



SHRIMPERS TRUST

NEWSLETTER – Volume 3 Issue 6



THE INTRODUCTION – Paul FitzGerald

I write this after perhaps two of the most exciting matches in the Club's history. Firstly we visit Stamford Bridge and do very little and then snatch a marvellous late equaliser - oh happy days - what a moment for the birthday boy Peter Clarke and indeed the rest of us.

The result is enough to turn the national press's attentions towards us for the first time in a little while and indeed with Chelsea's own issues (oh to have issues like them!) it wasn't possible to pick up a paper without Southend being mentioned in the same sentence as Chelsea.

The game itself – well....I don't need to report really as I'm sure you all saw it – we gave it a go, it wasn't enough, we weren't good enough, *quelle surprise* as I'm sure Francis would have said if only he was fit, but oh boy was it fun!

I'd like to give my personal thanks to all those who contributed to the success of getting 18 coaches to Chelsea for the first fixture. For all those attending, I hope you enjoyed it and will travel with us again soon.

And I'd also like to thank the Club's efforts in getting the tickets sorted without too many issues and, in particular, for the effort which we know they put in dealing with such unusual volumes in a short space of time.

So it's back to business this weekend with the wake up call of an away trip at Stockport and the reality of lower number of points than Ron must have been expecting. Let's get behind them and really make a difference

From a personal point of view I have been delighted to see the progress of young Johnny Herd recently and was doubly pleased to see Franck Moussa back and perform so well on Tuesday – I didn't think he looked out of place at all amongst the overpaid, sulky prima donnas that seem to make up most of the top tier of the Prem. Although to be fair we did hear some nice stories about the generosity of one or two Chelsea players after the first match – so fair play to them.

By far the largest part of our funds go towards helping the youth set up and it's great to see a few players coming through and making an impact. It must give the other youngsters a huge incentive and it makes us all feel the money is worthwhile.

And, of course, on that point a few foolhardy individuals (myself included) are not bothering with the coach for the Colchester game – we are walking! That walk is approximately 42 miles and we are raising money jointly for the Trust and Havens' hospice. We'd really appreciate your support – even a few pounds would make a difference.

Coming up over the next few weeks: the Trust are to hold a meeting with Ron Martin on the current state of the plans and development – if you'd like anything specific brought up then please contact any committee member and we'll ensure your questions are presented to Ron

If you have any ideas to improve the Trust or its coverage so that we can continue to help our team – we'd love to hear from you



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THE BLUES TO U'S WALK



A casual suggestion a few months ago for a way to raise funds for the Shrimpers Trust has since developed into a full-blown effort to generate funds for Havens Hospices and the Trust.

Havens Hospices was chosen because it is a much needed local and Essex facility and one which has touched the hearts of many in the Blues 'family'. Our Captain, Adam Barrett is a prominent ambassador for Little Havens and it is apparent

from the postings on the ShrimperZone and Shrimpers On Line Message Boards that Havens has provided invaluable support to a considerable number of Blues followers and their families.

Early on Friday 20th February a small number of Trust Members, including Chairman Paul FitzGerald, Vice-Chairman Bryan Woodford, Company Secretary Trevor Bashford, Treasurer Darren Posnack, Alec Trott, Hugh Cumberland and Sarah Zimmer will embark on a sponsored walk which will take them from Roots Hall via Rayleigh, Maldon and Tiptree to Colchester United's new ground adjacent to the A12 in North Essex. Staying Overnight in Maldon, and re-commencing early Saturday, the walkers will endeavour to reach Colchester's Stadium in time to attend the match with the Blues, especially as they will be carrying the *Match Ball* with them. The distance to Colchester's Ground is around 42 Miles so the walk in a cold and damp February is going to take some effort.

Paul Yeomanson, Trust Membership Secretary, will provide support by accompanying the walkers in the Havens Hospices' Minibus which will carry luggage and much needed refreshment.

We have to-date been fortunate to receive support from *Essex & Suffolk Water* (bottled water), *The Swan Hotel*, Maldon (overnight accommodation) *Sirco Controls Limited*, Rochford (various), and *Southend on Sea Rotary Club* (Hi-Vis Jackets) Any additional expenditure will be borne by the Trust or individual walkers in advance so that 100% of the Sponsorship Monies received will be equally allocated to Havens Hospices and the Shrimpers Trust Football and Community Projects.

Ron Martin has already agreed to generously sponsor the walkers and we have also received significant financial sponsorship from the Southend United Players, Paul Robinson & Co, solicitors and MGI Rickard Keen, Chartered Accountants.

The Blues to U's Walk was launched on the pitch at half-time during the Oldham game on Saturday 22nd November 2008 with Rev. Trevor Williams from Havens Hospices and several Trust members.

Sponsorship Forms are available from the Trust Info Stand in the Shrimpers Bar, SUFC's Main Reception and the SUFC Ticket Office. You can also download a Sponsorship Form from the Trust Website www.shrimperstrust.co.uk .



We have also set up a page on the Just Giving Website which can be accessed by visting the following webpage <http://www.justgiving.com/bluestousbryanwoodford>

This article first appeared on the Shrimpers Trust website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk, where you can find out all the latest news from the Trust



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IT'S A MARATHON – NOT A SPRINT



The ING New York City Marathon is one of the world's great road races, drawing more than 100,000 applicants. Each athlete has the chance to excel in the media capital of the world before two million cheering spectators and 315 million worldwide television viewers. As any one of the more than 700,000 past participants will attest, crossing the finish line in Central Park is one of the great thrills of a lifetime and Trust Member and avid Southend United Fan Joe Elliott is no exception!

On the 2nd November 2008, Joe completed the New York Marathon bearing the Shrimpers Trust name on behalf of The Parkinson's Disease Society in a time of **3 hours 03 minutes 21 seconds** (*at an average of 6.59 minutes per mile*) which is a remarkable achievement considering his age and also considering that the New York Marathon is thought of as one of the most challenging races in the world.

When interviewed Joe said, "*The Parkinson's Disease Society is a charity that I hold very close to my heart having lost my Grampy through the disease on the 14th February 2005. I dedicate each marathon I run to the memory of my Grampy and to my nanny who witnessed more than anyone the effect that Parkinson's Disease can have on somebody's life.*"

This was Joe's third marathon having run the London Marathon in both 2007 and 2008 and has to date raised in excess of £12,000 for the charity. The Shrimpers Trust was delighted to support such a good cause as well as a loyal supporter of the football club and trust and wish Joe all the best for 26th April this Year when he will be running the Flora London Marathon.

CHELSEA – FA CUP 3rd ROUND – JAN 3rd 2009

The Shrimpers Trust Board and Committee would like to thank the following for their help in getting the 16 Coaches to Stamford Bridge and back: *Clare Brooks, Tom Brooks, Dave 'Junior' Taylor, Brian Cotgrove, John Spooner, Alan Gifford, Warren Sadler, Keith Overall, Paul Smith, Alec Trott, Paul FitzGerald, Kevin Brown, David Cardy, Derek Jaques, Lee Bird, Trevor Bashford* along with *Rob Craven* and *Paul Yeomanson* for their help at Roots Hall.

Thanks also to *Ian Bridge* from SBC Leisure, *D.C. Spooner* from Essex Police, *Ray Davy* and *Southend United FC*.



As some of you will be aware the Trust had for sale a limited edition Hard Enamel Pin Badge for this game, in fact it was that limited it had the wrong year on it !!!!

For those of you who travelled and didn't get one, or for those of you who want one the badges cost just **£1.50** and are available from the Trust Info Stand in the Shrimpers Bar at Roots Hall or by post from: **The Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 9FD**. If ordering by post please enclose a covering letter advising quantity required and despatch address along with a Cheque made payable to S.U.S.C.T. Please add **50p** to the Total to cover our Postage Costs.



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CHELSEA – FA CUP 3rd ROUND REPLAY– JAN 14th 2009

We would like to pass on the following message sent by Peter Trenter, the Co-Vice Chair of the Chelsea Supporters Group.

Sir / Madam,

Please pass on my thanks to all at Roots Hall for a superb night out at the football.

The opportunity to visit clubs from the lower divisions are a rare thing nowadays and something I know most Chelsea supporters look forward to.

