



# SHRIMPERS TRUST

## NEWSLETTER – Volume 3 Issue 2



### THE INTRODUCTION – Paul FitzGerald

This newsletter coincides with perhaps yet again the most exciting few weeks in a Southend supporters life – the potential to play at rebuilt Wembley, amazing when you think most Premiership players/teams haven't played there yet..! Sadly it was not to be and contrary to the press during the build up the players that have done so well for us this year just did not perform on the day....the supporters though once again did the club proud and I'd like to give a big thanks to Ron Martin for providing the opportunity for so many to get there.

Which of course brings me on to my personal thanks for those supporters who once again bust a gut to make the travel happen as smoothly as it did. It's great to know that we have people who at the drop of the Chairman's hat will put their personal life on hold for the good of our club – take a bow Paul and Clare and thanks also to all the normal crew for putting themselves out on the day once again.

Despite the result on Friday I'm sure most of us will remember this season in a very positive way and I'd like to thank the club and the players for that.

**Matters arising from the last newsletter.....** someone does read the newsletters! In fact two people were so impressed with my plea for volunteers that they have joined our unpaid ranks and very welcome they are too – so thanks for reading and volunteering and take a bow Paul Smith and Lara McSweeney

Sadly I return from holiday and find yet another delay to the Football Clubs planning application. The pack I received contains 6

notes with various issues that need to be resolved before the Secretary of State will finally commit to making a decision – current estimate "on or before 7 July 2008". For anyone who's interested four of the items appear to be technicalities, one is dear Peter Bliss now concerned about the ability of the Crematorium to extend into FF and the final one is to do with our old enemy avarice....and if its not resolved by the next newsletter then I will publish the names and addresses of those responsible.....!

**And finally.....** John Walton, a committed Trust member and ex Ron Pountney Committee Member intends to revive the SUFC Exiles player sponsorship for 2008/9. The Exiles are a loose aggregation of Southend fans who reside outside of the geographic area of our chosen club (however you choose to define that area). Matt Walker has done a superb job administering the group in the past. Rather than work out any exact cost at this stage, John is suggesting a figure of around £30 should be sufficient to secure a piece of the action. If more members come forward, he'll consider reducing that amount or finding an alternative use for the surplus. Benefits of membership are, shall we say, "soft". The SUFC Exiles name in home programmes, opportunity to meet up with fellow Exiles, particularly in order to be photographed with said player at a home game. John has particular fond memories of a get together outside of the Millennium Stadium, Cardiff. Player sponsors also get a pair of tickets which have in the past been donated to a good cause. At this stage he's looking for notice of intent rather than cash – If you are interested please contact John at [je.walton@virgin.net](mailto:je.walton@virgin.net)

### AWAY TRAVEL

#### Doncaster – A Big Thank You

The Shrimpers Trust would like to thank everyone involved in last Friday's mass exodus to Doncaster, from the supporters for being patient whilst loading the coaches, to the Club and Ron Martin for paying for them.

We would also like to thank the following (in no particular order) for the help given by them in managing to transport over 1000 supporters to Doncaster and Back, the biggest away following to an away game by coach outside of the 3 finals at Cardiff.

*Clare Brooks, Trevor Bashford, Rob Craven, Brian Cotgrove, John Everett, Paul & Jenny Yeomanson, Lara McSweeney, Paul Smith, Peter & Hazel Wayland, Keith & Gay Overall, Darroll Adlington, John Spooner, Kevin Brown, Alan Perry, Warren Sadler, Roger French, Derek Jacques, Chas Matthew,*



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Darren Posnack, Martin Cranmer, Liam Sullivan, Michael Paul, Alec Trott, Lee Bird, Marie Haverty, Peter Brock, Billy Clark, Ian Holmes, Nick Green, Ken Taylor, Francis Taylor and Paul Marshall.

Thanks also to the Club Ticket Office for taking bookings, D.C. Spooner for his advice and co-ordination with the Doncaster Police, Peterborough Services for making us welcome and SBC Leisure for providing the coaches.

Special thanks however must go to **Liam Sullivan, Michael Paul** and the other 47 Supporters who were stranded on the A1 for several hours due to their coach breaking down. Thanks for being patient and understanding and we are very glad you arrived back at Roots Hall safely albeit 3½ hours after all the others.

### SHRIMPERS TRUST PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

**Nicky Bailey, Adam Barrett, Peter Clarke and Johnny Herd were the toast of the Shrimpers Trust End of Season Review Night, held in the Shrimpers Bar at Roots Hall on Tuesday 6th May.**

Midfielder Nicky Bailey scooped the Shrimpers Trust Player of the Year award, presented by managerial duo Steve Tilson and Paul Brush, after a number of consistent displays in the centre of midfield saw him win the vote ahead of defender Peter Clarke and midfield partner Alan McCormack.

