net.

Two minutes before half-time, the rampaging Adam Barrett levelled the scores, connecting with Lewis Hunt's delightful right-wing cross with his right foot for a real collector's item of a goal. Unfortunately, minutes after the break, United gifted their visitors the lead again, with Gareth Taylor afforded all the space he required in the penalty area to head past Collis from a corner again.

match in a sentence: Roots Hall witnesses rare home defeat

sat 13 oct: crewe alexandra (h) w3-0 (league one)

On a day on which England did their hopes of qualification for Euro 2008 no harm at all – unlike the following Wednesday, when they crashed to a 2-1 reverse in Russia – Southend United took to their field for an early kick-off against Crewe, who appeared to still be half-asleep as the Shrimpers never had to get out of second gear.

Nicky Bailey further enhanced his excellent reputation as a midfield goalscorer as he collected Gary Hooper's smart touch and smashed the ball into the goal; in the 18th minute to make it 1-0. Hooper should have added a second when Tommy Black's shot was palmed into his path, but he failed to convert with the goal gaping, though he made amends in the second half.

He and Leon Clarke burst through, and when Clarke's effort was parried by Ben Williams, Hooper slotted in the rebound. The former Grays Athletic man was then laughably upended by the Railwaymen's shotstopper as he attempted to make it 3-0, leaving Clarke to fire in a spot-kick. The match was also notable for Lee Barnard, rumoured to be a one-time loan target for Blues, assaulting Peter Clarke in the opening stages and somehow avoiding a red card.

match in a sentence: Shrimpers set tone for successful day

sat 20 oct: walsall (a) w2-0 (league one)

Although rarely fully tested away from Roots Hall, United's form on the road was beginning to look formidable at this stage as they recorded a comfortable 2-0 win at Walsall. It was Peter Clarke that netted the opener on 38 minutes as he headed Steven Hammell's dangerous corner past Clayton Ince, the ball taking a deflection on its way into the net.

Then, six minutes after the break, namesake Leon added his seventh goal in just eight games for the Shrimpers, tapping home after excellent work from Mark Gower and Gary Hooper. This was a match of few opportunities, and a two-goal lead was far too much for Walsall to overcome.

match in a sentence: Clarkes prove best at Bescot

sat 27 oct: Carlisle United (h) 10-1 (league one)

I have to admit that I missed the first half of this clash travelling back from the Under-18s win at Oxford United, but my sources at Roots Hall suggest that I did not miss much. Indeed, the main talking point, sadly, seemed to be the referee, who cautioned Steven Hammell for having the temerity to take a free-kick too quickly. On another occasion, Hammell forced Kieran Westwood into a fine save from another set-piece.

The second half saw yet more of the play punctuated by the referee, including Nicky Bailey's legitimate claims for a penalty kick being waved away and the playmaker booked for what the official interpreted as simulation. Instead it was a wonderfully-worked move that saw Carlisle snatch the win on the hour, Danny Graham setting up Joe Garner for a neat finish, with both men losing their markers.

match in a sentence: Cumbrians come out on top



SHRIMPERS TRUST

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sat 03 nov: northampton town (a) w1-0 (league one)

Adam Barrett just loves going to Sixfields. It was at Northampton Town's poky venue that the central defender nodded home two headers from identical corners in 2004/5 to help add momentum to Southend's promotion campaign, and it was another nodded effort in the second half that consigned the Cobblers to a rare home defeat.

Steve Collis had already been called upon to make a fine save, tipping Ryan Gilligan's shot over the crossbar, by the time that the assistant referee indicated that Peter Clarke had handled the ball inside the penalty area. League One's top goalscorer Andy Kirk stepped up but smashed his shot against the post before flashing the rebound wide of the opposite upright.

The Shrimpers were not without their opportunities, but Leon Clark blazed over when Mark Gower's effort was palmed into his path ten yards out and Nicky Bailey smashed a low shot across the face of goal, with Gary Hooper just unable to get a touch at the far post. Never fear, though, when Adam Barrett is present, and he met Mark Gower's flag-kick with a firm header to plant the ball home in the 65th minute and hand Blues all three points.

match in a sentence: Barrett continues love affair with Sixfields

tues 06 nov: nottingham forest (a) 11-4 (league one)

Another match against top-level opposition, and another defeat, this time in crushing style, although for an hour the visitors lived with their more illustrious opponents. Nottingham Forest are a club that constantly look back to the wonderful history brought to them by Brian Clough in the 1970s, 80s and 90s, but that all counted for nothing when Mark Gower ghosted in and curled home after just two minutes.

I was just starting to think how well Southend were dealing with crosses sailing into their penalty area when Forest skipper Ian Breckin was afforded space at the far post to nod down and over Steve Collis five minutes before the break. Still, the visitors had as many chances as the home side at the City Ground until the introduction of Nathan Tyson.

On 64 minutes the former England Under-21 front man sprung the offside trap to guide the ball past Collis and raise a 26,000-strong roar on the banks of the Trent. Sixty seconds later United's star striker Leon Clarke was walking off the pitch having stupidly head-butted Luke Chambers, whose reaction made sure that the Sheffield Wednesday man received his marching orders. Two further efforts from Junior Agogo gave the scoreline an unfair impression.

match in a sentence: Tyson lands knock-out blow

sat 10 nov: rochdale (h) w2-1 (f.a. cup first round)

With Billericay Town bravely going down to Swansea City ten miles up the road, Southend's F.A. Cup first round afternoon was strangely missing in the mysticism of the world's premier knock-out competition. Normally there is simply nothing quite like the F.A. Cup, but on this particular Saturday afternoon, 5,100 people snored through the fare on offer.

23 seconds in, the match had a different complexion as Nicky Bailey rose to head Steven Hammell's excellent cross in at the far post and make it 1-0 to the home side. Rochdale had barely got out of their own half when Adam Le Fondre unexpectedly equalised, but Matt Harrold handed Blues the advantage again on 24 minutes after seeing Gary Hooper upended.

Unfortunately, the former Yeovil Town man could not repeat the trick in stoppage time when Franck Moussa was brought down on the brink of netting his first senior goal for the Shrimpers, goalkeeper Sam Russell this time guessing correctly to effect a good low save.

match in a sentence: Magic of the Cup missing in uninspiring victory