The welcome we received from all was fantastic, the result helped of course but you should be proud of all your staff and supporters for the pleasant and helpful way we were dealt with. Too many times we encounter heavy handed officials and police at Premiership away games and it was good to see that 'proper' enthusiasm from lower league clubs still exists.

Best of luck for the rest of the season and thank you again for a memorable night.

Peter Trenter
Co Vice-Chair

<http://www.chelseasupportersgroup.net>

YOUTH TEAM ROUND UP – By ROB CRAVEN

As we enter 2009, there are many reasons to be pleased with the progress that continues to be made at Southend United's Centre of Excellence under the stewardship of Ricky Duncan.

Despite failing to emulate last season's historic achievements in the F.A. Youth Cup with a first round exit at the hands of Brentford, Blues' Youths find themselves nicely points within touching distance of the leaders in the Football League Youth Alliance ready to launch an assault on what would be a first-ever League title in the South-East Conference.

The teenage Shrimpers suffered a painful penalty shoot-out reverse against the Bees in what turned out to be a thrilling Cup tie at Roots Hall, with the visitors being reduced to ten men and forward Craig Calver missing a penalty kick that meant that the fixture went into extra time. A further half-an-hour failed to separate the sides and, after 17 successful spot-kicks, it was the unfortunate Marcus Milner who saw his penalty saved.

The game further promoted the progress of second-year scholar Stuart O'Keefe, who netted twice - including a stunningly-executed free-kick - and ended the year having signed a three-year professional contract with the club. The other goalscorer was Justin Hazell, an attacking midfielder who has scored eight goals in 13 appearances for the Under-18s. Both made their first-team debuts in the F.A. Cup first round replay against A.F.C. Telford United.

In the next round of that competition, Steve Tilson caused a stir by introducing Under-16 starlet Femi Orenuga who, at 15 years and 256 days, became the youngest talent ever to appear for Southend United at senior level. Orenuga's elevation was all the more remarkable since it came before he had made a single appearance for the Under-18s or the reserve team, although it did come off of the back of a week-long trial at Premier League and European Champions League winners Manchester United.

The top goalscorer for the youth team at the turn of the year is Craig Calver, the second-year being the final recruit to the squad in mid-August. The former Ipswich Town trainee netted on his debut



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as a substitute at home to Millwall and bagged a brace in the next fixture away to local rivals Colchester United.

However, it was against Queens Park Rangers that the 17-year-old really made his mark, scoring on four separate occasions as Blues recorded a landmark 5-3 victory in west London. Rangers have won the League title for the past three seasons. The success helped Duncan's team qualify for the knock-out stages, although they were defeated narrowly 3-2 at Boots & Laces against Gillingham.

United were unbeaten in the League at the turn of the year, a run that now stretches back to March. Among the highlights - aside from the 2-1 win at Colchester - was a 6-2 triumph at Aldershot Town as Harry Crawford and Marcus Milner scored their first goals of the season and a 2-1 success against Gillingham, as Kyle Asante bagged his inaugural two goals on his full debut.

There are a swathe of new faces at the club aside from Hazell, Milner, Crawford and Asante, with Callum Whittaker and Ade Osifuwa at centre-half, Duran Reynolds impressing on the left-hand side of defence and Merrick James-Lewis in midfield. All the signs are that there will be another batch in 2009/10, with a series of Under-16s debutants in the senior youth team following a fantastic start to their own season.

The Under-18s play their home fixtures at Boots & Laces on Eastern Avenue in Southend-on-Sea, and spectators are always welcome. Kick-off is generally 11:00am, but it is worth checking the club's official website, www.southendunited.co.uk, for any late amendments.

Match reports of all matches can be found on the Shrimpers Trust website, www.shrimperstrust.co.uk, as well as season statistics and full player profiles. Comments are always welcome via info@shrimperstrust.co.uk.

THE TRUST – What We've Done

The Shrimpers Trust Committee continue to convene on a monthly basis in order to discuss the latest pressing matters and debate how best we can represent the supporters of Southend United F.C.

The Trust has been fortunate of late to be able to welcome new blood in Paul Smith, Lara McSweeney and Alex Trott, who were co-opted formally onto our committee at the last Annual General Meeting. For those of us who have served for a number of years now, it has been useful and challenging to hear their views on the way forward, and the past two meetings - held on 1st December 2008 and 5th January 2009 - have largely focussed on this subject.

Needless to say, there are a number of new ideas in the pipeline which the committee will continue to discuss ahead of their implementation. One of our core targets is to increase the participation of our membership, and your thoughts are always welcome at info@shrimperstrust.co.uk. We fully intend to be canvassing opinion in a more thorough and concentrated manner over the coming weeks, so keep your eyes peeled!

There was another new face at our last meeting in John Freemantle. John has been attending meetings of the Football Supporters Federation (FSF) across the southeast of England since moving up from the south coast, and he wished to represent the Shrimpers Trust in this organisation. The committee felt that, after the departure of former secretary Terry Jeffreys, this was a neglected aspect of our role as a Trust, and we delighted to invite John onto the committee so that his participation with the FSF became more formal. Providing he enjoys his time with us, John will official become part of the Trust committee at the next AGM.

Discussions have continued to take place to make sure that the Blues To U's Walk on 20th/21st February runs - or indeed walks! - smoothly. Paul Yeomanson and Bryan Woodford have already driven along the route, and a sub-committee has been formed in order to deal with any issues that may arise over the next four weeks.



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If you have any subjects that you feel should be discussed by the Trust committee at its next meeting on 2nd February, please get in touch at info@shrimperstrust.co.uk or come and speak to us in the Shrimpers Bar on any home matchday and we will be more than happy to make a representation to the group.

FUNDRAISING

Christmas Draw

This year's Christmas Draw took place at half-time during the Home Game v Northampton on Friday 26th December 2008.

The winning tickets were drawn by Southend United Club Captain Adam Barrett, and the Trust would like to thank Garry Adamson and SUFC for arranging this.

	Prize	Ticket No.	Winner
First Prize	£1000	8982	Steve Ray
Second Prize	£500	11981	Jim Cleves
Third Prize	£250	2894	Brian Collins
Fourth Prize	Signed SUFC Football <i>(donated by SUFC)</i>	6894	Colin White
Fifth Prize	Bottle of Champagne	15013	B & J Cotgrove

We would like to thank all those who helped raise funds for the Trust, either by selling, or by buying the draw tickets.

100 Club

The latest winners in the scheme, pulled out of the hat during weekly draws since the last newsletter were: **Nigel Rickard, Alec Trott, Paul Smith, Grham Truman, Wally Depsy, John Walton, Derek Clench and David Mason** each collecting around **£35.00**. However the biggest winner since our last Newsletter was Graham Hilder who won £350 in the 100 Club Xmas Draw. Congratulations to him and all the weekly winners.

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 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

This Season's Quid A Goal scheme is now up and running and with numerous pledges made so far the current running total after **29** matches is **£1,114.10**.

For this season part of the funds raised from the QAG scheme will be given to the Southend United Community & Educational Trust (SUCET) to help fund their Bodycare Programme. This programme is delivered young children of both Infant and Junior school age to help them get a healthy start in life with the benefits of physical activity and healthy eating being covered as well as mental and social health.

If you would like to help raise funds for this worthy cause you can do so by visiting the Trust Info Stand in the Shrimpers Bar prior to any Home Game or by completing the form printed in this season's SUFC Match Day Programmes.

Application forms are also available for download from the Trust Website www.shrimperstrust.co.uk



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MEMBERSHIP

Life Membership (total: 159)

This newsletter we would like to welcome three new Life Members, **Pippa Herbert, John Smith and Paul Smith.**

If you are interested in joining this group please contact our Membership Secretary, Paul Yeomanson via email at 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, 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:

James Allman, Gary Beard, Mark Brett, Reece Burton, Paul Burton, Gary Button, Andrew Clark, Terry Craven, Christine Dixon, Phil Endell, Penny Frost, Alan Fuller, Therese Gowan, Stuart Graham, Ian Green, Peter Hall, Peter Harrington, Perry Harrington, Paul Hewitt, Andrew Hughes, Mr G. Keyes, Mrs A. Keyes, John Kidney, Mark Kohlbeck, Matt Lagden, Simon Lennox, Graham Lipscombe, David Lisner, Simon Lisner, Ron Maylin, Susan McCamley, Steven Moss, Sandra Moss, Joan Pateman, Trevor Pawsey, David Pearce, Charlotte Pearce, Terence Penn, Chris Poore, Ron Pountney, Clare Rankin-MacLean, Maureen Raven, Mandy Roberts, Nicole Sansom, Mark Seamark, Peter Shaw, Graeme Shaw, Clive Skingley, Laura Skingley, Mark Smith, Jason Spink, Donna Stone, Ian Tandy, Peter Valentine, John Wall, Michele Wall, David Waters, Fred Waton and Sarah Zimmer.

