

# “I’ll be there”

THE CARDIFF CITY SUPPORTERS CLUB NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2006

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Flying the flag in North America

# SUPPORTERS CLUB DIRECTORY



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## CARDIFF CITY EXILES

Website [www.cardiffcityexiles.info](http://www.cardiffcityexiles.info)

## ROLL OF HONOUR

### CCSC Player of the year

2005/2006	Jason Koumas
2004/2005	Chris Barker
2003/2004	Tony Vidmar
2002/2003	Robert Earnshaw
2001/2002	Graham Kavanagh
2000/2001	Andy Legg
1999/2000	Andy Legg
1998/1999	Kevin Nugent
1997/1998	Jon Hallworth

### CCSC Most improved player of the year

2005/2006	Neil Alexander
2004/2005	Chris Barker
2003/2004	James Collins
2002/2003	Rhys Weston
2001/2002	Rhys Weston
2000/2001	Josh Low
1999/2000	Mark Bonner
1998/1999	Graham Mitchell
1997/1998	Craig Middleton

### CCSC Young player of the year

2005/2006	Joe Ledley
2004/2005	Joe Ledley
2003/2004	James Collins
2002/2003	James Collins
2001/2002	Daniel Gabbidon
2000/2001	Robert Earnshaw
1999/2000	Robert Earnshaw
1998/1999	Robert Earnshaw
1997/1998	Christian Roberts

### CCSC Hall of fame

2005/2006	Scott Young
2004/2005	Ronnie Bird
2003/2004	Dave Bennett
2002/2003	Phil Suarez
2001/2002	Jason Perry
2000/2001	Fred Keenor
1999/2000	Carl Dale
1998/1999	Brian Clark
1997/1998	Phil Dwyer

**CARDIFF CITY 1927 CLUB**  
**LONDON & S. EAST SUPPORTERS CLUB**



# VOICE FROM THE CHAIR



**Well I don't know about you but I am absolutely starving. I haven't been fed since the 22nd of April when we played home to Norwich. Due to work commitments I missed our trip to Coventry and that was that!**

So at last Barnsley awaits, it is almost here and the excitement is growing as each day passes.

Once again it has been a Summer of high activity with some cracking signings made by our beloved football club. I am probably a little bit gullible at times and easily taken in by press reports, and I do believe everything I read!! But there can't be too many of us who are not genuinely excited by our Summer captures.

Yes we will miss Cameron up front but I am positive Michael Chopra will be even bigger, (not bigger as in big because I would imagine he is smaller in that sense!) but anyway there is Kerrea Gilbert, what about him!! From the Premiership here to play a season with Cardiff City.

There are other signings of course but I am not going to mention them all because I'll get even more boring!! It seems they are all good lads and I trust Dave Jones' judgement 100%.

I am sure he wouldn't sign anyone who he felt did not have a genuine chance of making it.

There will be more on our pre-season tour to Canada from those who actually went so I won't say too much but it was great to read all the reports and see the pictures of our great fans having a whale of a time in Vancouver. Being a Morris myself I felt a little insulted when Morris dancing was described as English, British please!!

So on to 2006/07, in my opinion we will do very well, but let's not put too much expectation on the lads, because we have a tough start. Let's get to 50 points first and take things from there. Our only other wish has to be bulldozers, diggers and men in hard hats working their socks off over the road!

For those that don't know me too well, I am Howard (Howie) Morris, I will be 49 in September. I live in Llanishen, Cardiff and married with 3 lads who are all avid Bluebirds followers. My first City game

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was 18.09.1965 and what a game it was, a 4-3 home win for City over Man City, and I have been a fan since.

Between 1974 and 1990 I played local parks football as goalkeeper so I didn't get to too many games in that period but once I hung up my boots I returned to the fold. I would love to go to every game but at the moment I have to work 1 weekend in 4 so it is not possible, but my time will come!!

**Have a great season!!  
Howie.**

Any Interest for CCSC coach to:

## **SUNDERLAND v. CARDIFF**

Plus an afternoon at Catterick Races (50 mins from Sunderland)  
Tuesday 31 October 2006

Coach will leave Cardiff at 08.30 approx

Call Vince (this would be in addition to the normal service)

# WILLIE BOLAND SEVEN YEARS HARD GRAFT

**With all the comings and goings during the close season, I thought it would be appropriate to acknowledge the contribution made by midfield hard man Willie Boland over the past seven seasons.**



In fact, Willie was the last remaining player who had experienced life in the City squad before 'Sam's' arrival.

It's always sad to see good servants of the club move on, but each season tough decisions need to be taken and Willie Boland, amongst others, wasn't offered a new contract.

Willie was signed by Frank Burrows in the summer of 1999 from Premiership Coventry and during the pre season games supporters were thinking we had acquired a prolific scoring midfielder as Willie got on the score sheet 7 times.

He made his League debut for the club in the opening game, our return to Division 2, against Millwall at home. In a fiery match played in a hostile atmosphere, Willie slotted home a cool penalty, passed Tony Warner who was also making his debut in the Millwall goal that day, as the Millwall fans rained missiles down into the penalty area. Who were they aimed at, I wondered years later!

Unfortunately the team drew too many matches they should have won that season and although we had a managerial change in the February, Billy Ayre taking over, we were relegated by 1 point.

Back in the basement, the Hamman regime had taken over and the team had started the 2000/01 strongly, with Boland in great form. Unfortunately, Willie was to break his leg in a fixture at Barnet, which was to keep him out until after Christmas, but upon his return Willie was a key figure, at the heart of the midfield, in securing us a promotion.

Arguably, Willie's best two seasons were the Play Off campaigns in Division 2, he rarely missed a game and it culminated in the 'never to be forgotten day' of the final against QPR.

Willie had 3 seasons in the Championship with the Bluebirds but last season was severely disrupted by injury, in typical fashion he fought his way back into the 1st team before the end of the campaign, and his final match was against his former club Coventry.

After his early scoring exploits, Willie didn't actually score a goal again from open play, until he knocked in a deft flick, in another pre season game, at Accrington last season.

**Here are some Willie Boland moments:**

1. Scoring debut penalty, amongst all the missiles, against Millwall.
2. Walking off the pitch with a broken leg at Barnet (how hard is that!)
3. Hitting the bar from 30 yards at Tottenham in the League Cup.
4. Scoring a Free Kick, into an empty net, at Bournemouth as the keeper remonstrated with the Ref.
5. Scoring a free kick on 'Match Of The Day' against Margate in the FA Cup.
6. Crossing the ball for Thorne's goal that finally saw us beat Bristol City (02/03).
7. Giving 100% effort at all times.

In 7 seasons Boland played for 6 managers and made 209 league appearances plus 25 more from the bench.

He was involved in 2 promotions a relegation and played for the Bluebirds in 3 different Divisions.

At the age of 31 he will surely give another club good service and total commitment.

Thanks Willie

Footnote: Willie scored in another pre-season friendly, recently whilst on trial for Swansea.

**Gwilym Rees**



## Scanning the list of summer transfers I noticed a number of ex-Bluebirds on the move:

<b>Michael Boulding</b>	Retirement to Mansfield
<b>Ian Butterworth</b>	Assistant Manager at Hartlepool
<b>United Andy Campbell</b>	Dunfermline to Halifax
<b>Jeff Eckhart</b>	Gloucester to Risca United
<b>Leo Fortune-West</b>	Doncaster to Rushton
<b>Martyn Giles</b>	Carmarthen to Hereford
<b>Ryan Green</b>	Hereford to Bristol Rovers
<b>Richard Langley</b>	QPR to Luton
<b>Andy Legg</b>	Retirement to Llanelli
<b>Josh Low</b>	Northampton to Leicester
<b>Alan Mahon</b>	Wigan to Burnley
<b>Carl Muggleton</b>	Chesterfield to Mansfield
<b>Michael Ricketts</b>	Leeds to Southend
<b>Damon Searle</b>	Forest Green to Newport
<b>Paul Shaw</b>	Rotherham to Chesterfield
<b>Tony Vidmar</b>	NAC Breda to Hunters Mariners (Australia)
<b>Gavin Ward</b>	Preston to Tranmere
<b>Tony Warner</b>	Fulham to Leeds (Loan)

I think the interesting transfer here, is Josh Low to Leicester. He hasn't played at this level before and might well be more suited to Championship football. If he could make an impact with a Leicester side that finished last season well, he could force his way into John Toshack's Welsh squad.

