



KEVIN MAHER

STATEMENT

'Legend' is an overused word in football, stretched so far that it's started to lose meaning. Not with King Kev.

For more than twenty years, he has bled our club's blue. When everything around him was burning between 2022 and 2024, he stepped up, led, and steered us through the storm. He dipped into his own pocket to help players and staff financially, and even drove the kit van home to stop it being repossessed. Alongside Darren Currie and Mark Bentley, Kev went above and beyond, again and again, and we are sad to see them depart.

The scale of the turnaround since Kev became Head Coach should not be underestimated. Pride and respect were restored to Southend United on the pitch, even though chaos raged off it. Finishing 6th in 2023/24 (were it not for a points deduction), let alone avoiding a slide into regional football, is testament to Kev, Darren, Mark and the team. They will always have our respect and gratitude, and we're thrilled that they closed this chapter of their careers - and our club's history - with our first national cup competition win. The timing was poetic, and the honour richly deserved by all involved.

Of course, there is disappointment that promotion back to the EFL didn't quite happen. That ambition remains very much alive. The disappointment is shared by all, but it does not dim the gratitude we owe.

So, thank you, Kev. Thank you, Darren. Thank you, Mark. For your dignity and hard work. For reuniting our Club and giving us back our identity. For making us dare to dream again. And thank you to every player who wore the shirt with pride through the toughest years this club has known. We can never repay what you have done.

You kept us alive. We will never forget it.

Now, change comes quickly: a new Director of Football and Head of Recruitment, and significant changes to the coaching staff and possibly the squad. Naturally, that brings variables and uncertainty as we head into the summer and towards next season. It is a sizeable roll of the dice by COSU, but they are entitled to try something different to take the next step and they should be allowed the opportunity to make it happen. Rebuilding will take time, and the possibility of a transition period - and the patience that it would require - will need to be acknowledged.

An interesting summer beckons.

The Shrimpers Trust Board