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 ***

2008/09 SEASON TRUST EVENTS

Quiz Night – Saturday 31st January 2009

The Trust will be holding another of their popular Quiz Nights in the Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall, on Saturday 31st January.

Admission is £8 for adults and £5 for juniors (including fish-and-chip supper).

So why not come along and test your general knowledge brains against other shrimpers.

This event is selling out fast so please contact Alan Perry on 01702 476458 or alanperry4@hotmail.com to check availability.

Bowling Night – Thursday 12th February 2009

On Thursday 12th February at 7.15pm (for a 7.30pm start) the Shrimpers Trust will be holding a bowling evening with the **Blues** at the Kursaal Bowl, Southend on Sea.

At a cost of £10 per person (plus £1 shoe hire) you will have the opportunity of winning a bottle of bubbly if you score a strike when the randomly positioned 'golden' pin is positioned as the headpin on your lane and will also have the chance to meet or bowl with members of the current Southend United FC squad.

For further details or to book a place please contact Alan Perry on 01702 476458 or alanperry4@hotmail.com.



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Programme Fair – Sunday 19th April 2009

The Shrimpers Trust will have a stand at the Annual Southend United Football Memorabilia & Programme Fair on **Sunday 19th April** in the Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall, where we will be selling our normal range of Trust Merchandise including Pin Badges, Books, Shirts, Coffee Mugs, Car Stickers and much, much more.

We will also be selling from our Stand 'The Southend United Miscellany' by Dave Goody & Peter Miles.

The book is a 100-page, A5 paperback, featuring hundreds of interesting facts and snippets about Southend United. The book has over 200 photos/illustrations, 173 in black/white and 34 in colour and priced at just **£7.99**



This annual event, organised by The Football Programme Directory is a must visit for those wishing to add to their Programme Collection or wanting to buy Football Memorabilia in general. Admission is just **50p** and there will be several Programme/Memorabilia Vendors in attendance.

Forthcoming Events for 2009

The following is a list of further events confirmed for 2008/2009. Full details will be published in future Newsletters and on the Trust Website.

Saturday 7th March 2009

RACE NIGHT

The Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall – 7.00pm for a 7.30pm prompt start

Tickets: £3.00

For further details contact Paul Yeomanson

(Tel: 01702 302373, email: info@shrimperstrust.co.uk)



Tuesday 31st March 2009

CURRY NIGHT

The Maharaja, London Road, Benfleet – 7.30 pm for 8.00 pm meal

£12.00 – All You Can Eat Buffet

For further details contact Alan Perry

(Tel: 01702 476458, email: alanperry4@hotmail.com)



Saturday 18th April 2009

QUIZ NIGHT

The Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall – 7.30pm for an 8.00pm prompt start

£8.00 Adults, £5.00 U18's – Includes Fish & Chip Supper

For further details contact Alan Perry

(Tel: 01702 476458, email: alanperry4@hotmail.com)





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MATCH REPORTS – Bashford's Banter

Saturday 8th November 2008 – AFC Telford (Away) FA Cup Rnd. 1 – Result (D) 2-2

The joy and hysteria of the FA Cup returns as Southend United set-off for Shropshire and a potential banana skin against non-league opposition. Many of the Blue Army have short memories if games against Scarborough, Kingstonians, Aylesbury, Harlow, Yeovil Town, etc. etc. are anything to go by.

What a fantastic set-up that Telford has at their new ground. Their facilities are way above many Coca Cola league grounds and their catering and pricing should be reviewed by all Premiership and Coca Cola league clubs. There is definitely something for our own club to note and learn from. Ticket prices at £10 for adults and £3 concessions a credit to the board of Telford, who did not use a game against football league opposition to put up prices. Let us hope that for the replay we do not make the same mistakes (i.e. Vs Oxford united) and two teams play to a near empty Roots Hall in the replay.

Now my rant begins and I must disagree with some of Steve Tilson's comments as reported in the press. If Peter Clarke's goal had not been disallowed and if the same player had not missed a penalty we would have been out of sight. This did not happen so where is the credit for Telford's fantastic second half performance? They had us on the back foot for a large part of the second half and a neutral would say they deserved to win!!! ?????

My personal view is that Saturday was one of our poorest performances to date this season, and of the 18 players on the team sheet the majority should be donating their wages to the British Legion Poppy Appeal, as they definitely did not turn up to play football!!!!!! I am only one opinion but to me they played as if the game was already won before they came onto the pitch and a cynic would say they had been out in the West Midlands the night before celebrating being in the draw for the 2nd round. There was no passion, no drive and no enthusiasm, the only exceptions being Herd and Christophe.

Four enforced changes to the starting 11 Vs Colchester as Chelsea, Ipswich and Reading would not allow their loan players to start. Mildenhall for Federici, Herd for Harding, Grant for Robson-Kanu and McCormack for Sawyer. This is the down side of having so many loan players even though we allowed Ritchie Foran to start for Darlington. Perhaps he should have been in our starting eleven? Still thank goodness Portsmouth allowed Christopher to play.

Telford started brightly with their first chance coming after 45 seconds with a header from a free kick just over the bar. Very little else to report about for remainder of the half:

- Southend first shot came after 30 minutes when a McCormack shot was nearer the corner flag than the goal
- 37 minutes – good play down the left by Laurent sets up Revel but his shot was over the bar when it looked easier to score
- 38 minutes – quick thinking by Christopher with a quick free kick to Laurent, whilst the Telford players were still disputing the hand-ball decision and the ball hits the back of the net. 1 – 0 Southend

Telford definitely had a pep talk at half-time albeit the visitors started the second half brightly totally dominating the first ten minutes.

- 54 minutes – a long throw from Herd was headed on by Revell and Peter Clarke powers home. To the amazement of everyone goal disallowed on the word of a linesman apparently for interference against the Telford keeper
- 55 minutes – Southend receive a penalty. Peter Clarke took the penalty, hit the post and Revell hit the rebound over the bar. No doubt referee Scott would have disallowed as not touched by a Telford player!!!!
- 56 minutes – Naylor, who had been cautioned for disputing the penalty cynically fouls McCormack but gets away with a lecture when normally he would have been dismissed for two bookable tackles
- Now one way traffic and the Southend defence held firm until the 70th minute when Jon Adams shot home through a crowd of players and Telford had equalised
- Southend are now finding it hard to retain possession and it is all Telford. On 83 minutes Adams again fires home inside a crowded penalty area and a shock is on the stocks as Telford lead 2 – 1. Even the home fans, which had been very quiet, are now making a noise, sensing a giant killing act.
- Southend are suddenly away, realising that there is little time to rescue the game. Tilly makes 2 substitutions, Walker for Grant and Scannell for Betsy.
- In the dying seconds of time added on, after Southend had had their best period of the game, a shot from Christophe broke the hearts of the home fans when it flew into the home net, albeit a couple of deflections on the way. Away fans relieved but not delirious.



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Crowd: 3,631.

Team: Mildenhall, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Herd, Betsy (Scannell), Christophe, Grant (Walker), McCormack, Revell and Laurent. *Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Sankofa, Furlong, O'Keefe and Hazell.*

Saturday 15th November 2008 – Tranmere (Away) – Result (D) 2-2

Match Report Not Available

Crowd: 5,019.

Team: Federici, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Betsy (Grant), Sawyer (McCormack), Christophe, Robson-Kanu, Revell and Laurent. *Substitutes Not Used: Mildenhall, Sankofa, and Scannell.*

Tuesday 18th November 2008 – AFC Telford (Home) FA Cup Rnd. 1 (Replay) – Result (W) 2-0

Match Report Not Available

Crowd: 4,415.