Ex City player Kevin Evans of Carmarthen Town, will shortly be emigrating to Brisbane, Australia. Kevin is probably best remembered for two goals he scored against Chesterfield during season 00/01.

In the away game he scored a spectacular 30 yarder as City held the league leaders to a draw. In the return fixture, towards the end of the season, he scored a dramatic 90th minute header to earn the City a 3-3 draw.

Those that made the short trip up the A470 for the pre season fixture with Merthyr would have recognised a familiar face as Leon Jeanne was making an appearance for the home side. Although a few pounds heavier, he certainly hasn't lost any of his ball skills or confidence.

**Gwilym Rees**



# CCSC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2006-07

Membership for the 2006/07 season remains at £7.00 for each adult and £3.00 for each child (under 16).

Members who would like to receive future newsletters by e-mail (approx 4–5 days earlier than Royal Mail) should fill out e-mail details and delete as applicable.

I enclose a cheque/postal order (payable to CCSC) to the value of £\_\_\_\_\_

## FIRST MEMBER

Adult  Child  (tick as applicable)

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail No \_\_\_\_\_

CCFC Fan No \_\_\_\_\_

**Newsletter delivery** (tick as applicable)

E-mail  Royal Mail  Both

## SECOND MEMBER

Adult  Child  (tick as applicable)

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail No \_\_\_\_\_

CCFC Fan No \_\_\_\_\_

## THIRD MEMBER

Adult  Child  (tick as applicable)

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail No \_\_\_\_\_

CCFC Fan No \_\_\_\_\_

## FOURTH MEMBER

Adult  Child  (tick as applicable)

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail No \_\_\_\_\_

CCFC Fan No \_\_\_\_\_

Please photocopy this form or use additional paper if you require.

Apply to **Cardiff City Supporters Club, PO Box 1927, Cardiff CF11 8YH.**  
Or hand into the CCSC shop/away travel booking office.

Finally, please write all details clearly and in CAPITALS.



**TRAVEL BOOKINGS:** Club shop on matchdays, or telephone 029 20566793 and 07814 779441

Date	Team	Fare Category	Pencoed	Bridgend	Pontypridd	Barry	Nantgarw A470	Merrie Harrier	Ninian Park	Gabalfa	High Cross
Sat Aug 5	Barnsley	D	0755	0730	0825	0800	0835	0810	0820	0840	0855
Sat Aug 19	Leeds	D	0725	0700	0755	0730	0805	0740	0750	0810	0825
Sat Sep 9	Preston	D	0725	0700	0755	0730	0805	0740	0750	0810	0825
Tue Sep 12	Plymouth	B	1355	1330	1425	1400	1435	1410	1420	1440	1455
Sun Sep 23	Southend	D	0625	0600	0655	0630	0705	0640	0650	0710	0725
Sat Oct 14	Crystal Palace	C	0755	0730	0825	0800	0835	0810	0820	0840	0855
Sat Oct 21	Norwich	D	0655	0630	0725	0700	0735	0710	0720	0740	0755
Tue Oct 31	Sunderland	E	1055	1030	1125	1100	1135	1110	1120	1140	1155
Sat Nov 4	Colchester	D	0725	0700	0755	0730	0805	0740	0750	0810	0825
Sat Nov 25	Sheffield Wed	C	0825	0800	0855	0830	0905	0840	0850	0910	0925
Tue Nov 28	Stoke	B	1325	1300	1355	1330	1405	1340	1350	1410	1425
Sat Dec 16	Hull	E	0755	0730	0825	0800	0835	0810	0820	0840	0855
Sat Dec 23	Leicester	B	0925	0900	0955	0930	1005	0940	0950	1010	1025
Mon Jan 1	Luton	C	0755	0730	0825	0800	0835	0810	0820	0840	0855
Sat Jan 20	Wolves	A	0925	0900	0955	0930	1005	0940	0950	1010	1025
Sat Feb 10	Coventry	A	0925	0900	0955	0930	1005	0940	0950	1010	1025
Tue Feb 20	WBA	A	1455	1430	1525	1500	1535	1510	1520	1540	1555
Sat Mar 3	Birmingham	A	0625	0600	0655	0630	0705	0640	0650	0710	0725
Wed Mar 14	Southampton	C	1325	1300	1355	1330	1405	1340	1350	1410	1425
Sat Apr 3	Derby	B	0855	0830	0925	0900	0935	0910	0920	0940	0955
Mon Apr 9	Burnley	D	0725	0700	0755	0730	0805	0740	0750	0810	0825
Sat Apr 21	QPR	C	0825	0800	0855	0830	0905	0840	0850	0910	0925
Sun May 6	Ipswich	D	0655	0630	0725	0700	0735	0710	0720	0740	0755

Price Category	A	B	C	D	E
Adult advance	£14	£16	£17	£20	£22
Unaccompanied Child/OAP advance	£12	£14	£15	£18	£20
Accompanied Child advance	£10	£11	£12	£13	£14
Standard Fare	£17	£19	£20	£23	£25

#### Pick-up points – Bridgend route

Bridgend. Council offices  
 Cowbridge. Town Hall (Bridgend +10 mins)  
 Barry. Jenner Park turnstiles  
 Penarth. Merrie Harrier Pub  
 Pentwyn. A48 Roundabout  
 Pontprennau. A48 roundabout

#### Pick-up points – Pencoed route

Pencoed. Monument  
 Talbot Green. Main Rd, at Bus Stn (Pencoed +10)  
 Church Village. Bebb office, Fagins (Pencoed +20)  
 Pontypridd. Bus Station  
 Nantgarw. A470 roundabout  
 High Cross. M4 roundabout/Malpas Fire Station

Advance fare is **only** available to members who pay at least 7 days prior to travelling.

Fixture and departure times are subject to changes by the Football league, please confirm when you book.

## ORGANISED TRAVEL ABROAD WITH CCSC TO WATCH WALES

### Last Call for Prague

**Czech Republic v. Wales.** 2nd September 2006, in Tepice, 3 nights. £360.00 includes coach travel, Hotel (breakfast), Flight and tax.

Depart: 09.30 Thursday 31st August – 23.00 Sunday 3rd September.

Limited space available. Match Tickets not included in the price.

### Anyone for Dublin?

**Eire v. Wales.** 24th March 2007, European Championship Fixture

Leave Cardiff Wednesday evening on the 21st March 2007, Ferry crossing, arrive Dublin Thursday morning.

Saturday 24th March is match day, arrive back in Cardiff late Sunday evening.

£235 per adult (twin sharing) £188 per child.

Price includes coach transfers, ferry, hotel (match tickets not included).

Cheques for the above fixtures should be made payable to 'CCSC Wales' and handed into the supporter's club shop/booking office.

### Cyprus & San Marino

European Championship Double header.

The supporters club are looking into the possibility of organising an 'away travel' double header to Cyprus & San Marino .

The fixtures are planned for Mid October 2007: make your interest known to Vince, so that we can gauge numbers to see if it's feasible.

### Savings Scheme

CCSC are setting up a savings scheme so supporters can regularly deposit funds to help plan for away travel with Wales.

Between September 2006 and November 2007 Wales have four important away fixtures.



# TRANSFERS



Looking at the diagram and comparing those that have left the club with those that have joined, I think most of you will agree that the squad is certainly stronger this season. That said, football isn't played on paper, so lets hope the new additions gel.