*"It has been a good year for me and a good year for the lads,"* the former Barnet playmaker, who was celebrating his second straight player of the year title after claiming the Bees gong in 2006/7. *"Thanks to everyone who has voted for me."*

Bailey was also a contender in the Goal of the Season award for his strike in the 2-1 defeat to Millwall, and his eleven goals from midfield have inspired Blues into a play-off spot. *"It has been good, and between myself and Macca, we have got over 20 goals. Everyone has chipped in, but if the goals hadn't been shared around, then we wouldn't have scored many! Thankfully, since Christmas the strikers have come in and scored."*

*"When I joined, I was more relieved that I was good enough to do it at this level,"* Bailey added. *"Hopefully now we can go on and win the Play-Offs."*

Despite Bailey's strike at the New Den or Mark Gower's mazy run and Adam Barrett's stunning strike in the home win over Brighton & Hove Albion, it was Peter Clarke's tremendous 35-yard effort at Leyton Orient in a 2-2 draw that won the Shrimpers Trust Goal of the Season award.

Tilson and Brush were also on hand to give Barrett the Southend Junior Shrimpers Player of the Season shield. The Shrimpers skipper revealed, *"I would be lying if I said that I hadn't dreamt about leading the team out at Wembley in the Play-Off Final, but we know that Doncaster Rovers will be tough opponents in the semi. I just hope that we can win."*

Johnny Herd won the evening's first event, the Tom Grace Memorial Shield for the Shrimpers Trust SUFC Youth Team Player of the Year. Full-back Herd became the first winner of the shield after winning a two-year professional contract with Southend United after an excellent season with the club's youth and reserve teams, and received his reward from Tom's brother, Nick.

*"I wasn't expecting to win this at all,"* the left-back said. *"I got the Players' Player of the Year award last season, so I had a little feeling. I have been pleased with my reserve team performances throughout the year. Che Wilson's injury has given me this chance, and the Youth Cup run was absolutely massive."*

Wilson's absence has contributed to some of Herd's more memorable moments: *"It has been massive being in and around the first team squad; going up to matches the day before, going on the flights and sitting on the bench in the F.A. Cup against Dagenham & Redbridge, which was probably my biggest achievement."*

*"The Essex Senior Cup Final was the biggest crowd that I've every played in front of, and it was a different game to play in. The style probably didn't suit my game, but I thought I did really well. I've now got to keep doing what I'm doing. I want to get a regular spot on the bench and, if I carry on working hard, I hope to make my debut next year,"* Herd aspired.



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First-year scholar Stuart O'Keefe claimed second place, declaring, *"Because I'm only a first-year makes this special. I've got to keep this level of performance up now to get a contract at the end of next year."*

The midfielder has caught the eye after joining the Shrimpers eighteen months ago from Ipswich Town's Academy: *"It has been a good season, my first as a full-time player here. It's a new club, and I've enjoyed it. My favourite match was the Senior Cup tie against Bowers & Pitsea – it was the first game in front of the gaffer and Paul Brush, and I'm still claiming the first goal!"*

*"As a first-year, starting every game in the F.A. Youth Cup was a good achievement. I got injured at Carlisle which kept me out for just over a month, but I got back into the side at the end of the season, and I even scored a left-footed belter in the last game at Brentford – I feel that I have got goals in my game."*

One man that certainly has that is James Lindie, who came third after netting 16 goals in 2007/8. Lindie even had time to fit in a month on work experience at Ryman League Premier Division club Harlow Town. *"It probably wasn't the best standard at Harlow,"* he admitted, *"but I got some goals and it was a good experience. I learnt from it and I'm pleased to have done it."*

Lindie continued: *"It has been a good season all round. The award is much appreciated, and it's good for my confidence to be recognised. I've been offered a development contract for next season, and that will give me a chance to train with the professionals and work on my game. Hopefully I'll see some progress."*

There was no doubt as to the striker's favourite memory: *"Derby County in the F.A. Youth Cup without a doubt. It was a good performance and I got a couple of goals."*

This was a theme that Ricky Duncan also touched on as he spoke to the evening's host, Brian Wheeler. *"The Fifth Round was a big achievement for this club,"* the Shrimpers' Head of Youth declared. *"We want to win every game in that competition, and the way we played against Derby County was tremendous."*

*"But it goes further than that because the Under-16s won a tournament in Le Portel and the Under-15s won a big competition in the Norhalne Cup. There was interest in one of the players, Femi, from a couple of other clubs who asked me, 'How much?' Our Centre of Excellence teams are now going abroad and winning trophies."*

*"We are assessing our youngsters all the way from Under-9s up, and I want to give players to Steve Tilson and the first team,"* Duncan continued. *"It shows how far we have come that other clubs are interested in our players, but we want them to play for Southend United."*

Duncan, who presented all eight monthly winners – save the hospitalised Luke Thurlbourne and released Richard Priest – with a picture of their presentation on the Roots Hall pitch at each stage of the season, also paid tribute to the Shrimpers Trust. *"Since I've come back, the Trust have supported the tour programme, and now they have the youth team sponsorship deal. I want the supporters to feel involved – the youth department is part of their club, and it represents the future."*