Team: Mildenhall, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Herd, Scannell (Ademeno), Christophe, Grant (Hazell), McCormack (O'Keefe), Betsy and Walker. *Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Sankofa, and Lokando.*

Saturday 22nd November 2008 – Oldham Athletic (Home) – Result (L) 1-2

I would like to praise the Southend United fans who gave our former captain Kevin Maher a fantastic welcome back to Roots Hall. Kevin was a fantastic servant to our club and notwithstanding any comments from Steve Tilson or Ron Martin there is a feeling that he was badly treated by Southend United and is sadly missed – he was a great and loyal character.

It was also a sad end to the game when we bade farewell to another loan player, this time goalkeeper Federici. We all wish him best on his return to Reading and he deserves to break into their first team as soon as possible. Welcome to Robert Milson from Fulham.

There were three changes to the starting XI Vs Telford Federici replacing Mildenhall, Herd for Harding and Milsom for Grant.

- 4 minutes: Revell just wide but deemed to be offside.
- 28 minutes: Great play involving Francis, Walker and Milsom with Revell again just wide.
- 31 minutes: Great play between Revell and Betsy saw the ball forced away for a corner
- 32 minutes: Clarke has the ball in the Oldham net following rebound from a Christophe shot that hit the post – off side.
- 35 minutes: A Milson free-kick causes panic in the Cheltenham penalty area but eventually scrambled clear.
- 0 – 0 at half time only some erratic kicking from Crossley in the Oldham goal to keep us amused. We were the more dominant team but the visitors always dangerous on the break

More effort from both sides in the second half but yet again we are sunk by the “killer punch” of a good counter attacking team.

- 53 minutes: Oldham start to show their attacking prowess, especially down the left wing. Taylor crosses and Lee Hughes just wide when unmarked.
- 54 minutes: Inspirational play from the home team with Betsy and Francis combining well down the right. A pin point cross from Francis and that man Walker is there again to fire the Shrimpers into the load. Deserved on possession but not overly convincing!!!!
- 55 minutes: First caution of the game Shelton for dissent having seconds before fouled Walker. Harding fires free kick over.
- 63 minutes: Hughes shakes off Clarke and Federici
- 64 minutes: Taylor crosses and Byfield effort tipped over by the Southend keeper.
- 65 minutes: Corner finds Walker unmarked and score 1 – 1. Again defence found wanting – this time Harding loses his man.
- 71 minutes: Free kick from left, Hughes peels away from Barrett at the far post and fires home - nothing Federici could do.
- 72 minutes: Kevin Maher cautioned for foul – where are the fireworks between him and McCormack?



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- Ademeno and Grant introduced to try to change things, at the expense of Revell and Christophe, but to no effect. Oldham hang on for a 2 – 1 victory.

Crowd: 7,014. League position: 9th.

Team: Federici, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Betsy, Christophe (Grant), McCormack, Revell (Ademeno), Milsom and Walker. Substitutes Not Used: Mildenhall, Herd and Sankofa.

Tuesday 25th November 2008 – Cheltenham Town (Away) – Result (D) 0-0

Welcome to the excitement, or not, of a match Vs a “Mad Dog XI” on a freezing cold, frosty Tuesday evening in Gloucestershire. It is great watching “the high ball kick and chase game” just made for the “land of the giants”. This game was always going to be 0 – 0 because it featured two of the worse defences in the division.

There were two changes to the starting XI Vs Oldham with Mildenhall replacing Federici, who returned to Reading to “warm the bench” and Sankofa for the sick Revell. Very little to write about but here goes !!!!!!!

- 19 minutes: Sankofa attempts to bring some excitement into the game with a poor, misplaced, back pass. Barrett eventually clears
- 21 minutes: A Milson cross finds Adam Barrett but his header just wide.
- 27 minutes: After some hair tennis in and around the penalty box Bird shoots well wide for the home team
- 35 minutes: A Milson free-kick causes panic in the Cheltenham penalty area but eventually scrambled clear.
- 45 minutes: Cheltenham come close but shot well saved by Mildenhall – we nearly had something to shout about but 0 – 0 at half time.

More effort from both sides in the second half and the home team did “score” but ruled out for offside.

- 46 minutes: Free kick come cross from right well saved by Mildenhall
- 48 minutes: McCormack shoots wide after some good work down the left wing.
- 50 minutes: Cheltenham think they have broken the deadlock and score with a “fantastic” goal line bicycle kick but celebrations cut short as “scorer” was “miles offside”.
- 55 minutes: First of three Cheltenham substitutions. Could someone please explain to me why other teams are allowed to refresh their team when we keep the same players even when one or two appear to be playing badly – my personal perception but a big frustration!!!!!!
- 56 minutes: Long shot from Vincent, a player whose attempts at diving scored well for artistic impression, well saved by Mildenhall
- 66 minutes: Pin point cross from Francis to Betsy from which the latter should have scored – frustration of crowd growing!!! Sawyer cautioned following incident with Mr Kay – he is becoming a “real thorn in our side”
- 70 minutes: Another Cheltenham substitution Payne for Lenton – what is the world coming to – changing the team looking for a home win.
- 75 minutes: Francis crosses again and Betsy, albeit in the right place misses.
- 76 minutes: Harding cautioned when “last man” – some referees might have given a red but player forced away from direct run in on.
- 77 minutes: Milson hits cross bar from yet another “perfect” cross from Francis
- 79 minutes: Third Cheltenham substitution – movement on the visiting bench but as it appears Grant to enter the fray he puts on tracksuit and sits back down
- 85 minutes: Good run from Walker but no scoring effort at the end
- 87 minutes: Betsy put clear in penalty area – he must score but no loses the ball. Some claims for a penalty but no one near him.
- 89 minutes: Cheltenham attempt to claim a penalty but referee, who in my opinion had a good game, waved play-on.

Crowd: 2,908 League position: 10th.

Team: Mildenhall, Sankofa, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Francis, McCormack, Christophe, Milsom, Betsy and Walker. Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Herd, Grant, O’Keefe and Ademeno.

Saturday 29th November 2008 – Luton Town (Home) FA Cup Rnd. 2 – Result (W) 3-1

Weather conditions cold and wet but fortunately we did not have the freezing fog that caused either the postponement or abandonment of a number of other F A Cup ties. Why do Southend United make their fans sweat week in / week out? This was a game we dominated from start to finish but at the end supporters were biting their finger nails worried that we would have to go to Luton for a mid-week replay.



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Fantastic to see two of my boy-hood heroes, Gary Moore and Billy Best, make a return to Roots Hall forty years after making FA Cup history after both scored a hat-trick in both the first and second rounds of this competition. With the ongoing injuries to Messrs Barnard and Freedman perhaps we should consider signing the legends on short term contracts. We again made history on Saturday when we introduced a 15 year old substitute, Orenuja, in the closing seconds of the game but at the time of writing these notes there is a rumour that Mike Harford the Luton Town manager is challenging his eligibility.

The downside of playing loan players is the number of team changes, match on match, especially where teams refuse to allow their players to play in the early rounds of the F. A. Cup. Still thanks to West Ham for allowing Junior Stanislas to make his debut and what a debut it was!!!! Changes to the starting eleven at Cheltenham were Herd for Harding; the fit again Revell for Sankofa; Stanislas for Milsom, and Laurent returning from a three match suspension, for Walker.

- 1st minutes: Francis crosses to Revell whose effort cleared for a corner
- 11th minute: A sign of what was to come later with a Stanislas free-kick into the side netting
- 20th minute: First meaningful Luton effort with Paul McVeigh shooting straight at Mildenhall
- 25th minute: Francis's cross from the right met on the volley by Revell and tipped wide for a corner by Conrad Logan in the Luton goal.
- 34th minute: Betsy fouled by Roper just outside the Luton penalty area for which the former cautioned, albeit the linesman was flagging for either off-side or a foul but ignored by referee Mr Penn who I thought had a great game. Stanislas curls a wonder free-kick into the top corner of the Luton net to make it 1 – 0.
- 37th minute: Betsy, now looking very dangerous on the right, working well with Francis, and crosses from the goal line and Revell misses with a side foot shot when to the supporter in the stand it appeared to be easier to score.
- 38th minute: Howells in acres of space in the Southend penalty area shoots well wide when, as a minimum, he should have forced Mildenhall into a save
- 39th minute: Luton substitution Pilkington for Roper
- 40th minute: Long ball flicked on by Revell to Christophe who shoots just over the bar
- 42nd minute: Low cross from Christophe on the left missed by everyone
- 43rd minute: Betsy corner headed over by Christophe

1 – 0 at half time with the home team in the ascendancy but will we be punished for a high volume of missed chances?