<b>MF</b> N. McKoy (M K Dons)	<b>MF/RB</b> N. Ardley (Millwall)	<b>RB</b> J. Darlington
<b>RB/LB</b> K. Gilbert (Aresnal)	<b>FD</b> N'Dumbu-Nsungu (Gillingham)	<b>CB</b> N. Cox (Crewe)
<b>FD</b> G. Glomard (Nantes)	<b>MF</b> W. Bolland	<b>GK</b> L. Worgan
<b>MF</b> S. McPhail (Barnsley)	<b>MF</b> P. Mulryne	<b>CB</b> D. Parslow
<b>GK</b> M. Howard (Aresnal)	<b>FD</b> C. Jerome (Birmingham)	<b>CB/FB</b> B. Anthony (B. Rovers)
<b>CB</b> R. Johnson (Wycombe)	<b>MF</b> N. Fish	
<b>MF</b> M. Kamara (M K Dons)		
<b>FB</b> K. McNaughton (Aberdeen)		
<b>FD</b> K. Campbell (WBA)		
<b>MF</b> W. Flood (Man City)		

**Over the years my summer holidays have taken me to more Mediterranean Islands and beaches than I care to remember. About five years ago I decided to do something completely different. Sad character that I am, I decided to base my holiday around City's pre-season tour.**

The first one took me to Ireland. We played Athlone and Longford Town, it rained a fair bit and we drank a good quantity of the black stuff. Subsequent trips have taken me to Scotland & Scandinavia.

One game against Ayr United, North of the Border, me along with 85 other City fans paid £12.00 for the privilege of watching a pre season game from the terraces. On to Motherwell and Berwick and also Hibs in Edinburgh where all the locals wanted to do was fight!

In 2003/04 we at last got abroad and toured Scandinavia where City played Koge FC and BK Frem in Denmark and IFK Malmo in Sweden. Carlsberg, as I remember, was £4.00 a pint in Copenhagen that year – bargain!

All of these trips provided opportunities to go to places you wouldn't normally go, and meet new people you may not have met and remain friends since. These trips give you stories to tell that bring a smile to your face years afterwards. How could I ever forget Greg Davies eating cold lamb madras with a plastic spoon, at 1030 in the morning, on the train to Ayr.

Or indeed, the time I arrived at Koge FC in Denmark to find the game had been switched to City's training ground in Malmo, Sweden. Not only was I at the wrong ground I was in the wrong country.

All these trips were short and easy to get to, so imagine the surprise last March when the tour details for this summers pre season were announced for North America & Canada. This would present much more of a challenge, a ten-hour flight and City's longest trip since 1969 when they toured Australia. Was I going? Yes.

The tour was to be based in Vancouver on the West coast of Canada, where we would be playing the Inaugural Nations Cup tournament along with the local team, the Vancouver Whitecaps, the Indian national side and China Under 20's. Vancouver has a very large Chinese and Indian community and it was the idea of the organisers to bring together these communities together and create interest in the tournament.

After the original itinerary was put together, further games were announced against Seattle Sounders at the 67,000 seater Questfield Stadium and finally as a Tour Opener v. Victoria United on Vancouver Island.

Luckily for us Zoom Airlines now operate direct flights from Cardiff to Vancouver via Belfast. So tickets were booked by early April and over the next few weeks Hotels sorted out via the wonder of the Internet. The trip was taking shape and gradually one or two other lads started making arrangements to make the trip as well.

Accompanying Andrea and myself would be the one and only Mr Viv Granfield and daughter Kate (but more of that later). Clive Francis and Mark Jennings were also making the trip and Gary Weston of the notorious Ninian Park Crew along with Daniel Clark of the DKBA would be flying from Heathrow on a separate flight.

I was now really looking forward to the trip and finally the 15th July arrived. We were on our way to Canada to watch City play. It still seemed a bit of a dream.

What follows is a diary of my tour recalling some, but certainly not all, of my memories of what were to prove a fantastic trip.

## DAY 1

We all arrive at the airport, Viv is more excited than I am. I point out the baggage allowance is 40 Kilos not 40 stone as he has brought everything plus the kitchen sink.



Kate's case is even bigger! Clive and Mark have already started some pre flight re fuelling accompanied by some of the Rams Boys. All in all there is about 20 of us on the flight.

Five hours into the flight and Viv has been up and down the aisles for 3 hours. He has already converted one guy, flying home to Canada, who has promised to come to our game against China. He has even given Viv his phone number, which makes me doubt his sanity. If only he knew what we do!

On arrival we are met by Phil Lathey who is already in Vancouver staying with family plus Phil's mate Mike O'Brien of the Bryncestin Rams. Viv is now very hyper. The Mavrick has landed. Look out Canada!

It is all over the net that the Koumas deal has been done or so we are told.

After settling in at the Hotel we spend an evening at Phil's mothers house with a barbeque and a few beers. Just yards from her house is a sign which reads:

Warning – Bear sightings in this area...If you see a bear...don't panic...Back away slowly... Leave the area immediately.

Viv is still hyper and now insists he would love to see a bear. City have won their opening game 4-1 against Victoria United, Chopra has scored his first City goal.

We miss this one as our flight time meant we couldn't make the 4pm kick off. Gary and Daniel who flew out earlier have made the game we will meet up with them in the next few days.

Back to the hotel 10.30pm Day 1 is over it's been a good start-roll on tomorrow.

### **DAY 2**

We have decided that we are going to see as much of British Columbia as we can during our stay. Phil who is now our unofficial tour guide picks us up and along with Mike we go to Horseshoe Bay and travel by ferry over to Naiamo on Vancouver Island. The City squad are still on the Island following yesterday's game.

During the course of the day we bump into a well known Echo reporter who confirms the Koumas deal is not done and dusted but still on going. Chopra looks very sharp and all of the new boys are settling in well. The usual tour banter and joking has started and is in full swing.

We travel on to Victoria, which is the Capital of British Columbia. It's a lovely place with a picturesque harbour and some very British looking buildings and pubs.

It's back to the ferry for an 8 pm crossing which takes about an hour and half. The scenery is impressive and we see some seals bobbing about in the water.

Viv is not that impressed and still wants to see a bear.

### **DAY 3**

We meet up to travel to a place called Summerland. We are going to stay there overnight at a motel Phil's brother owns and then travel on the following day to Seattle for City's match at the Questfield. Summerland is situated in the Okanagan Valley, which has some stunning scenery and a lake, which stretches for over 75 miles.

It is therefore a bit bigger than Roath Park and confirms what a vast country this is. The weather is again superb so after another barbeque and a few beers at Phil's brothers we get some sleep. We have driven over 200 miles and tomorrow is a lot further, little did we know it was to prove a very eventful day.

### **DAY 4**

We are up and on our way by 10.30 am and heading for Seattle for our first City Game of the tour.

We arrive at the border crossing into the USA by 11.30 am. We were then all required to complete small information cards, have our fingerprints taken on a small digital machine along with photographs and pay approximately \$6 each to cross into the USA. All this took 45 minutes or so as these guys move at they're pace not yours.

At 12.15 we were allowed to go. Worryingly we were told the trip to Seattle would take 6 hours we had anticipated 3 1/2 hours.

The journey down just shows you are travelling from one vast country into another. Passing through huge areas of valleys and mountains and not seeing any buildings for miles on end. After travelling for 4 hours or more and not even seeing a sign for Seattle we all got a bit concerned. To make things worse a lot of the roads are not the best and overtaking is not easy for long stretches.

At last we saw a Seattle sign and stopped at a small Burger place for a rest. It was like stepping back in time to something out of Happy Days. In one corner was a full size cardboard cut out of Elvis Presley in the other one of Betty Boop and furniture in the shape of Cadillac's complete with lights and pink upholstery? The Jukebox had no records on it less than 30 years old but it was free and had some good old tunes so no complaints there.

The girl who served us was the same age as Kate and worked in the school holidays. She was fascinated by our accents but didn't know where Wales was. She wanted to know if we had the same money as them and also wanted to know if we had mobile phones and sent text messages.

She was a nice kid and Viv got her to do the Ayatollah so yet another convert.

We left and finally found some decent road, things were going ok and Seattle was only 60 miles away. Phil had put the pedal down and we were making up time. Just as everything seemed fine a Blue light appeared behind us.