Wheeler also interviewed Tilson and Brush for the Shrimpers Trust members in attendance. *"Around Christmas, I think Brushy and I were looking for another job,"* Tilson joked. *"We've made a couple of good signings, and hopefully we'll finish the season off with promotion to the Coca-Cola Championship via the Play-Offs."*

*"I don't like singling out players, but Barney [Lee Barnard] has come in and scored goals, and they win you games,"* the Wickford-born boss continued. *"We weren't ever looking at relegation. The belief has been there throughout the campaign, and we have reached the top six on merit. We are good enough, though if we go up, we've got to bring in another three or four players."*

Tilson also looked ahead to the Play-Off semi-final against Doncaster Rovers. *"In the Play-Offs, any one of the four sides can get through. Doncaster are a good footballing side, but we are an attacking side. We want to win games and score goals, and in doing that we will concede a few as well."*



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"It bugs me when people like Colin Calderwood and Steve Cotterill say that it will be Doncaster-Leeds United final. Hopefully we can go on to cause an upset in the Final, should we make it there," Tilson said.

Brush was similarly confident: "Our best results have come in Cup competitions – look at the Manchester United match last season and Watford this year. The lads know that they are good enough to beat anyone in this competition, and we're up for it."

"Hopefully on the Friday night, the fans will be the 12th man. The fans can make a difference at home or away," Tilson pleaded. "Our away support has been fantastic this season," Brush interjected. "We want to see you all up there in the second leg."

"We want to attack other teams and play at a high tempo, because that's when we play our best football. If we can get some goals in the first game, then they will have to come out in the second leg," Tilson prophesied.

There were no awards this season for the Top Travellers on Shrimpers Trust coaches as the season still has at least one further away match to be played. Terry Boulter, Adam Halvey, Lesley Hicks, Dean Overall, Gay Overall, Keith Overall and Warren Sadler were applauded for completing all 8,716 miles so far, whilst Liam Fitch was the top Junior, having attended 15 away matches covering 4,674 miles to date.

New Trust Committee member Paul Smith outbid Treasurer Darren Posnack for a signed teamsheet from the F.A. Cup Fourth Round at Tottenham Hotspur in January 2007 with a £360 pledge in the auction, whilst the evening's final act saw outgoing club PA announcer Wheeler presented with a glass decanter set by Trust Board member Paul Yeomanson.

The Shrimpers Trust convey their thanks to all its members who attended, as well as the staff, players and management team from Southend United and Ricky Duncan and his Under-18 squad.

*\*\*This article first appeared on the Shrimpers Trust website, [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk), where you can find out all the latest news from the Trust\*\**

## THE SHRIMPERS TRUST KIDS

### Shrimpers Trust SUFC Youth Team Player of the Month

Johnny Herd & James Lindie are the latest recipients of the Shrimpers Trust SUFC Youth Team POTM Award for March and April respectively. The inaugural winner of the Tom Grace Memorial Shield presented to the Youth Team Player of the Year was Johnny Herd. A full report on the Trust's Player of the Year Awards can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.

### Blues' Youths Under-18s Results

**Sat 29 Mar | Football League Youth Alliance | Barnet (h) | W3-0 | Forshaw, O'Keefe, Moon**

**Match Report:** [http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page\\_id=473](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=473)

**Sat 05 Apr | Football League Youth Alliance | Peterborough United (h) | D1-1 | Lindie**

**Match Report:** [http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page\\_id=480](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=480)

**Sat 12 Apr | Football League Youth Alliance | Queens Park Rangers (h) | W2-1 | Obaze, Lindie**

**Match Report:** [http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page\\_id=481](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=481)

**Sat 19 Apr | Football League Youth Alliance | Colchester United (a) (played at Boots & Laces) | W1-5 | Forshaw, Lindie (2), Henry, Adeyinka**

**Match Report:** [http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page\\_id=483](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=483)

**Sat 26 Apr | Football League Youth Alliance | Brentford (a) | W1-2 | O'Keefe, Jones**

**Match Report:** [http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page\\_id=486](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/default.asp?page_id=486)

### Shrimpers Trust Youth Team Update

A full youth team round up will appear in our next Newsletter.





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### THE TRUST – What We've Done

#### Committee Meetings

##### April

Our venue hoping continues!!!! This update refers to a meeting at Leigh Constitutional Club however future meetings are now going to be held in the Harry Public House, Leigh-on-Sea.

Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008 with the following subjects covered:

- Agreement to provide some support to SUCET - Steve Goodsell gave a detailed presentation of the worthwhile work currently being undertaken and planned for the future
- Re-arranged date for Shrimpers Trust Player of The Year of 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008 in case of participation in the end of season play-offs
- Use of Executive Box on 12<sup>th</sup> April Vs Northampton
- Southend United Under 16 Tour to Holland 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2008
- Regular updates on liaison meeting with Southend United; Membership (1,319 Full Members; 98 SJS and 143 Life Members); Fundraising (next event was the Race Night on 12<sup>th</sup> April) and detailed monthly interrogation of our Finances.