Second half much the same as the first albeit Luton still confident of snatching an equaliser on the break and taking the game into a replay.

- 46th minute: Great run by Laurent and, as in the first half, cross missed by everyone.
- 47th minute: More pandemonium in the Luton penalty area, this time following a shot / cross from Betsy which ended Luton scrambling the ball clear
- 52nd minute: Great play between Francis, McCormack and Christophe again sees the ball scrambled clear.
- 60th minute: First meaningful Luton effort of the half sees Hall rob the ball off the Southend defence but he shoots well wide
- 63rd minute: Revell sets Herd free and the young left back's effort well saved by Logan.
- 64th minute: Wonders of wonders a Southend United substitution Grant for Christophe
- 70th minute: Final "throw of the dice" from Luton with Andrews and Emanuel introduced for Jarvis & Davis
- 76th minute: 2nd Southend substitution with Walker replacing Revell, the latter have hardly trained in the past week due to illness.
- 78th minute: Barrett effort cleared off the line
- 80th minute: A rare Luton attack results in a corner. Home fans on tender hooks when the inevitable happens. Spillane unmarked and ball in net for 1 – 1.
- 84th minute: Gutsy Southend fight back and a brilliant move down the rights which sees McCormack setting Betsy free and his pin point cross headed home by debutant Stanislas at the far post to make it 2 – 1. The home fans breathe a sigh of relief.
- 90th minute: This time McCormack sets Grant away down the right and his cross smashed home by Walker to make it 3 – 1 and we can now think of the 3rd round of the FA Cup.
- Dying Seconds: Orenuja introduced for Stanislas and the debutant receives due approval from the home fans.



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A great team effort made all the better with Sunday's draw and a trip to Stamford Bridge. We must not get carried away with the glory of the Cup because between now and then we have key league games against Leicester, Huddersfield, Hartlepool, Northampton and Franchise FC.

Crowd: 4,111.

Team: Mildenhall, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Herd, Betsy, Christophe (Grant), McCormack, Revell (Walker), Stanislas (Orenuja) and Laurent. *Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Sankofa, O'Keefe and Hazell.*

Saturday 6th December 2008 – Leicester City (Away) – Result (L) 0-3

A cold, frosty but sunny day saw Southend United travel to the East Midlands for a game against the league leaders. This was a day when former Southend stalwart Chris Powell received an award for his 750th league appearance and was enthusiastically applauded by both sets of supporters. It was a game in which both sides created chances but only one, Matty Fryatt was able to score. He was well supported by his partner in crime the experienced Steve Howard/ If only both Messrs and Barnard and Freedman were fully fit perhaps we would convert more of the chances that we are creating. It must be said that we are creating chances but not having the "rub of the green" in front of goal.

Two team changes from the team that started against Luton Town in the FA Cup with Milsom replacing Christophe, who has returned to Portsmouth as his loan period is over and he will definitely be missed in the centre of mid-field, and Harding returning at left back for Herd. If the youngster is good enough to play in the cup he is good enough to start in the league and as a fan not sure why change was made, especially as Harding's loan is up shortly.

Both sides started brightly and an early effort from Fryatt following a pin point pass from the right back gave us a warning of what was to come. If we could stop giving the ball away in our own half of the pitch we could take the pressure off our defence.

- 6th minute: a great pass to Fryatt saw the lively striker cut inside Adam Barrett to slide home the first goal
- 15th minute: A pin point cross from Francis picked out Revell but the hard working Blues striker headed over from six yards
- 18th minute: free-kick from the lively Stanislas was met by Barrett but the Leicester keeper was able to scramble clear.
- 20th minute: First meaningful Luton effort with Paul McVeigh shooting straight at Mildenhall
- 24th minute: Barrett fouls Howard, I thought it was in the penalty area, but referee Boyeson and his linesman disagreed and a free-kick awarded just outside the penalty area. Resulting kick timidly shot straight at Mildenhall.
- 38th minute: Good play by Milsom but Laurent's effort just wide.

1 – 0 at half time with the home team having lots of possession, helped by the visitors persistently giving the ball away but we always looked dangerous on the break. If only we had a striker with 22 goals in all games before Christmas (in fact 19 days before Christmas).

Second half started on the same pattern as the first with lots of Leicester pressure but the Southend defence "just about" holding out.

- 54th minute: Great play by Stanislas but his resulting shot was well saved by Martin.
- 55th minute: Leicester substitution Davies for Berner.
- 66th minute: The bustling Howard fires over the Southend bar
- 70th minute: Francis loses possession on the halfway line to Dyer whose run towards goal fortunately ends tamely
- 71st minute: Southend substitution Walker for Laurent
- 73rd minute: Second Leicester substitution with Morrison replacing the injured Tunchev
- 76th minute: Howard flicks on a long free kick from goal keeper Martin and Fryatt slots home number two.
- 78th minute: Good play by the visitors see Milsom force a great save out of Martin.
- 70th minute: Final "throw of the dice" from Luton with Andrews and Emanuel introduced for Jarvis & Davis
- 80th minute: Peter Clarke handles in the penalty area and Fryatt coolly slots home from the penalty spot to complete his second successive hat-trick.
- 81st minute: A debut from Liam Feeney, on loan from Salisbury, as a replacement for Betsy
- 84th minute: Shot from King well saved by Mildenhall
- 85th minute: Final Leicester substitution with the experienced Dickov replacing hat trick hero Fryatt,



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- 86th minute: A quick Southend free-kick and Stanislas just wide.
- 90th minute +: Good work by Walker but Revell again fires wide.

At end the game both sets of fans applauded Chris Powell, who had a good game at left back for Leicester, as he did a lap of honour distributing shirts to all supporters.

Crowd: 16,836. League position: 11th.

Team: Mildenhall, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Betsy (Feeney), Milsom, McCormack, Revell, Stanislas and Laurent (Walker). Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Grant and Sankofa.

Saturday 13th December 2008 – Huddersfield Town (Home) – Result (L) 0-1

A cold, wet and windy afternoon at Roots Hall where at pitch level there was no protection from the inclement weather or the unhappy home fans.

Forget the FA Cup trip to Chelsea and the circa £350k that the club will make success in the league is far more important and at the time of writing we have not won a league game since beating Leeds United 1-0 on 28th October. Since that date we have only picked up three points out of a maximum of 18 from draws with Colchester (3-3), Tranmere (2-2) and Cheltenham (0-0). We have slipped to 12th in the league – 17 points behind leaders Leicester City and 15 points ahead of bottom club Crewe. What has gone wrong since the end of last season when we made the pay-off semi finals? Is it because of the number of experienced players that we let go? Is it because of the frequent changes as a result of bringing in loan players? Is it because of the long term absence of our two key strikers (i.e. Messrs Freedman & Barnard)?

Starting XI as at Leicester but with two key changes on the substitutes' bench with Freedman and Barnard replacing Joyce and Feeney. Both sides started well and we always looked good on the break but for large periods of the first half Huddersfield played "keep ball", frustrating Southend but fortunately no goals came from all that possession.

- 7th minute: a telling cross from the right and Gary Roberts just wide for the visitors
- 8th minute: Swift passage of play from defence to attack and Laurent heads over from a Betsy cross.
- 9th minute: home side remain in an attacking mode and Laurent this time hits the post after a perfect through pass from Dan Harding, but all blushes spared as lineman flagged for off-side
- 16th minute: Milsom cautioned after late tackle in own half of the field. 18th minute: Ball played behind Simon Francis and Craney fired wide for the visitors, albeit to the man or woman in the stand looked easier to score.
- 19th minute: No magic today as Stanislas fires a free kick high over the bar
- 25th minute: After several minutes of "keep ball" Huddersfield fired straight at Southend keeper Mildenhall.
- 30th minute: Great run from Barrett, starting in his own half of the field, but his shot was deflected wide for a corner.
- 31st minute: Huddersfield effort wide on the left clawed away by Mildenhall from under his cross-bar
- 36th minute: Good play between McCormack and Milsom sees the Fulham youngster fire his shot just wide of the left hand post.

A goalless first half in which Southend played well in patches but visitors had far more possession.