We were pulled over by the Police and the usual pleasantries ensued. Thankfully, we got off with a verbal warning. Had we not been Brits I don't think we would have been so lucky. We arrived at the Questfield with just over an hour to spare. We had totally underestimated the journey but we were so pleased to be there we couldn't stop laughing. We took loads of photos outside the ground and had time for a very swift pint.

Inside the ground there were 40 or 50 City who tried to make ourselves heard, we did but it's not easy in a bowl of a stadium that hold 67,000 people. Can you imagine 50 singing in the Millennium? Prior to the game the Choir of Sound who had been taught to sing phonetically sang both anthems. We were given a card after which they used. It read as follows.

"My haine wlad vuhn-had-dai un an-nwoil ee me gwald byurth a chan-tor-yion en wog-yon oh vree eye goo-raul rah-vel-were gwald-

gar were tra mod trouss ruh-thidgoth-las-sant eye gwide

Gwlad gwlad (ply-ai)-dee all oi-ef eem gwlad tra moor uhn veer ear beer hoff bye oh bu-thed ear haine – yai-the bar hai(repeat)."

As for the game, I almost forgot, we drew 1-1 Chopra scored again and the stadium announcer was brilliant- regular announcements advertising local restaurants, bars and car dealerships were all made while the game was going on every time a foul was committed he announced it.

A foul by Cardiff's Steve Thompson" "A foul by Darren Purse" It was bizarre. There was even a full match commentary in the toilets. Can you imagine Ali doing that at Ninian, I don't think so!

On the way out of the ground we bump into Bill Irwin who kept Goal for City in the 1970's. We have our photo taken with him and he tells us he is living and coaching college players in Portland. He's travelled up for the game and still keeps in touch with some of the old players.

Willie Anderson lives nearby him and we have also met his son tonight, he was really chuffed when one of the lads had gave him a City programme with photos of his father. He has taken an email address and says he will keep in touch.



We travelled straight home to Vancouver after the game via the direct route this time. We got back to the hotel at 2am. We had seen city play in the Questfield Stadium Seattle and I suppose only 50 or so can say that. We had done well over 500 miles that day but it was worth it. It had been a great day.

### **DAY 5**

After yesterdays trek we have an easy day. Do a little bit of shopping and then meet up in a bar to watch the first half of the Whitecaps v India game. Later on we meet Daniel and Gary Weston for a couple more beers.

Daniel recounts a tale of arriving last Thursday and being dropped off outside a doss house by Phil in a rather dodgy area of Vancouver. He had booked this fleapit over the internet for one night only before moving on to his proper hotel. He has now realised this was a big mistake, despite only costing \$12 a night.

Some of the windows are boarded over and the manager barely speaks English. After being shown to the room, with his mate Adam, he hears the owner shout down the corridor to some other bloke "They are in room 6". For the rest of the night they stay in the room with a cupboard and a fridge wedged behind the door.

At the crack of dawn they are out of there fast.

Gary Weston appears and then disappears again.

### **DAY 6**

We are going to go up to Grouse Mountain today. It's a tourist attraction about an hours drive outside the City. Gary Weston has appeared again and decides to come with us for the day.

Grouse is a ski resort in the winter but is not snow covered at this time of year. A cable car ride takes you up to the top where there is Lumberjack shows and birds of prey amongst other things. At long last Viv gets to see two bears, in captivity as part of a conservation scheme. On the way home we take a ferry over to Bowen Island and have a meal overlooking the bay, which is a very nice way to end another good day. We make the return ferry crossing which only takes 20 mins to the main land. Gary Weston has stayed all day and has not disappeared.

Tomorrow is match day, we play China in our first match in the Nations Cup.

### **DAY 7**

After a free morning we meet up in the steam works Brewery in the afternoon before travelling to the game.

The station is nearby and we catch the sky train out to Burnaby, which takes about 20 minutes.

The Swangard Stadium is about 10 minutes walk from the station through a park and holds about 6,500 people. It's a bit like Brightons ground in some ways with a running track around but a lot more picturesque. The City supporters are all gathered together in the large stand that runs the length of the pitch.

There is a carnival atmosphere the bar is open and doing a brisk trade and we are in good voice. We are making ourselves heard in a big way. All the matches are being shown live on Shaw TV in the British Columbia Province, and our presence is causing some media attention.

The more we sing the more they show us. On the field we are cruising to a 5-0 win, with Chopra scoring again. Each time we score the cameras is apparently focused on us and when we decide to do a conga around the stand we are on the TV again.

Thompson scores a volley from the edge of the box to finish things off we go Barmy. The game ends with everyone asking us if we will be there on Sunday

We have managed to go through the entire repertoire of City songs without using a single swear word, quite an achievement you must agree. After the game we travel back to town still in great voice, our little gang now swelled by Lee Davies and Colin Cox (Coxy) who normally travel with the Rams from Bargoed. They have now announced they would like to travel with the Pop & Crisps on at least one away trip next year. Gary Weston has disappeared again.

#### DAY 8

Phil, Andrea and Mike plus myself travel up to Whistler Mountain today. Viv and Kate decide to stay in Vancouver. At 12 o'clock the radio in British Columbia broadcasts a football show "Whitecaps world of soccer" Dave Jones is interviewed first and then comes Cardiff City Fan Viv Grandfield. We are listening to Viv travelling up to Whistler on the car radio. This isn't a GTFM sort of thing this is broadcast across the state. Viv is in the 'big time'. The guy asks him all about the City fans and all the singing we did last night and why we did the Conga. Viv is interviewed for about 10 minutes and explains to the interviewer why we came over. He seems amazed that we would come all this way for some friendlies.

The day at Whistler was superb. It will of course host the 2010 Winter Olympics and the Ski runs can be seen from the foot of the slopes. A covered gondola takes you up to about 6000 ft and a ski lift the final 1000 ft up to the summit at 7028 ft. The views are fantastic and at \$29 (£15) are worth every penny. This was my favourite trip and if you get the chance to go to this part of Canada go to Whistler.

#### DAY 9

Its finals day. We all meet up and travel to the Swangard. Again the support and vocal noise was great. We had some great banter especially with the Whitecaps mascot who resembled a giant Donald Duck. He drenched us with a huge water gun. We retaliated by pouring a bucket of water all over him.

The game itself – disappointing, it would have been nice to win the trophy just to say we had won the inaugural Nations Cup but overall we had all enjoyed ourselves and there is no doubt that Cardiff City and its fans are regarded in a very positive manner in this part of Canada.

As a result, I think that its quite likely we will get invited back one day.

We go back to town for another beer – tomorrow we are off home.





## DAY 10

Phil picks us up from the hotel and we spend the final afternoon at his mothers and sisters house in Eagle Harbour. We travel to the airport for an 8pm flight home. The City squad are there at the same time and they admit, like us, its time to go home. We've packed so much into 10 days and it's been a fantastic trip. The best City tour I've been on and worth every penny. Next year it's China and who knows, this time next year, I might be in Xiamen if I'm lucky.

So there are some of my memories of Canada 2006. At this point it would be impossible of me not to express my thanks to Phil Lathey who not only did all the driving but also gave his time to make this trip such a memorable one. Thanks from us all mate, you are a top man. Also thanks to Phil's mother Pru, sister Helen and brother John for such great hospitality.

As I said at the beginning, these trips always give you the opportunity to meet people who you may never have met before and make new friends. This one has been no exception and I look forward to seeing them again this season.

By the way has anyone seen Gary Weston?

BloooooBirds!

# KILIMANJARO 2006 BY VINCE ALM

**For many years my pre-season activities were mainly reduced to D.I.Y, and watching England get knocked out of competitions at the early stages, through penalty shoot outs or reduced to ten men – some things don't change.**

In recent years however I've been "trying" to keep myself fit, not quite as fit as Eric Botchett, Garry Lee, Steve Jones, or Gary Western, (you may laugh, but the other three are as fit as our Mr Western) but to a fair standard. I decided to branch out once I was physically fit enough to have a go at mountain climbing, and walking up them with a group of work colleagues. We decided to get involved in charity events like Three Peaks Challenge which involves ascending the highest peaks in Wales, England, and Scotland in 24 hours, also climbing Snowden, and climbing all 16 'fans' in the Beacons e.g. Pen-Y-Fan, Fan-Y-Big etc which took 2 days. It was during one of these events the seed was sown for me to have a go at Kilimanjaro.