#### Liaison Meetings

As most members are aware, the Trust Committee members participate in monthly meetings, in which various supporter concerns and matters are discussed, with club management, including the Deputy Chairman, other Directors, and Head of the Commercial Department. The Trust enjoys a healthy working relationship with the club and all supporter comments are taken on board by club officials.

The minutes of the meetings are published on the Trust website but points which may be of interest are repeated below.

##### March

Geoffrey King told informed us of the requirements of the Secretary of State to pass planning permission for Fossetts Farm and that it was anticipated that the stadium would be ready for the start of season 2010/11.

We asked the club whether they would be subsidising the cost of travel for the remaining away matches but no decision had been made at the time.

The frequent charge for parking our coaches at away grounds was discussed. This adds to the cost of travel and is particularly frustrating as the club does not levy a similar charge to away teams' supporters. There are no plans to charge other clubs but this is under review.

The Youth Team Lottery Board was raised in the meeting. There will be three supporters' representatives on the Board, which will assist in overseeing the expenditure of Lottery money received for the Youth Team.

The Trust agreed to make a donation to Southend Scorchers, a football team of players with special needs and also discussed the idea of playing a match against them at a future date.

##### April

Discussions are ongoing about the possibility of a testimonial match for Spencer Prior, who retired at the end of last season. Proceeds would go to Little Havens Hospice.

We were informed that the recent share issue had achieved a little over £300,000.

Although the play off dates were not known Garry Adamson discussed ways of speeding up the distribution of tickets for supporters as time would be limited before the matches.



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There was a concern at the time that we may have to play the away leg on a Roots Hall Market Day e.g. Thursday, which would prevent the coaches being able to pick up at the ground. Geoffrey King agreed to contact the airport to see if they could assist with their car park.

Should the team reach the play off final at Wembley, the Trust will receive a block of tickets for sale to its members.

We again raised the question of the gents toilets in the West Stand and how the limited access/exits caused long delays at half time. The issue was to be monitored.

The Trust has entered into discussions for publishing a book, for historical purposes, with pictures of matchday scenes at Roots Hall and preparation of FF.

*\*\*Full Minutes of the Trust's Liaison Meetings with Southend United are available for download from the Shrimpers Trust website, [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk). The archive goes right back to the very start of the regular meetings, in September 2002\*\**

### Race Night (12<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

The Shrimpers Trust held their last Fundraising Event for the 2007/08 Season on Saturday 12th March 2008, an all new version of their ever popular Race Nights.

Hosted by Trust Committee Member Paul Yeomanson and ably assisted by Trevor Bashford and Clare Brooks the event was a runaway success with over 80 people in attendance, raising just over £620 for Trust Funds.

Included in the evening were eight all new Horse Races, and one never seen before Pig Race, and there were numerous winners with 1st Place prizes ranging from £2.50 to £8.50. The Winning horse Owners all received a bottle of wine courtesy of Southend United FC, and a Shrimpers Trust goodie bag.

The Shrimpers Trust would like to thank the following Companies for sponsoring one of our Races on the evening.

	ALPINE INSURANCE SERVICES LIMITED Tel: 0800 0268761 <a href="http://www.alpineinsurance.co.uk">www.alpineinsurance.co.uk</a>	Provider of Public Liability Insurance to the Shrimpers Trust
	ECOMUK LIMITED Tel: 01268 723333 <a href="http://www.ecomuk.com">www.ecomuk.com</a>	Internet Service Provider to the Shrimpers Trust
	FRAMEWORKS (ESSEX) LIMITED Tel: 01268 732041	Suppliers of Trophies to, and Picture/ Shirt Framers for the Shrimpers Trust
	SBC LEISURE Tel: 01702 528038 <a href="http://www.sbcleisure.com">www.sbcleisure.com</a>	Coach Providers for all Away Travel organised by the Shrimpers Trust
	SOUTHEND RADIO 105.1 FM Tel: 01702 455070 <a href="http://www.southendradio.com">www.southendradio.com</a>	
	THE FOOTBALL PROGRAMME DIRECTORY Tel: 01268 732041	



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The Trust would also like to thank Southend United FC and Brian Dear for the use of the Shrimpers Bar and the donation of wine for the winning horse owners.

*\*\*This article first appeared on the Shrimpers Trust website, [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk), where you can find out all the latest news from the Trust\*\**

### FUNDRAISING

#### End of Season Draw

**This year's End of Season Draw raised just over £1300 for Trust Funds.**

We would like to thank all those who took part, either by selling, or by buying the draw tickets. Congratulations to the following lucky winners who will be notified over the next few days.

	Prize	Ticket No.	Winner
First Prize	£500	11497	Terry Roberts
Second Prize	£250	11447	Nigel Rickard
Third Prize	£100	11520	Steven Whittock
Fourth Prize	Signed SUFC Shirt	4213	Mr. Richards
Fifth Prize	Bottle of Wine	15824	Valerie Grant

#### 100 Club

The latest winners in the scheme, pulled out of the hat during weekly draws since the last newsletter were: **Irene Bashford, Paul Brice, Tim Wilson, Dave Barlow, Teresa Perry, Trevor Bashford, Rick Napper, Phillipa Herbert and Richard Harrington**, each collecting around **£33**.