- 46th minute: Stanislas breaks up a Huddersfield passing move and good passing between the West Ham youngster and Revell sees the play played out to Harding and his cross headed over by Laurent.
- 48th minute: Michael Collins given the "freedom of the park" on the Huddersfield left and his cross rammed home by Ian Craney with the Southend defence "playing statues".
- 55th minute: After a foul on Revell, a Stanislas free-kick well saved by the Huddersfield keeper.
- 57th minute: Good combination play between Betsy and Francis on the right and the latter's cross missed by everyone, including Laurent on the far post.
- 60th minute: Home crowd happy to see the return of Freedman replacing the "out of form" Laurent
- 61st minute: Wild tackle from McCormack sees him pick up his 5th caution of the season – not bad considering out injured for first few months, followed by long periods on the substitutes' bench.
- 72nd minute: Second Southend substitution with Walker replacing Revell.
- 83rd minute: Betsy fouled in the Huddersfield penalty area and penalty awarded. Walker takes the ball off Freedman and hits one of the weakest penalty kicks seen for seasons straight at the Huddersfield keeper. Crowd show frustration, especially with regular penalty taker Barnard waiting to enter the "field of play"
- 84th minute: Barnard replaces Stanislas for Southend and Huddersfield substitution of Clarke for Collins
- 85th minute: Goal scorer Craney cautioned for a foul on Freedman



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- 87th minute: 2nd Huddersfield substitution Camera for Roberts.

In the end an easy win for Huddersfield and the home side booed off the pitch. A shame that circa 1,200 youngsters, invited to the game on a special pricing deal, saw a poor Southend performance – remember these youngsters are the future of the club !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

So forget all about Chelsea and let's all get behind the team at Hartlepool, at home to Northampton and away to MK Dons.

Crowd: 8,366. League position: 12th.

Team: Mildenhall, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Betsy, Milsom, McCormack, Revell (Walker), Stanislas (Barnard) and Laurent (Freedman). Substitutes Not Used: Grant and Sankofa.

Friday 19th December 2008 – Hartlepool United (Away) – Result (L) 0-3

Whoever was responsible for agreeing that Southend United would make a circa 600 mile return journey on the Friday before Christmas wants either shooting or their head examining. What consideration was made for the "loyal supporters" of both clubs but especially the travelling yellow army? The reward was the lowest crowd in Coca Cola league one over the weekend of 19th / 20th December and the blow was not even cushioned by TV revenue. The decision makers in football need some lessons in "Customer Service and Treating Customers Fairly" because at a time of reduced crowds due to the recession no normal person would make such a decision.

The travelling support, circa 120 strong, was again magnificent with their non stop singing in the second half showing true British Bull Dog spirit. They took annual leave, rearranged shifts, gave up attending Christmas Parties and even arrange a business trip to North Yorkshire to watch Southend. You are all true supporters. I also appreciate that a number of you had no annual leave remaining, did not finish school or college in time to travel to the North East but when you saw the result I bet you were glad you stayed at home.

When will officials at Southend United realise that at present the yellow shirt appears to be a jinx as is the players staying overnight before a game. Who says football fans are superstitious and keep statistics?

The first half was played in atrocious weather conditions with a swirling wind and driving sleety / rain. Manager less Hartlepool started brightly with a shoot on site policy. As per past few weeks we were again content to surrender possession and rely on the counter attack. Lee Barnard for Laurent was the only Southend United change from the fixture Vs Huddersfield.

- 1st minute: Joel Porter fires straight at Mildenhall for the home team
 - 2nd minute: Great play down the Huddersfield left and with Ben Clark shooting over. All one way traffic at this stage.
 - 4th minute: Porter steals possession on the left, fires a wicked cross across the Southend penalty area and Kyle volleys home, unmarked at the far post. 1 – 0 to the home team.
 - 7th minute: Robson shot well saved down low by Mildenhall
 - 8th & 9th minutes: Southend at last come alive and create two chances. Firstly a Betsy gets into a good goal scoring position but offside so good work from Stanislas wasted,. Seconds' later free kick awarded to the visitors but shot wide of post.
 - 18th minute: Betsy robs home defence, passes to Revell and his cross fired just over by Barnard.
 - 22nd minute: Barrett and Harding booked. The former for a wild lunge and the latter either for dissent and a missed foul tackle seconds before Mr Barrett connected.
 - 29th minute: Good passing between Milsom and Revell but move comes to nothing as Betsy offside.
 - 36th minute: Period of Hartlepool domination finished by a quality goal from Porter cutting in from the left giving Mildenhall no opportunity to save. 2 – 0.
 - 44th minute: That man Porter again down the left but this time shot just over the bar.
- 2 – 0 down at half-time and things can only get better – even the rain has stopped!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- 51st minute: Mid-field lose the ball in our own half but fortunately Hartlepool effort well wide.
 - 52nd minute: Hartlepool attack down the right and Kyle robbed by some great defensive work with the goal at his mercy.
 - 57th minute: Innocuous foul, if contact was made because TV inconclusive, on the edge of the Southend penalty area sees Adam Barrett red carded as referee Moss decided he was the last defender. On the night looked a clear foul but TV indicates a dive. Harsh if Captain Courageous suspended for next three games. I know I have been calling for changes to back four but decision looks suspicious.



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- 57th minute: Good combination play between Betsy and Francis on the right and the latter's cross missed by everyone, including Laurent on the far post.
- 61st minute: Game, set and match to Hartlepool as confusion between Betsy and Clarke lets Kyle score his second goal of the game.
- 65th minute: Sankofa replaces Betsy
- 67th minute: Grant replaces Barnard
- 75th minute: Laurent replaces Stanislas
- 77th minute: McCormack fires just over
- 90th minute: Just as it looks like Southend will break their goal scoring duck. Revell unselfishly passes to Laurent when appeared easier to shoot and Frenchman crowded out by the home defence.

A 3 – 0 defeat, a long journey home, seventh league game without a win and cries of "Sort it out Tilson" as the team left the pitch. Rumour that Harding also suspended as may have received 5th yellow card but I got maths wrong for Alan McCormack so hopefully the same here. If not back four will definitely need to be changed for game Vs Northampton Town on Boxing Day?

Crowd: 3,123. League position: 13th.

Team: Mildenhall, Francis, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Betsy (Sankofa), Milsom, McCormack, Revell, Stanislas (Laurent) and Barnard (Grant). Substitutes Not Used: Joyce and Walker.

Friday 26th December 2008 – Northampton Town (Home) – Result (W) 1-0

Friday football returns to Roots Hall, albeit a 3:00 pm kick-off, as Southend United face Northampton town in the first of two matches in three days. For a Boxing Day fixture the crowd was a disappointing 7,767 with very few making the short trip down the M1. I was brought up that the Christmas fixtures were always played to a full house notwithstanding current form – perhaps everyone was bargain hunting at the sales or put-off by the bitterly cold weather.

Four team changes to the starting XI verses Hartlepool the previous Friday with Messrs. Barrett and Harding suspended and replaced by Sankofa and Herd; the fit again Freedman for Barnard and Grant for Betsy. This was not a festive feast from either side but the winning goal in time added on was a fantastic Christmas present to Steve Tilson, his team and the home fans who braved the extreme cold to see Southend's first league win since 27th October.

- 1st minute: good run by Stanislas down the left wing and his dangerous cross headed away for the Northampton defence for a corner
- 13th minute: the left wing was again the source of activity involving Stanislas, Herd and Revell and the latter's pin point cross to Freedman was fired just wide.
- 26th minute: corner from Milsom headed into side netting by Francis
- 29th minute: Liam Davis of the visitors cautioned for a foul on Sankofa
- 30th minute: Milsom cautioned for a reckless challenge on the half way line
- 39th minute: Abdul Osman cautioned for a foul on Grant
- 44th minute: Akinfenwa holds off the Southend defence but shot well saved by Mildenhall at the near post.

A poor first half from both sides but for Southend some signs of improvement over recent weeks albeit struggling to see where the goals will materialise from. Perhaps the referee will abandon the game so we can go home and watch Mary Poppins or Chitty Chitty Bang Bang in the warmth of home !!!!!!!

The second half took almost ten minutes to "spring into life".