It was two years ago during the annual ascent of Snowden by supporters from the valley rams, and supporters club that the idea of climbing Kilimanjaro was put to me.

Gwyn Davies said he would like to climb it and asked if I was interested, I said yes and decided to start investigating. I looked around different adventure travel agents, and found there where many trips from the U.K organised every year during the months it is safe to climb, so I was ready to book

for June or July 2006 so it didn't effect watching the City. However, another thing caught my attention a month or so later which would send me down a different route of achieving my target. While collecting tickets from the Ticket Office I overheard a conversation that not all disabled season ticket holders were able to attend games either through illness or because they had no helper to bring them, so I looked for a disabled charity that were running events to Kilimanjaro and found SCOPE, so I signed up in October 2005 and so it began.

After months of training with professional boxers from Ely Star A.B.C which involved getting up at five every morning and running at least 7 miles, and then to the gym 5 nights a week I was ready for the challenge. I had also spent many an hour up the Beacons, Snowdonia, and a trip to Greece to climb mount Olympus, so when June 15th arrived I was champing at the bit.

I travelled up to Heathrow on the afternoon of the 15th in boiling sunshine with the roads chock-a-bloc with people rushing home to watch England V Trinidad Tobago, it was a bit of a nightmare getting there, however, once I got through customs I met my fellow

trekkers who were all glued to the football, any way we were soon boarding and our way.

It was a night flight, and took about 8 hours crossing the Med, and Sudan on the way, it was a good flight and we arrived at about 6.30am in Nairobi to searing heat, as soon as we got through customs you were surrounded by locals offering to carry your bags or begging for money, luckily our head guide for the tour was there to greet us and transport us to Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, he ushered them all away.

There were 44 in the party all together, with 38 climbers and 6 organisers, so I was expecting a 50 seat air conditioned bus with DVD, radio etc so you can imagine my surprise when I saw two mini buses to transport us to our destination 7 hours away, in 40 degrees heat, by the time everything was loaded it looked like one of them buses in Rawlpindi, India. We left the Airport about 8.30am in the morning on the main highway to Tanzania I will never complain about the state of our roads again in this country, it was a very bumpy ride in cramped conditions.

What was noticeable about Kenya straight away was how poor the country was and the squalor they lived in along the highway, people were trying to make a living selling anything from fruit & vegetables to bracelets, carvings just to survive the day.



When we got to border control it took 1 hour to get through. Time you sort out visa's for both countries, and avoid the Massai women trying to sell you their trinkets and bracelets it seemed like 4 hours. Once we were on our way what became apparent was the closer we got to Kilimanjaro the greener the countryside, which meant that every shack that people lived in also grew something, no spare piece of land was left uncultivated this left the Massai to only be able to graze their cattle on the grass verges.

We got our first glimpse of Kilimanjaro just after the border. Apparently it is visible from Kenya, which I can confirm because on the return journey it was visible all the way until it went dark. We stopped for lunch in a hotel on the way, and finally arrived at our hotel at approx 4.00pm. We then had our final brief, off to dinner, and early to bed. I had no problems sleeping I had not slept for 24hours although I was awoken by strange animal noises a couple of times, and no it wasn't Viv Granfield doing Karaoke.

Wake up call at 5.45am, we got the kit together, went down for some breakfast, then we were taken up to Marangu gate in two groups at 8.00am. Once there we all had to sign in which took an age, and believe it or not it was cold due to cloud cover, only 13 degrees!! We also had our first glimpse of our support team consisting of porters, chefs, and guides, in total 104.

They were there to carry our main bags 12kgs each, also water, food for everyone, cooking utensils, gas, their own kit, tents. The list goes on - amazing people.

We finally got under way at 10.30am starting our trek through Jungle by now the sun had come out and we were back to searing heat and mosquito's, the first part of the trek we were harassed by local children selling T shirts, flags, bush hats etc, after a couple of hours they disappeared, and we were left in peace. There was plenty of wildlife including a couple of different monkey group's, colobus and blue back were the ones I saw. The path we followed was well marked, and easy to follow although the gradient was not particularly steep, we were told to go very slow to help with the acclimatisation. We were giving a basic packed lunch which was probably a feast to the locals, but appreciated by us, thinking of how short food is in the region everybody ate every

last scrap, this was to change though the higher we climbed.

We arrived at Mandra huts about 4.00 pm and were allocated bunk houses to sleep in which roomed up to 20 people at a time, I was allocated to stay in the white house which was damp, and basic with very uncomfortable bunks. This was also my first sight of the toilet facilities, anyone who has seen the film 'trainspotting' will know what I'm on about when I say the toilet in that film is luxury compared to the ones on Kilimanjaro. We had an excursion before tea up to a crater, which had some breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside, I then realised how high we had climbed already approx 2,700mts (8,910 feet). We walked back slowly for dinner then off to bed, I found it hard to sleep with me having about 3-4 hours, and it rained all night extremely heavily as well. I only went to the toilet once, there were some strange animal noises so I didn't risk it again.





**Day 4** up at 6.15 am for breakfast, it was still raining so waterproofs were the order of the day and sun tan lotion kept in my day rucksack just in case the weather improved.

Breakfast consisted of bacon, sausages, egg, beans, tea or coffee, also we had toast with jam, marmalade etc, all this would be ready for us as soon as we got up, don't forget they also cooked a three course meal in the evening which they served, cleaned up after us before having their food, so the porters and chefs could not have had much sleep themselves.

We set off at 8.15am in rain, and it got heavier as the day wore on, we were now walking through giant heathers for a couple of hours until we hit meadow/marsh type land. Due to us walking through clouds all day we were unable to see much scenery, and this is where I realised how important it was

to keep yourself hydrated by drinking a minimum of 4-6 litres of water a day, because it was wet, many amongst us hadn't hit the required amount, and had started to struggle with the high altitude. The problem is with less oxygen at this level (3,500mts, 11,550 feet) your body can not get rid of the carbon dioxide, because of your increase in breathing to get sufficient oxygen into the body it gets trapped, which if you don't acclimatise leads to mountain sickness, which can kill you when it gets to an advance state. So your body needs to go through a transformation to cope with this by producing more red blood cells to carry the carbon dioxide until your body gets rid of it once your breathing becomes steady. But this takes time, which we didn't have, so by drinking plenty of water you were able to urinate it out through your kidneys. We finally got to Hombu Huts about 4.00pm in a bad state, wet,

exhausted, and with the start of the high altitude symptoms. Still, I was put in a hut sleeping five, who turned out to be great people, and had a good laugh. A bonus for me, my waterproofs actually had done the job and kept me dry unlike 90% of the group. What was apparent now, you could not go tearing around the place, it took you an hour to recover even if you just had a small spurt - I slept well that night, 8 hours.

**Day 5** was a rest day, and acclimatise day, so we did not get up until 7.00am (lie in), it was still misty so we were unable to see the peak of Kilimanjaro but I decided to take the optional trek up to Zebra Rocks which would also help to acclimatise, this was 4,100mts (13,530 feet), many were unable to do this because they were suffering with sickness and diarrhoea, and were bedridden. We set off about 9.00am and got to Zebra point in about 90 minutes, the clouds lifted and we were able to see Mawesi which stands at 5,100mts (16,830 feet) but the peak is only accessible with ropes. We had a pleasant walk back down, it had warmed up a bit and the views were stunning, we were well above most of the clouds although Kilimanjaro was still obscured by high cloud. I was starting to develop headaches and stomach cramps, it was time for paracetamol, and Immodium tablets.



We had lunch, and then relaxed the rest of the day, at the evening meal it became apparent how many people had gone down with sickness with about 30% missing the meal, my appetite was starting to wane with trips to the toilet becoming more frequent, I became suspicious that everybody was passing some kind of food poisoning around, I think it was the high altitude though.