The nature of the 100 Club means 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](mailto: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. By setting up a standing order for just £5 a month (or just £60 a year), you put yourself in with a chance of winning over £30 per week at the present time.

#### Quid-a-Goal

The final total raised for the season is **£4225.15**, and we would like to thank all those that took part this season.

Alan Perry is in the process of sending out letters to all of this season's participants advising the amount due and how to make payment.

Details regarding next season's Quid a Goal Scheme will appear in our next newsletter.

#### EURO 2008 Prediction Competition



**The Shrimpers Trust will be running a prediction competition for the upcoming European Championships.**

Each entry costs just £5 with 50% going into the "prize pool" and the remaining 50% being split between the Shrimpers Trust to continue their work with the SUFC Youth Team and [The Shrimpers-Online](#) Josh Tippett appeal, who is a young lad suffering from cerebral palsy.

Now our season is over and with England failing to qualify for the Championships you can still have some interest in footy over the summer !!!!

Competition Rules along with an entry form have been enclosed with this newsletter.



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### MEMBERSHIP

#### Life Membership (total: 146)

This newsletter we would like to welcome three new Life Members, **John Griffin, Linda Kidd** and **Kerr Mellia**.

If you are interested in joining this group please contact our Membership Secretary, Paul Yeomanson via email at [membership@shrimperstrust.co.uk](mailto:membership@shrimperstrust.co.uk). You can also join up as a Life Member in the Membership Section of the Trust Website [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk), and postal applications will also be accepted via **Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9FD**.

#### The Shrimpers Trust would like to welcome the following New Members

**Olive Bridge, Tony Brown, Paul Busson, Barry Chowns, Steve Crockford, Shane Crome, Adam Duffil, Hilary Galvin, Stephen Giles, Robert Hutcherson, Bruce James, Hazel Kerr, Kenneth Myall, Matt Overall, Paul Redding, Adam Smith, Natalie Snelling, Martin Terry, Mrs. Thomas, Thomas Tobias, Mike Torode** and **Kevin Webb**.

*\*\*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 address. Please send any change of address details to **The Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5380, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9FD**, or alternatively fill in our on-line contact details form which can be found in the Membership Section of the Trust Website, [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk) \*\**

### MATCH REPORTS

#### Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2008 - Crewe Alexandra (Away) – Result 1-3

The weather for the first trip to Crewe since the early nineties was a mixed bag of sun, rain, sleet and snow and the journey home was not a lot better.

What a strange game football is 2-0 up inside 19 minutes; give away two penalties and a goal and finish with a goal of the highest quality to complete a 3-1 victory.

Steve Tilson selected same team for second game in succession and was rewarded with a performance where Southend totally dominated the first half but only had a 2-0 lead to show for some exciting attacking play with everyone bar Darryl Flahavan attempting to score. It was a game where we should have been "out of sight" before we allowed Crewe back into the game.

Goal one came within the first 90 seconds with Lee Barnard powering into the penalty box to score with a classic strikers finish into the bottom corner of the net. This followed an excellent pass from James Walker. Play was end to end with both sides creating chances. Second goal was scored by James Walker in the 19<sup>th</sup> minute following cross field pass from Alan McCormack.

Crewe's first penalty awarded in 33<sup>rd</sup> minute after referee awarded a penalty for a foul by Peter Clarke on Nicky Maynard. Gary Robert's spot kick was excellently saved by Darryl Flahavan.

Southend continued to dominate the second half but in the 72<sup>nd</sup> minute Simon Francis was the second man alleged to have fouled Nicky Maynard and another penalty awarded. Kenny Lunt stepped up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> penalty kick but he too was foiled by some excellent goal keeping from Darryl. Within seconds Crewe scored when, from a free kick, Nicky Maynard was allowed a free header.

Pride restored in 80<sup>th</sup> minute when, after some excellent play by James Walker, Lee Barnard powered home Southend's third goal.





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Simon Francis and Charlie Mulgrew were cautioned during the game. Notwithstanding this a fine team performance.

**Crowd: 4, 895 (of which circa 700 supported Southend). League position: 5<sup>th</sup>.**

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Black (Moussa), Bailey, McCormack, Gower (Grant), Barnard and Walker (McDonald). Substitutes not used: Collis and Revell.**

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### Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2008 - Brighton & Hove Albion (Home) – Result 2-0

What a fantastic team performance, which in the first half saw some of the best football played by Southend United this season.

Steve Tilson was able to select the same team that started at Crewe and the result ensures that he continues to wear his “unwashed football shirt” for another game!!!!!! Result saw unbeaten stretched to 11 games.

A great all round team performance, including two wonder goals. In the 24<sup>th</sup> minute Simon Francis set Mark Gower free in his own half. He then set off at pace, showing all the skills of a star winger, left the Brighton defence in his wake before cutting inside before hitting a fantastic shot that flew into the roof of the new. 1 – 0.