- 56th minute: Northampton substitution Holt for Crowe
- 57th minute: first meaningful effort of the second half but shot just over Mildenhall's bar
- 58th minute: cross from Jackman met by Southend old boy Constantine (aka money grabber) but he fires wide
- 59th minute: home team come to life at last with Revell passing to Stanislas but his shot charged down for a corner.
- 60th minute: second Northampton substitute with Larkin replacing Davis
- 62nd minute: James Walker replaces the out of form Milsom
- 70th minute: most people thought that Southend had taken the lead when Revell goal bound header from a Stanislas cross but somehow the visiting keeper was able to make a miraculous save on his goal line
- 71st minute: Abdul Osman sent off by referee Milton for a second bookable tackle. Will this be to Southend's benefit or detriment – only time will tell



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- 73rd minute: the crowd wake up and start haranguing former Southend players when Luke Gutteridge replaced Akinfenwa and from word go fouls home players left right and centre as if trying to make a point (what that is no one but Luke knows)
- 76th minute: a positive move by Tilson and brush with Lee Barnard replacing Sankofa
- 90th minute: 5 minutes of added time signalled
- 92nd minute: Stanislas free kick from the left straight at Northampton wall
- 94th minute: Gutteridge fouls McCormack on edge of penalty area – this time the right hand side. This time Stanislas is deadly accurate and curls the ball into the Northampton net giving Southend United a “get out of jail card” but more importantly three points
- 95th minute: the hard working Revell deservedly announced as man of the match

Crowd: 7,767. League position: 12th.

Team: Mildenhall, Sankofa (Barnard), Francis, Clarke, Herd, Grant, Milsom (Walker), McCormack, Revell, Stanislas and Freedman. Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Betsy and O’Keefe.

Sunday 28th December 2008 – MK Dons (Away) – Result (L) 0-2

The curse of the yellow shirt continues with a 2 – 0 defeat in a game in which we were the better team and if we could have finished in front of goal could have won easily.

Welcome to the world of Franchise FC – a half finished ground in the middle of nowhere, food and drink prices that a Premier club would “die for” but the seats were padded and the view excellent. Some good points for Ron martin to take on board. Is this not another white elephant like Darlington’s ground or are there plans for other sorts to utilise a 45,000 seater stadium (e.g. Northampton Rugby Union club)?

Twas a freezing cold Sunday afternoon and the last league game of 2008 saw Southend concede two goals from dead ball situations. Did the two team changes have any effect (i.e. the return of Barrett and Harding for Herd and Milsom)? It was effectively three changes because Francis moved out of defence to play on the right side of mid-field. Why change a back four that had just kept a clean sheet?

- 2nd minute: Freedman sets up Stanislas but the West Ham youngster fires just wide
- 3rd minute: a defence splitting pass from the improving McCormack to Stanislas but this he fires over the cross bar
- 8th minute: a disputed corner on the right (the Southend players and travelling supporters convinced a goal kick) taken by Leven who in turn finds O’Hanlon unmarked to head home the umpteenth goal this season from a dead ball situation
- 9th minute: Jude Sterling makes an error in the Mk dons defence, quickly pounced on by Freedman but his effort over the bar
- 11th minute: a rare attacking move from the home team but Stanislas tracks back to give a corner when the goal beckoned
- 22nd minute: this team McCormack robs Leven of possession but yet again effort over the bar
- 29th minute: Barrett wins the ball in his own half, rampages forward, passes to Revell who shot wide when it looked easier to score or at least make Willy Gueret make a save in the MK Dons goal
- 38th minute: more good passing play by the visitors involving McCormack, Revell and Freedman but the end effort from Francis was fired tamely at Gueret
- 43rd minute: the hard working Jenal Johnson finally crosses dangerously but the free scoring Wilbraham fires over – a persistent theme this afternoon

A poor first half, which the visitors dominated, but were 1-0 down to a soft goal. Game crying out for a goal scorer for either side.

- 49th minute: Navorro cautioned for a foul on Freedman an resulting free-kick from Stanislas well saved by Gueret
- 53rd minute: Wright’s shot for the MK Dons looks goal bound but Adam Barrett in the right place at the right time to deflect away for a corner
- 56th: Grant cautioned for what looked like a clear dive by Johnson
- 58th minute: Baldock curls free-kick into the back of the Southend net to make it 2-0
- 62nd minute: Barnard replaces Revell for the visitors with Powell replacing Wright for the home team
- 66th minute: Francis crosses from right and Barnard heads wide
- 74th minute: O’Hanlon cautioned for foul on Freedman – Stanislas fires resulting free-kick against the post but Barnard misses rebound with open goal at his mercy
- 76th minute: Freedman cautioned for dissent – challenging a poor decision by lineman to award a throw on to MK Dons
- 78th minute: Betsy replaces Francis and for Mk Howell replaces Johnson



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- 81st minute: Stanislas again shoots over the bar
- 84th minute: another MK Dons caution with Powell receiving yellow card for kicking the ball away
- 88th minute: Peter Clarke cautioned for foul on Powell 76th minute
- 89th minute: Torre Andre Flo replaces Wilbraham
- 92nd minute: Freedman and Barnard attempt to walk the ball into the back of the net but Cummings clears tame effort off the line.

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Crowd: 10,432. League position: 13th.

Team: Mildenhall, Sankofa, Clarke, Barrett, Harding, Francis (Betsy), Grant, McCormack, Revell (Barnard), Stanislas and Freedman. Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Herd and Moussa.

Saturday 3rd January 2009– Chelsea (Away) FA Cup Rnd. 3 – Result (D) 1-1

Welcome to the world of David Vs Goliath, where David frustrated the mighty Goliath to earn a replay and some additional cash for the coffers and the opportunity to play Ipswich Town in the fourth round.

6,000 true blues, armed with flags (thanks to the club and the Blue Voice), balloons, confetti, etc. made the short journey to Stamford Bridge for an FA Cup Third Match where the end of match headlines included "Prawns Vs Shrimps – big fish held by the small fry".

What a fantastic no "magnifique" performance by Southend United and their secret weapon the travelling fans. Both battled from start to finish and whilst the team managed a fantastic draw the supporters won their battle hands down signing and supporting their team from start to finish and even taunting the home fans with ditties like "Do you ever sing at Home? And "1-0 up and you still don't sing". At the end whilst the visitors were celebrating a draw the home fans were booing off a team of international prima donnas, many from overseas who did not relish a cup fight against battling minnows (i.e. their attitude was that this is a stroll in the park but they were given a lesson in English Cup Toe football.

For the visitors, 13th in Coca Cola League 1 this was a "backs to the wall performance". The 4, 5, 1 strategy was not pretty but on the say effective and despite the statistics (i.e. Chelsea had 15 goal attempts to our 3 and 15 corners to our 4) both sides entered the draw for the fourth round despite Chelsea dominating possession. This was a great team performance and thoroughly deserved.

On a cold Saturday afternoon Steve Tilson made three team changes to the starting XI at Milton Keynes Dons the previous Sunday with Herd replacing Harding, the latter having returned to Ipswich at the end of his loan, Christophe for Francis, the former now having signed after loan period from Portsmouth, and Barnard for Freedman.

Chelsea dominated from the start, well supported by referee Attwell who considered that most of the tackles by the visitors were illegal and awarded Chelsea a disproportionate number of free-kicks close to the Southend penalty area.

- 5th minute: Lampard free-kick miles wide
- 6th minute: Adam Barrett loses the ball to Joe Cole in his own half but the Chelsea player's shot come cross was missed by everyone
- 9th minute: Southend's first real entry into the Chelsea half of the field saw McCormack fire wide after good possession play down both flanks
- 10th minute: Clarke robbed by the ineffective Drogba who stormed into the Southend penalty area and just as he was about to "pull the trigger" a last ditch tackle by Sankofa saved the day
- 11th minute: Mr Attwell gives Chelsea another free-kick on the edge of our penalty area but effort deflected wide off a Southend back-side only for Mr Attwell to award a goal kick, much to the amazement of everyone in the ground.
- 12th minute: Joe Cole and Lampard combine well down the right flank but shot from Belletti wide
- 14th minute: Birthday boy Clarke charges down a Lampard shot
- 19th minute: Lampard this time sets Ashley Cole free but his effort was deflected for a corner by that man Clarke.
- 20th minute: Kalou in acres of space fires wide
- 21st minute: Ashley Cole again free down the Chelsea left and his shot well saved by Mildenhall
- 22nd minute: Drogba thought he had an opportunity to open the scoring but fires shot straight at Mildenhall but to the Ivory Coast international's annoyance the chance would not have counted as he was flagged off-side
- 31st minute: Chelsea finally breaks the Southend defiance and guess what it was from a dead ball, this time a corner. Lampard's pin point corner finds the unmarked Salou who gratefully heads home for 1 – 0. We all anticipate that the flood gates will now open but



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- 34th minute: More good play from the England international duo of Lampard and Ashley Cole but Cole's effort brilliantly saved by Mildenhall at the near post
- 37th minute: Another Chelsea free-kick but Belletti fires high and wide
- 39th minute: A rare attacking effort by the mighty Shrimpers sees Christophe's effort cleared for a corner
- 43rd minute: First chance for Stanislas to show his attacking skills down the left flank but his run finally ended by the home defence as he was about to shoot

Albeit on paper a one sided first half this report does not show the effort put in by the Southend team who counter attacked when possible, tackled like terriers with eleven men behind the ball to shut down Chelsea's attempts at flowing football.