**Day 6** the start of what was going to be one of the hardest days of my life. I woke up at 6.00am got ready and went to breakfast, there was still misty rain to make it uncomfortable, and we had been invaded by Pied Ravens which are a huge crow type bird with a white ring around its neck, they were scavenging for food. We left the Hombru Huts at 8.30am and took a very, very slow walk towards the saddle, the high altitude symptoms got worse the higher you went, and the tablets became less effective, however the weather did brighten up just as we approached the saddle although we were now having the odd snow shower. The view was awesome and it was the first time I had seen an alpine desert, which is basically because its so cold, windy and not much oxygen in the air next to nothing grows or lives at this altitude so because of the fine volcanic particles it resembles a grey desert.

This part of the walk looked easy but was very difficult because of high winds, the occasional snow showers, low temperatures and lack of oxygen.

We arrived at Kibo huts late afternoon this had been torturous because the huts had been in view for about two hours and were probably a 20 minute walk away at sea level, I was feeling drained suffering with an upset stomach, permanent headache which tablets could not shift, tired, and Nauseas, I basically felt terrible. It was also snowing and Kilimanjaro was still covered in cloud, would it clear by tomorrow. This was summit night so we would start walking at midnight, this meant I would have to dig deep mentally to reach my goal.

I sat down to dinner with no appetite at all but forced some food down I was now shivering as the temperatures plummeted below zero, we were at 4,700mts (15,510 feet) what I ate went straight through me, by the time we had our brief it was 7.00pm and time to hit your bunks. I found it impossible to sleep as I battled with my body movements by clenching the cheeks of my bum to prevent any accidents, it was very uncomfortable, and time seemed to stop.

**Day 7**, Everyone was awoken at 11.00pm, but I don't think many had slept a wink, we got dressed, I used five layers due

to the severe temperatures to keep my upper body warm with three layers on my legs starting with a thin thermal base layer and finishing with a waterproof coat, and leggings. We were given a hot cup of tea and biscuits of which I was unable to eat the biscuits but appreciated the hot tea. I was feeling worst than I did earlier in the day, my symptoms had increased, headache, stomach cramps, nausea, sleep deprivation, no appetite, light-headedness, and temperatures as low as -20 made me think what was I doing here, most people admitted to having similar symptoms, so we all had something in common.

We all assembled outside the huts, we had our last briefing and wished each other luck. For this final leg of the trek only the guides would be climbing with us to the summit with a dozen of the porters also starting with us to help anyone who was unable to make it to the top, they would make sure they got back down safely. Also we were to be given a hot cup of tea or coffee half way up which they would brew. These porters had been amazing all trip carrying heavy loads up on their heads, backs and in their hands at the same time, they waited on us hand and foot and all we did was moan about every little ailment and whim effecting us. At this time only one person had dropped out so there were still 37 of us when we set off for the final ascent at midnight.

I was near the back at first with the group of people from hut 38, we had decided to encourage each other on so that we could make sure we all got to the top. We must have looked a sight as we started to wind our way up the scree with our head torches switched on in single file. The reason for the midnight start to ascend the final stretch of the mountain is because the scree is frozen and easier to climb, whilst in the day time it is nigh on impossible as you would keep sliding down due to the steep gradient, and the scree thawing.

The temperatures were still plummeting so at this point I decided to wrap a T Shirt around the pipe from my platypus to stop the water freezing, I had also put an energy boost powder sachet in there to also help prevent the water from freezing, and of course give me an energy boost at the same time. I had carried a minimum of 3 litres of water every day filling up to ensure I did not de-hydrate every day, I found it easier sipping from a platypus because even if you didn't feel like drinking you could still take little sips every couple of minutes and achieve the required quota of fluids to keep you hydrated. My rucksack, which had felt as light as a feather all the way up now seemed to weigh a tonne.

The good news there wasn't a cloud in sight, and those people who have been to Africa before will know what I'm on about when I say how crystal clear the sky

was, you could see many more stars and actual galaxies than in Europe, I could not see the top of Kilimanjaro though as we were to close, as you looked up it seemed like a gigantic wall almost impossible to scale and never ending.

The first hour seemed to pass with out much incident, I was still feeling rough and I had a couple of flushes which bothered me but I managed to put them to the back of my mind due to the fact the climb had become physically more difficult because of the steep gradient we were ascending, and concentrating on solid footholds so not to find yourself sliding back down, the only casualty I had seen at this point was from another party, an American who was quite arrogant to us early in the evening so perhaps it was justice he had to come back down with altitude sickness. We were taking breaks every 15-20 minutes only for short periods because some people were suffering with the pace. It was a still a very slow but it seemed quicker than anything we did previous on the trek, it probably wasn't, I think the higher we climbed the thinner the air became it was a struggle to get oxygen into my body so I was breathing deep and long followed by a long exhale to try and get the carbon dioxide out of my system, it was working I wasn't breathing nowhere near as heavily as anyone else. My trainer, Ronnie Rush, had taught me that too recover quicker between rounds when boxing, he has trained three world

champions, Steve Robinson, Barrie Jones, and Robbie Reegan so he knows a thing or two about fitness and training and I was now grateful for all the sessions I had with him.

The first casualty of our group came after about an hour and half, I did not witness this because most of the ones who had really started to struggle were falling to the back, and if they were unable to keep up they would be taken back down, the guides were keeping an eye on every person for signs of mountain sickness, as mentioned earlier if left unchecked it could kill you, and they knew some people would try and push themselves which is very dangerous, so they were constantly talking to us to check how coherent we were, and make sure we were steady on our feet, incoherent and unsteadiness are early signs of altitude sickness.

As we continued to climb my first aim was to reach the cave where we were to receive our brew, and that was about halfway to Gillimans point which is where we would reach the rim of the crater of Kilimanjaro, this was 5,585m (18,430ft). I was also now helping a couple of my fellow climbers who were starting to struggle, and starting my mental battle as the symptoms got worst. I was also covered in frost, and many of the climbers drinks had frozen, mine thankfully hadn't because of the T Shirt wrapped around the pipe and my constant sipping to keep the fluid flowing.



In my mind I was saying 1 Our Father, and 10 Hail Mary's over and over again followed by a song I absolutely hate by Tight Fit; 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight'. We finally reached the so called cave at about 3.00am, it was no more than a giant boulder with a overhang so if you thought you were going to get any refuge from the freezing conditions you would have been disappointed. I had a cup of tea but refused to sit down although I did take my rucksack off for a bit.

We left the cave after a 20 minute break, they had now put us in groups of about ten with a couple of guides in each group, some people were getting disheartened because when they looked up all you could see were head torches way above us from groups who had started out earlier than ourselves, this didn't worry me I was focused.

After about ten minutes we bumped into a load of army conscripts from Tanzania, they were on a training exercise, and 230 of them had started out at the bottom to climb Kilimanjaro in two days, they were ill equipped to climb without sufficient clothing or food, and no water.

They were dropping like flies, our doctor had to help many of them as they were just left on the side in -20 degrees temperatures, in fact with their camouflage ponchos on you had to watch where you were putting your feet in case you stepped on one of them. They were strung out all along the path with no one in charge or looking after them. If you wanted to kill all these soldiers without firing a shot they were going about it the right way.

We now were losing people at a regular rate with only about hour and half to go to Gillmans Point. One of the group I was keeping an eye on 'head torch' failed so I had to keep turning around to illuminate the way, the path was no longer there, we were now scrambling a lot more as the scree disappeared, and we started to clamber over big boulders which was a sign that we were nearing the top because these would have been blown in the air when the volcano erupted but were to big to be shifted by the molten lava. The lad in front of me was also struggling, and was beginning to get disoriented, so I had to keep an eye on him as well, I was still going through my repertoire in my head, the song was doing my head in, I

was becoming a bit more moodier, and grouchy by the minute - for no apparent reason? I was told later that's a side effect, and most people had suffered with it.