Adam Barrett, who in recent weeks has seen his fellow defenders Peter Clarke and Simon Francis score wonder goals, decided to get in on the act. A Charlie Mulgrew free-kick was not cleared by the Brighton defence which resulted in a great passing movement between Peter Clarke and Adam Barrett and the skipper crashed home a killer second goal putting Southend United 2-0 up and in cruise control after 30 minutes.

Southend always had the beating of a poor Brighton team albeit the visitors came more into the game in the second half but the home side were well in control and continued to look dangerous on the break helped by some erratic goal keeping from Michel Kuipers.

Peter Clarke was booked just before the second in a game fussily refereed by Mr G K Hegley who on many occasions provided no protection to the Lee Barnard and James Walker who received a severe battering from the Brighton defence. Difficult to pick out a man of the match as the whole team were magnificent.

**Crowd: 8,428. League position: 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Black (Grant), Bailey, McCormack, Gower, Barnard (Revell) and Walker (McDonald). Substitutes not used: Collis and Moussa.**

One downside being the stewarding of the West Bank, where at a time when maximum vocal support required, fans were officially prohibited to sit in Block W as no seats sold. When will Southend United learn!!!!!!!!!!

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### Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2008 - Northampton Town – Result 1-1

So near and yet so far from confirming a coveted play off position!!! Everything is in our own hands with two away and one home fixture remaining.

When will we learn home to defend free kicks and corners this have been our biggest downfall all season and in the 24<sup>th</sup> minute there was Colin Larkin unmarked from a corner, the ball was in the back of the net and we were 1-0 down. It would be interesting to see that happens on the training ground because this has been our weakest link all season and it is something we must get right if we are to reach the play-off final at Wembley.



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Big advantage at this stage of the season with Steve Tilson being again being able to select the same team. Good start from both teams either of whom could have scored in the first 60 seconds but the deadlock was broken after 24 minutes. Darryl Flahaven made a great save from Abeyayo Alinfenwa pushing his shot on the turn away for a corner. Comments above tell the story of what happened next!!!! Both sides had further chances but Northampton went in at half time 1-0 up.

Second half saw a more positive Southend who created numbers chances, with Mark Bunn in the Northampton goal in great form and woodwork saving them on several occasions. Adam Barrett and Charlie Mulgrew would be prevented from scoring by either the wood. Equaliser came in the 51<sup>st</sup> minute. A free kick from Charlie Mulgrew hit the cross bar and, for once, luck was with us with the ball falling to Lee Barnard who powered home the equaliser. No matter how much pressure Southend applied they could not score the winner. Northampton always looked dangerous on the break. *The biggest challenge to Darryl in the second half came from the four pigeons who decided to tale up residence in his penalty area.*

A very fussy referee in Mr Dedman who one minute was blew for every minor offence and the next trying to play the advantage when one did not exist. He turned down good penalty appeals from both sides. I always thought that if a referee thinks a player diving the latter should be booked!!!!

No Southend cautions albeit two Northampton players booked.

**Crowd: 9,286 (will we break the 10,000 Vs Port Vale ?). League position: 5<sup>th</sup>.**

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Black (Revell), Bailey, McCormack, Gower, Barnard and Walker. Substitutes not used: Collis, Grant, Moussa and McDonald.**

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### Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008 - Carlisle United (Away) – Result 1-2

The run of the mighty Shrimpers continues. 13 games undefeated, a play-off place confirmed and we can even dream of finishing second to Swansea City!!!! Tilly's football shirt is getting smellier!!!!

I would like to start this report by paying tribute to the army of travelling fans who made the 700 mile plus return to Carlisle by limousine, car, plane, train, motorbike and coach. The support was phenomenal and they made far more noise in supporting the team than circa 8,500 home fans. Well done to every one of you. The result justified the effort even those on the Swallows coach with the kamikaze lady driver!!!!!!!!

Now to the match report. Same team and substitutes again as per recent games. A bright start from both teams who not only wanted to win but play football as well. Westwood in the Carlisle goal looked shaky in the early stages and Southend built on this in the 7<sup>th</sup> minute when Charlie Mulgrew's curling free kick eluded players from both teams and sailed into the net at the far post. First half continued at a pace with both sides creating chances supplemented by crunching tackles but the referee, Mr Taylor, allowed the game to flow with no bookings.

A more attack minded Carlisle emerged after half-time, although they had to make a change at the back with Smith being replaced by Madine. In the 51<sup>st</sup> minute Carlisle were level following another goal against us from a dead ball situation. Simon Hackney's free kick from near the corner flag crept in at the near post. From hereon in play become very competitive with Nicky Bailey being the subject of a number of physical assaults which ended with Carlisle full back Raven being sent off in the 67<sup>th</sup> minute for a two footed tackle which the Carlisle bench and crowd disagreed with. Nicky was booed for the rest of the game. He had minutes before been booked for a retaliatory tackle after an earlier over zealous challenge. Mark Gower was also booked for dissent before the match ended. Chances continued to be created by both teams but as the game continued the 11 men became stronger. Alex Revell replaced Tommy Black after 79 minutes and in the 86<sup>th</sup> minute Lee Barnard hit a swerving drive that hit the inside of the post, ran along the length of the goal and was cleared before a Southend player could get near the ball. Pressure continued and in the closing



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seconds Lee met a Mark Gower cross and scored with a powerful six yard header. Game, set and match to Southend.