Ay half time Bill Garner, the man who scored for Southend the last we played Chelsea and was immediately signed for them, was presented to the crowd. Given a rapturous applause by the "yellow army" but politely greeted by the prawn sandwich brigade.

Everything in our favour for a shock result because despite for all Chelsea's domination they had only one goal to their credit.

- 50th minute: McCormack finally receives 5th yellow card of the season for a foul on Drogba. The resulting free-kick by Lampard straight at the Southend wall
- 51st minute: Drogba finally shakes off his markers, Messrs Barrett and Clarke, but shoots straight at Mildenhall
- 56th minute: Young Herd finally has in opportunity to break out of defence into the Chelsea half but was cynically body checked by Mikel who rightly received a yellow card.
- 61st minute: Another Lampard corner which was well met by Belletti but young Herd was in the right place at the right time to clear off the line
- 74th minute: A triple Southend United substitution:
 - ➔ Freedman for Barnard
 - ➔ Laurent for Revell
 - ➔ Moussa for Christophe
- 85th minute: A deep cross from Herd was met by Clarke whose header was flapped at by Cudincini and grazed the cross bar before being cleared.
- 86th minute: First Chelsea substitution with Di Santo replacing Joe Cole
- 87th minute: Second Chelsea substitution with Sinclair replacing Kalou – looks as though the Chelsea Shrimper, Lee Sawyer, will not be getting a game.
- 88th minute: Ex Chelsea player Grant cautioned for a "dive" by Di Santo
- 90th minute: Laurent breaks free down the right and ball cleared for a Southend throw. Herd's long throw headed on by Carvalho and Peter Clarke reacted the quickest to head past Cudincini to equalise. Away fans in raptures – the home fans racing for the exits to catch train home
- 94th minute: A perfect through pass from Lampard to Di Santo but his shot brilliantly saved, a la Gordon Banks, by Mildenhall to ensure a replay.

What a brilliant result – a great team performance albeit I must say that Mildenhall, who had his best game in a Southend shirt, won over the Southend fans with some great goal keeping on the rare occasions that the defensive line was broken. For his age and inexperience Herd also played well enough to earn an extended run in the team but this was a performance where everyone played out of their skin, especially the more attacking players who finally Tilly's orders and stayed in position. Chelsea, following a trip to Old Trafford on Sunday will not fancy a trip to Roots Hall on a Wednesday.

Crowd: 41,090.

Team: Mildenhall, Sankofa, Clarke, Barrett, Herd, Grant, Christophe (Moussa), McCormack, Revell (Laurent), Stanislas and Barnard (Freedman). Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Francis, Betsy and O'Keefe.

Wednesday 14th January 2009– Chelsea (Home) FA Cup Rnd. 3 Replay – Result (L) 1-4

What a confusing world we live in, especially the conspiracy theory surrounding whether this game was on or off. Chris Foy, the referee who I thought had a fantastic game once the game actually commenced, was not happy about the pitch and the fog from the moment he arrived at Roots Hall. At 18:45 he postponed the match and this was immediately picked up by several media agencies. The Chelsea team coach toured Southend several times awaiting a definitive decision. Mr Foy has dismissed any conspiracy theories about the bizarre events saying that at 18:45 he called the game off because of fog and not being able to see his two linesmen and either goal mouth. No sooner had the postponement been announced Mr Foy was advised by the police and club officials that the fog had lifted and what clearer than at any time that day. A further inspection



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was undertaken and the game was back on – by which time many fans had turned for home!!!! Mr Foy claims that there was no pressure from ITV for the game to be played as being shown live. In truth the conditions did improve. As a frequent critic of Southend United I would like to congratulate their stewards and security staff in getting everyone into the ground by 20:10 despite the long queues and delays in opening the turnstiles. I would also like to congratulate the fans for their patience.

Chelsea startled brightly but we established “a foot in the door” much earlier than at Stamford Bridge.

- 7th minute: Joe Cole shot saved by Mildenhall
- 13th minute: Barrack fires effort high and wide
- 14th minute: Moussa wins ball in midfield, sets Revell free and his shot / cross safely gathered by Cech
- 16th minute: Good pressure by Southend including a good break from Stanislas and Alex hitting a bad back pass for a corner. From one of several Stanislas corners Cech swept away for another corner. From second attempt Barrett has a free header which flies into the back of the net to make it 1 – 0 Southend. The home crowd go wild – the visitors fear a giant killing – ITV hoping to be present to see the underdogs win!!!!
- 18th minute: Anelka meets a cross from Bosingwa and fires wide
- 25th minute: Lampard shot well saved by Mildenhall and Barrack fires rebound over
- 33rd minute: Anelka shoots straight at Mildenhall
- 36th minute: Ashley Cole cross punched clear by Mildenhall and Ballack again fires over
- 37th minute: Lampard corner headed over by Terry
- 39th minute: Southend almost go 2 – 0 up. Sankofa breaks free down the right having been set free by Grant, for him a rare excursion into the Chelsea half, and his precision cross met by Revell three yards out but Cech anticipated effort diving low to his right to make a world class save. Mikel was cautioned for a diabolical foul on Grant. Referee Foy was brilliant in playing the advantage and cautioning the Chelsea player at the first break in play. Mikel must be one of the dirtiest players in the Premiership making our own Alan McCormack look like a Saint!!!!!!!!!!
- 45th minute: Disaster for Southend. Right on half-time Mildenhall and Clarke collide, definitely looked by be keepers ball, the ball breaks to Ballack who this time makes no mistakes and fires the ball home from 18 yards to equalise.

Another half of an ifs, buts and maybes performance from Southend - a chance to go 2 – up quickly followed by an undeserved equaliser. Southend cannot be faulted this was a fighting performance and can only get better in the second half.

At half time Chelsea replace Mikel with Belletti, yet another overpaid overseas import. Where are the likes of Sinclair, Sawyer and co (i.e. the youngsters coming through the ranks)?

- 48th minute: Clever free kick with Stanislas finding Grant, a former Chelsea youngster, and his cross just headed over by Barnard.
- 49th minute: Ashley Cole shot saved by Mildenhall
- 52nd minute: Lampard corner finds Alex and his effort tipped over by Mildenhall. This is the start of a period of Chelsea pressure when ends with Joe Cole shooting straight at Mildenhall.
- 55th minute: Direct run from Barnard forced away for a corner.
- 58th minute: A Stanislas corner finds an unmarked Christophe but he heads over.
- 60th minute: On the hour Joe Cole kicks out Salou who slips past Herd and calmly slots the ball into the back of the net from the right side of the penalty area. 2-1 Chelsea.
- 61st minute: Ashley Cole wins the ball in midfield, finds Joe Cole who fires into side netting.
- 73rd minute: The first Southend substitution Freedman for Barnard.
- 75th minute: Joe Cole injured following a tackle by Grant, and is replace by Di Santo
- 78th minute: Anelka slides the ball home after Barrett loses the ball to Salou – 3-1
- 80th minute Francis replaces Grant
- 86th minute: Betsy for Revell
- 90th minute: Lampard makes it 4-1 from a well constructed move.

The cup dream is over and we must concentrate efforts on the league.

Crowd: 11,314.

Team: Mildenhall, Sankofa, Clarke, Barrett, Herd, Grant (Francis), Christophe, Moussa, Revell (Betsy), Stanislas and Barnard (Freedman). Substitutes Not Used: Joyce, Walker and O'Keefe.

18th January 2009