All of a sudden the guides were getting more vocal and happier, why? I could see the rim, they new it wasn't far to the summit and it seemed to give everyone who was left a spur to carry on, and by this point anyone who was struggling they dragged up instead of taking them down, when we reached Gillmans Point it was unbelievable feeling, people were hugging each other, and had become very emotional with several shedding tears. I hugged and shook hands with a couple of the lads I had climbed up with, there wasn't a lot of time spent here because we still had another 200m to climb in altitude to Uhuru Peak which is the highest peak in Africa, in distance it didn't look far at all but was to take us another hour and forty five minutes, by this point I was getting my inner strength from the fact I had managed to eat Jeff Davies sweets all season, and anyone who travels on coach three from Ninian Park will know how difficult that is!

My many trips to see my dentist means he is now driving around in a Porsche, and is very happy.

We set off just after 6.00am and the sun was beginning to rise from below us which at that time I just could not get my head around, it seemed surreal, the views were now breathtaking as the sun lit up the clear blue sky, any cloud was now well below us and they looked either cotton wool you just felt you could jump into, or snow you could walk across, we were on top of the world and loving it.

The glacier fields only a couple of days earlier had seemed like just little dribbles of cream were now in front of us, 250 feet thick and sprawling for hundreds of square miles all around the rim of the crater looking like some where in Antarctica instead of Africa, we followed the rim of the crater around to our final peak walking through snow clambering over boulders, and stopping occasionally to take pictures of this desolate landscape, but in the same breath beautiful landscape as you looked down on the green lowlands and smaller mountains surrounding Kilimanjaro, we also watched planes fly below us to Nairobi Airport 350km away, you could also see Mount Kenya same distance away, STUNNING!

As we made our way along the final part of the rim it was a fairly gentle gradient compared to what we had climbed earlier but it was just as difficult due to even less oxygen and walking through

snow and across a small glacier. However, we were spurred on by the sight of the finish line which 18 of us achieved on June 21st 2006 at 8.45am, also out of 230 soldiers I counted 8 that had made it, that put how difficult a feat it is to achieve in a short time with no acclimatisation. The elation of reaching the top was indescribable, I became very emotional which is unusual for me and nearly shed a tear, hugging everyone in sight, my vocabulary range is not vast enough to put into words how I felt but it was like the play off victory, the FA Cup win against Leeds, the away win there last season, the FA Cup win against Tottenham in 1977, the ripping down of the clock at Portsmouth in 1983, and the win against Real Madrid 1971 (way before my time) all rolled into one.

Due to the severe temperatures we were allowed to stay there for about 20 minutes after all we were at 5,895m (19,453 ft), so time only for a couple of snaps together and of the landscapes, then it was time to head back down.

The first part I took it steady just plodding, but when I got back to Gillman's Point a couple of us decided to scree ski down the slope which is basically big steps from side to side, the lower I got the easier it was to walk because the oxygen got thicker, my symptoms had seemed to subside a fair bit when I got to the top probably because of the adrenalin rush, and now the lower I got the better they were, I was first down at 10.00am it had taken me one and half hours to get back to Kibo huts, it had taken me seven hours forty five minutes to go up.





I was given a cold cup of orange squash, which tasted like nectar. I had run out of water so I was thirsty. I was given a bunk but I was buzzing so I couldn't get to sleep, so I hung around until everyone came down, we then had lunch and headed off to Hombru huts where we would be spending our last night on the mountain, as we walked down the views looking back across the saddle were stunning of Kili (I can call it that now because I been to the top) it stuck out of the alpine desert like a big blamanche with cream on top of it.

Funnily, I was beginning to feel sick and ended up throwing up on the way back to the huts, I was to learn later it was due to the fact I came down to fast. Once I got to the huts I felt exhausted I hadn't slept for two days so I went straight to my bunk and stayed all night only waking to go and have some dinner. I had gone to sleep unable to stop myself from shivering, this had happened twice already on this trip, the first night, and summit night, thankfully when I woke up the shivering had stopped and I was feeling refreshed.

I packed all my kit away, put my day rucksack together and took them down to the mess room, every camp we stayed at had a mess room which resembled something like one of them old Viking halls, and if you were unfortunate to get a seat on the inside bench against the sloping roof you would resemble

something like one of them hawks from the Lord of The Rings after eating your food, so it paid to get there early, however I was one of the last that morning so I stood up to eat my breakfast, I was starving my appetite had returned fully so nothing was going to put me off eating including the cold beans which I had consumed with ravenous vampire tendencies. After breakfast we took some group pictures with Kilimanjaro in the background which was peaking above the camp like a large walnut whip with the top bitten off, the sky was cloudless with a deep blue colour that made the scenery look like it was an oil painting. The porters put on a show for us before we set off singing and dancing there way through a couple of songs about Kilimanjaro, we had been advised not to give them money as tips apart from the group tip of 40-50 dollars each which was presented to them that morning, instead we were told if we had any mountain clothing to give them it would be more appreciated as it is very expensive to purchase, and looking at how the majority of them were dressed I was amazed how they made it, some had trainers on, and no coats. I gave away some items of clothing, and I had ignored the advice and been tipping them individually which they appreciated and I must say they more and deserved.

We set off about 9.00am at a very sedate pace taking in the scenery that we missed on the way up due to the inclement

weather. We also spoke to scores of people who were on the way up offering encouragement, and information about the ascent, it reminded me of a couple of days earlier when it was me asking the questions trying to glean any knowledge off people who had succeeded in reaching the summit of what it might be like, and what to expect because by now they would have probably started to suffer with some of the high altitude ailments that effect everyone including the guides and porters although not to the severity of us, and at a higher altitude about 5,000 metres. In fact our main guide, Moses has been up to the top 89 times out of 133 ascents, some of them have been when whole group as failed, but some were due to him becoming sick.

We made our way down to mandra huts, had lunch and set off again, some of the group who were still sick were put into a four wheel drive vehicle and driven down through a track that wound its way through the jungle, we continued walking down through the jungle, and reached the entrance gate at about 3.30pm where congratulations were in order. We then had to sign off the mountain with our guides and state where we had reached which they verified by signing alongside your signature. I then purchased a couple of cold beers from the gift shop aptly named Kilimanjaro, and downed them well deserved I thought, this set me up nicely for the gala evening which I must admit to drinking way to much, and falling into bed about 4.00am in the morning.

We left the following morning taking that long drive back to Nairobi in the mini buses nursing an hang over, and the 300 immodium I had taken deciding to take effect now I was back at sea level just my luck, I gone from a plasterer to a bag of wind!

Looking back on my experience it is obviously something that will stay with me for the rest of my life, and although it might not have been as physically challenging as I thought it was going to be all that training I put in helped with my mental toughness, and it became apparent that those who had put

little effort in were first to go, it doesn't mean you have to be super fit to climb it but you need to have pushed yourself to your limit a couple of times to give you a chance of achieving climbing to the summit. Everyone had set out with personal targets although openly I said I wanted to get to this point, and then look at the next stage not to sound arrogant, but deep down I had built up this determination during the prior months that failure was not an option, so I did my research and prepared accordingly to make sure I did everything within my power to achieve the success.

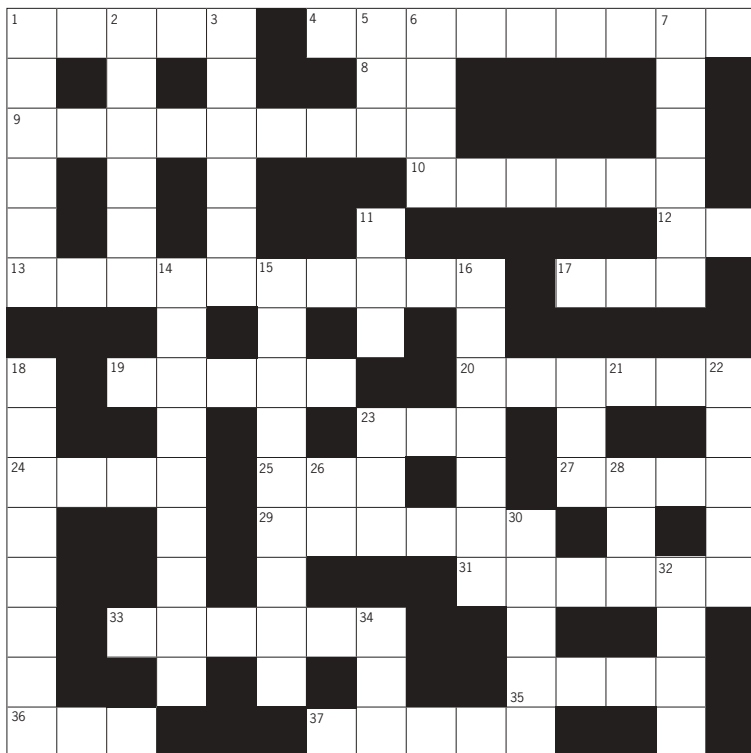
I recommend if you are ever given the opportunity to climb Kilimanjaro, take it, you will not regret it, and you will never experience anything like it again, it was worth all the pain.