**Crowd: 9,122. League position 5<sup>th</sup>.**

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Black (Revell), Bailey, McCormack, Gower, Barnard and Walker.** *Substitutes not used: Collis, Grant, Moussa and McDonald.*

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### Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008 - Tranmere Rovers (Away) – Result 1-0

Separated by motorways M25, M1, M6, M56 and M53, separated the Seven Dwarfs, Yogi Bear, numerous Clowns, Telly Tubbies, a Womble, a King, Knights of the Round Table and many more travelled to see Southend play away.

23<sup>rd</sup> (and last) league away game and the mighty blue army travelled in numbers to sunny Birkenhead. 13 game unbeaten run came to an end before the play-offs so players can now shave, Tilly's shirt can be washed and all other superstitions start again. Some excitement before the game was whether our own Beaver would get through the turnstiles or need the gate opened – luck was on his side and he met the challenge of the turnstiles.

One late team change with Alex Revell replacing Lee Barnard and Damien Scannell coming onto the substitute's bench. Southend created a number of chances in the first half, noticeably McCormack and Revell but our own Mr Flahaven was the busier of the two goalkeepers making several good saves to keep the home side at bay. 0-0 at half time. Not the flamboyant football seen in recent weeks.

Second half started in a similar fashion with both sides creating chances albeit Tranmere continued to look the stronger side. Deadlock broken in the 53<sup>rd</sup> minute when Antony Kay broke from midfield and met a left wing cross from Shane Sherriff to head home. Appeared to be some animosity between Messrs Bailey and McCormack as to whom should have been marking the goal scorer but they were quickly separated by Adam Barrett and Peter Clarke. More urgency now from Southend but the killer pass and deadly long range shot were missing this week. Tranmere continued to look dangerous on the break. Three substitutions tried MacDonald for Revell; Moussa for Gower and Scannell for Black but to no avail. The travelling army continued to sing and even found time, supported by Tranmere fans, to bait Leeds United as Gary McCallister was watching the game. Only one more league game to go before the play-offs. Only down side, other than the result, was that McCormack stormed down the tunnel at the end of the game and did not salute the travelling fans. Who will we play Doncaster, Carlisle or Notts Forest or will every thing be thrown up in the air by appeals following the announcement Leeds United's latest appeal against the deduction of 15 points?

**Crowd: 5,842. League position: 5<sup>th</sup>.**

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Black (Scannell), Bailey, McCormack, Gower (Moussa), Revell (McDonald) and Walker.** *Substitutes not used: Collis and Grant.*

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### Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2008 – Port Vale (Home) – Result 1-1

The last home league game of the season. 45 games gone and one to go. A lovely sunny day – hopefully summer is here at last.

The first worry of the game was when Port Vale arrived on the pitch in our red away kit. Could not see where there was a colour clash with their normal kit but perhaps I am getting old or it has been a long season!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tilly rang the changes ahead of the two play-off games which by the end of the day we established was Doncaster Rovers as Nottingham Forest had stolen second place, Leeds finished 5<sup>th</sup>, Carlisle 4<sup>th</sup> and us 6<sup>th</sup>. Still anything is better than a Thursday night in Carlisle.



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**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Moussa, Robson-Kanu (Gower), McCormack (Bailey), Hooper (Barnard), Revell, and Walker.** *Substitutes not used: Collis and Black.*

Bright start with Moussa, Hooper and Walker all going close. Port Vale had to change formation after 21 mins, with the loss of their centre half Walker. 25 mins. Silly foul on edge of the box by Peter Clarke and direct from free kick Shane Tudor put Port Vale 1 – 0 up.

Three substitutes used in the second half (Bailey for McCormack at half time; 57<sup>th</sup> minute Gower for Kanu-Robson and 59<sup>th</sup> minute Barnard for Hooper). We had to wait until 84<sup>th</sup> minute for equaliser when James Walker “tapped in” following a mistake from the Vale keeper.

Season over and parade of honour by players and their families. Fans well behaved with no pitch invasion.

Now for the play-offs and the various Player of the Year functions, plus of course two matches Vs Doncaster Rovers.

**Crowd: 9,292. League position: 6<sup>th</sup>.**

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### Friday 9th May 2008 – Doncaster (Home) – Play Off Semi Final 1<sup>st</sup> Leg – Result 0-0

My matchday experience was a little different to normal. I am usually in the south upper although cancellation of a prior engagement meant I could attend the match so I thought I would try the on line ticket purchase system. Everything was easy until I got to Roots Hall!