You never know, maybe I can run a trip there if enough people show an interest in a couple of years, but we will not be able to take a Thomas of Barry coach.

I would like to personally thank everyone from the football club, and supporters club who sponsored me its gone to a good charity, SCOPE.

**Thank you  
Vince Alm**





**Across**

- 1. Making waves on the wing (5)
- 2. Where 16 down came from (9)
- 8. Slang for hello (2)
- 9. The foxes (9)
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ utilities (6)
- 12. For example (2)
- 13. Scottish premier team (10)
- 17. Posh boss (3)
- 19. George \_\_\_\_\_ 1970's midfielder (5)
- 20. The Latics (6)
- 23. They play in Eindhoven (3)
- 24. Arsenal midfielder – liked his curry! (4)
- 25. Hull has one! (3)
- 27. First man in space (4)

- 29. Wurzels nickname (6)
- 31. One-time Sunderland manager (6)
- 33. Went there pre-season (6)
- 35. Regal striker (4)
- 36. The Baggies (3)
- 37. Slang for London (5)

**Down**

- 1. Chris Coleman is their manager (6)
- 2. They play at Brisbane Road (6)
- 3. Welsh golfer (6)
- 5. Optical organ (3)
- 6. Club side more famous for its railway museum (4)
- 7. English knacker-stamper (6)
- 11. Not Margaret but \_ \_ \_ , reluctant Welsh international (3)

- 14. Top scorer in 82-83 promotion season (9)
- 15. Ronnie Moore used to manage them (9)
- 16. Our Dutch masterpiece (7)
- 18. Earnie! Earnie! (8)
- 21. Mervyn \_ \_ \_ , once West Ham keeper (3)
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_ Road, once Man. City ground (5)
- 23. Best place to be after Ninian Park (or before come to that!) (3)
- 26. Short for Maureen (2)
- 28. River in Gwent (3)
- 30. Rivals from the Potteries (5)
- 32. Part of Welsh rugby chant (4)
- 34. Follow the leader! (3)

# A SAD LOSS AND CHANGES BEHIND THE SCENES

**As a result of the untimely death, whilst on a family holiday, of 46-year-old Academy Manager John Kerr, new appointments had to be made during the close season.**

Lee Robinson, brother of Welsh International Carl has moved from his post with 'Football In The Community' to that of Academy Manager, whilst ex-Bluebirds legend Scott Young replaces Carl in charge of 'Football in the Community'. Scott was seen in his new post during the recent 'Big Cheese' festival in Caerphilly, where his team promoted football and the football club to the thousands of visitors.

After many years service for the Bluebirds, Goalkeeping Coach, George Wood has left the club.

George joined as a full-time coach during the summer of 1999 and under his tenure he can take great satisfaction that Neil Alexander and Martyn Margetson won International recognition with Scotland and Wales respectively. Scottish International George had previously been a popular member of our first team between 1987 –1989.

As one door closed another opened and Martyn Margetson, who had looked to be on his way out of the club from an early stage last season, stepped up to become goalkeeping coach whilst also retaining his playing registration.

Amidst all the comings and goings in the playing squad, undoubtedly the best signing of the summer was Manager Dave Jones putting pen to paper on a new 2-year contract.

Everything looks set for the new season.

**Everyone at the Supporters Club would like to express our condolences to the family and friends of John Kerr.**

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# FIXTURES AND AWAY ATTENDANCES 2006-07



## JULY 2006

Tue 11	Merthyr	A	F	L 0-1	400
Tue 11	Carmarthen	A	F	W 1-0	
Sat 15	Victoria Utd	A	F	W 4-1	25
Tue 18	Seattle Sounders	A	F	D 1-1	
Fri 21	China Under 20	A	NC	W 5-0	
Sun 23	Vancouver W'caps (lost on penalties)	A	NC	D 0-0	
Fri 28	Auxerre	H	F	D 1-1	

## AUGUST

Sat 5	Barnsley	A	FLC	W 2-1	1678
Tue 8	WBA	H	FLC	D 1-1	
Sat 12	Coventry	H	FLC		
Sat 19	Leeds	A	FLC		
Tue 22	Barnet	H	CC1		
Sat 26	Birmingham	H	FLC	1.00pm	

## SEPTEMBER

Sat 9	Preston	A	FLC		
Tue 12	Plymouth	A	FLC		
Sat 16	Luton	H	FLC		
18 Sep	W/C		CC2		
Sun 24	Southend	A	FLC	1.15pm	
Sat 30	Wolverhampton	H	FLC		

## OCTOBER

Sat 14	Crystal Palace	A	FLC		
Tue 17	Southampton	H	FLC		
Sat 21	Norwich	A	FLC		
Mon 23	W/C		CC3		
Sat 28	Derby	H	FLC		
Tue 31	Sunderland	A	FLC		

## NOVEMBER

Sat 4	Colchester	A	FLC		
Mon 6	W/C		CC4		
Sat 11	Burnley	H	FLC		
Sat 18	QPR	H	FLC		
Sat 25	Sheff.Wed	A	FLC		
Tue 28	Stoke	A	FLC		

## DECEMBER

Sat 2	Colchester	H	FLC		
Sat 9	Ipswich	H	FLC		
Sat 16	Hull	A	FLC		
Mon 18	W/C		CC Q/Final		
Sat 23	Leicester	A	FLC		
Tue 26	Plymouth	H	FLC		
Sat 30	Crystal Palace	H	FLC		

## AS

## JANUARY 2007

Mon 1	Luton	A	FLC		
Sat/Sun	6/7		FAC 3		
Sat 13	Southend	H	FLC		
Sat 20	Wolverhampton	A	FLC		
Sat/Sun	27/28		FAC 4		
Tue 30	Leicester	H	FLC		

## FEBRUARY

Sat 3	Barnsley	H	FLC		
Sat 10	Coventry	A	FLC		
Sat 17	Leeds	H	FLC		
Tue 20	WBA	A	FLC		
Sat 24	Preston	H	FLC		

## MARCH

Sat 3	Birmingham	A	FLC		
Sat 10	Norwich	H	FLC		
Wed 14	Southampton	A	FLC		
Sat 17	Derby	A	FLC		
Sat 31	Sunderland	H	FLC		

## APRIL

Sat 7	Sheff. Wed	H	FLC		
Mon 9	Burnley	A	FLC		
Sat 14	Stoke	H	FLC		
Sat 21	QPR	A	FLC		
Sat 28	Hull	H	FLC		

## MAY

Sun 6	Ipswich	A	FLC		
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## AS

**CROSSWORD ANSWERS.**

**Across:** 1, Flood. 4, Feyenoord 8, Yo. 9, Leicester. 10, Kenton. 12, eg. 13, Motherwell. 17, Fry. 19, Smith. 20, Oldham. 23, PSV. 24, Rice. 25, Emu. 27, Yuri. 29, Robins. 31, Stokoe. 33, Canada. 35, King. 36, WBA. 37, Smoke.

**Down:** 1, Fulham. 2, Orient. 3, Dredge. 5, Eye. 6, York. 7, Rooney. 11, Ben. 14, Hemmerman. 15, Rotherham. 16, Loovens. 18, Earnshaw. 21, Day. 22, Maine. 23, Pub. 26, Mo. 28, Usk. 30, Stoke. 32, Oggi. 34, Alm (who else!).