The website instructions said I should collect my tickets from a machine in the ticket office. Thinking there could be hundreds of people wanting to collect the tickets I thought it wise to arrive early. Unfortunately the machine was being attended to by a mechanic who advised me I needed to go to the ticket office at the North east corner to collect my tickets so I joined the queue at the O-Z window only to be told as I had bought my ticket on the net, I need to go to the other ticket office.

Off I trotted and joined a queue. As I got to the front of the queue I saw a sign on one of the computers that said on line ticket sales here so I asked my son to queue in the other line as there was no such note on the queue I was in ! Nonetheless I was served by the young man looking after my queue and off I wandered to the West stand and queued outside a turnstile marked with my block. Unfortunately the ticket recognition machine decided to stop working so I joined the next queue, but that machine stopped working too, so I joined the next queue and eventually, with some relief, actually found my way to my seat.

Oh dear! I was sitting a couple of seats from a couple of lads with drums. The constant thudding was going through every sinew of my body and after a few minutes I developed a splitting headache. As an ex drummer myself and being used to listening to loud music you would have thought this was not going to be a problem to me, but it was.

After a while some of the crowd decided they did not want to sit down and decided to stand up, forcing hundreds of people behind them to stand. I have been a football fan for many years and I usually make it business to avoid areas where people stand. After being at work for ten hours that day I was not in the mood to stand. Why don't they ask the people behind them if it's OK for them to stand. If its not, they can swap seats so people who want to sit, go to the front! I have been going to away grounds where you stand in the open and get drenched in downpours in Macclesfield and spend the next few hours of discomfort making your way home in wet clothes! I therefore really appreciate the comforts of an all seater covered stadium. Not everybody is able to stand for hours on end. People with arthritic conditions, the disabled and the smaller members of the crowd all suffer because two men decide they are going to stand up the entire match and cant give a stuff about anyone behind them!

Oh, I forgot this was meant to be a match report!



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Two pretty evenly matched sides I'd say. Doncaster certainly the best side I had seen at Roots Hall for some months and we will need a repeat performance at Deepdale plus a little luck to come away victorious. I'm going to attend as I think it's possible.

Overall I thought the blues shaded the play although there were certainly periods when Doncaster looked the most likely of the two sides to take the lead. Various half chances fell to Gower, Walker and Barnard and a couple of smart saves by Sullivan seemed to sum up our evenings efforts. A hard fought contest by both sides was worthy of more than a goalless draw.

Oh well bring it on for next Friday.

**Crowd: 9,109.**

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Black (Revell), Bailey, McCormack, Gower, Barnard and Walker.** *Substitutes not used: Collis, Robson-Kanu, Moussa and McDonald.*

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### Friday 15th May 2008 – Doncaster (Away) – Play Off Semi Final 2<sup>nd</sup> Leg

When we all set off on a Friday afternoon Doncaster it was with enthusiasm and hope that on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2008 we would be playing the once mighty Leeds United at Wembley for a straight return to the Championship. Unfortunately Doncaster Rovers had other ideas, played fantastic football and blew us away 5-1.

The mighty blue army arrived in Doncaster with over 2,200 fans in attendance far greater than Doncaster's poor attempt at away support the previous Friday. All were in good voice and many took advantage of Ron Martin and his Board's offer of free coach travel to the game. Thank you Southend United for your brilliant gesture. Many more made their own way to and from the game. The fans were fantastic and sang their hearts' out for 90 minutes + notwithstanding the result. Everyone came to enjoy themselves and despite the result had a great time. To everyone who attended thank you from me for making it such a great evening. As in previous years (i.e. Southampton away, LDV Finals, Play-off finals, winning promotion at Bury, winning promotion at Swansea, winning promotion at Stockport, Peterborough, etc, etc,) the blue army sang and sang and sang. If I continue I will give my age away. You are a credit to the club and even Doncaster has asked whether you could be bottled and taken to Wembley to out sing their White Rose neighbours Leeds United (a team who in fairness should have been dropped to the bottom of the pyramid but escaped with a 15 point deduction).

**Team: Flahaven, Francis, Mulgrew, Barrett, Clarke, Moussa, Bailey, McCormack, Gower, Barnard (McDonald) and Walker (Revell).** *Substitutes not used: Collis, Black and Liptak*

We started well, albeit nervous, and James Walker hit the bar after 7 minutes. Doncaster went down the other end, a cuddle / push from Peter Clarke, saw a giant centre forward pole axed in the box. Penalty 1-0. Goals continued a plenty as Doncaster appeared to carve our defence and midfield apart almost every time they came forward. We continued to try hard with a succession of corners but to no avail. The goals continued to flow and for the second time this season we were 3-0 down at half time to Doncaster. Two more second half goals, including a Doncaster hat trick before Nicky Bailey pulled one back.

Southend fans went wild and the party continued. If only, if only, if only. As the fans sang "we are staying down for the Col U" !!!!!!!!

A great season but a timid ending. A great evening despite the result.

**Crowd: 13,081.**

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008**