

# “I’ll be there”

CARDIFF CITY SUPPORTERS CLUB NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 5 · DECEMBER 2006

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Delivered free to members



**Changes at the top**

# SUPPORTERS CLUB DIRECTORY



## CCSC MAIN BRANCH

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## CCSC COMMITTEE 2005/06

Chairman	Howard Morris
Vice Chairman	Steve Evans
Secretary	Steve Bradley
Treasurer	Steve Evans
Travel Officer	Vince Alm
Membership Secretary	Matthew Robinson
Merchandise	Clive Francis
Branch Liaison	Mark Western
Social Organiser	Vince Alm
General Committee	Michael Lambert Viv Granfield Garry Lee Deborah Murphy Gwilym Rees Mark Watkins

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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



# VOICE FROM THE CHAIR

**Since our last newsletter such a lot has happened. Here we are on the run up to Christmas and we're well on course for a top six position in the Championship.**

Amazingly we were six points clear at the top of the league, we faltered a little but what are six point gaps for? It allows for that little bit of breathing space to allow for a loss or two. I for one have no doubts City will be right up there come the end of May. The impression I get from the comments of Dave Jones and the players is they are up for it as much as we are and in them we have to trust.



As you all know Sam Hammam has stepped aside for our football club to move forward. During the 80's and 90's we endured lower league football and I believe had it not been for Sam we would probably still be there now.

Cardiff City is the club we love and during the pre Sam years we kept turning up in the hope that one day a saviour would come along, and Sam was our man. There were no five year plans to get to the Premiership as other "false dawns" had promised, just a belief that he may get us there some time in the future. Now we are an established and respected Championship club with a brand spanking new stadium just a couple of seasons away. Some club chairman have hung on to their clubs too long to the detriment of the club (Villa come to mind) but not Sam, we were all

sorry to see him stand down but he did it because he knew it was the right time; the right time for Cardiff City to take the next big step forward. Thanks Sam, you are a remarkable man who will stay in our hearts and will forever be in the history books of Cardiff City. Now it is Peter's turn and more exciting times lie ahead.

Back to current issues: Like most other people I was astounded to here the away fan ban Wolves has imposed upon us. Why are we banned? What have we done? I am of the opinion that the trouble last season was as a result of over reaction by the police to an incident that could and should have been dealt with without the use of aggression. So we have done nothing and got banned!! If this shocking decision is not over turned then we as a committee will discuss and decide the best way to make our voices heard.

I am sure there will be more details further on in the newsletter about some of our trips but for the first time we visited a horse race meeting en-route to Sunderland that was a great success and a venture we hope to repeat.

We have held two open meetings where City players attended, both were great nights out.

Looking ahead we have our Children's Christmas party to look forward to and hopefully, as usual, many of the players will be joining in with our Christmas antics.

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Another first for us this season is we are organising our first 5K family fun run (or walk if you prefer). It will be held on Sunday the 11th of March 2007 at 11.30 am at Bute Park in Cardiff. There will be changing and shower facilities at the National Sports Centre in Sophia Gardens. All monies raised will go to the Ty Hafren children's hospice. We would like as many runners as possible to attend wearing their City tops. Application forms and sponsorship forms will be available soon.

Well that's enough from me, it's been a remarkable season so far and we are still to reach the half way mark, so there are still lots of twists and turns, highs and lows to come, let's enjoy it! Have a great Christmas and New Year.

**Howie**

# Sam Hammam my experience

Vince Alm

**I first met Sam at the end of June 2000 in the then called Friendly Hotel in Coryton in Cardiff. My friend Tony Jefferies who was travel officer and spokesman for the supporters club at the time had been speaking to Sam for a couple of weeks regarding a possible takeover of Cardiff City FC.**

Sam was doing what was to become a trait of his, getting the supporters to buy into his ideas of where the club should be and how we were going to achieve it even before he had bought the club.

Tony assembled dozens of supporters from all fractions of the club including ex players and I was one of the lucky ones who got an invite. When Sam arrived he was mobbed and I thought all this passion would drive him away, we had just been relegated again and were destined to may be even drop out of the league altogether so just the sight of Sam showing

an interest in our club was enough to already treat him as a saviour for our club, however he was soon at home explaining to us what direction he wanted to take the club by investing £3 million into clearing the debt and £500,000 invested into the team this was music to our ears all that money to invest into the team, little did we know how much money he would invest in the future, he also talked about changing club colours, club nickname, and other club identities this brought a bit of fear into those present and over the years all those ideas were to be dropped except for the changing of the badge.



After the initial meeting with us fans and having our full backing Sam soon took over the club in a wave of national pride and publicity at our first home game with Blackpool a drab 1-1 draw.

We were in the Third Division and Bobby Gould was soon to be appointed manager, strange decision considering his ill fated term managing the Welsh International football side also he was friendly with one of our less popular owners Tony Clemo, I was to find out some time later both acquaintances came about due to the fact he did not know anyone connected to Cardiff and Welsh football apart from these pair he also conceded he knew nothing about their track records with Welsh football at the time and was amazed when we were calling for Bobby Gould's head almost straight away.

During his first season I did not have a lot to do with him to be honest, Tony was our liaison with the football club and had contact with him, one thing during that first season that changed from his initial plan was the money spent on strengthening the team far exceeded £500,000 and there were plans to spend money on upgrading Ninian Park with an announcement to look for a home to develop a new state of the art stadium in conjunction with Cardiff City Council. Sam had fallen in love with the club and supporters as he travelled around the clubs of South Wales spreading and sharing his dream for the club "WE WIL BE BIGGER THAN BARCELONA" was one statement, I just wanted to be bigger than Rochdale at the time.

The following year Tony stepped down from the Supporters club, after many years of hard work establishing a more professional look to the image and working of CCSC, due to his work commitments and I was then appointed in his place, what a baptism of fire, we had just beaten Leeds but the press were all over us like a rash, Tony had been good enough to train me prior to his decision to stand down and so this is when I got to know Sam a lot better in my new role.

I found Sam to be very passionate about football and clearly he had come here to make money from developing a new ground and in the process put us on the map, yet probably against his wishes he had fallen in love with the warmth and love the Welsh people.

As a consequence, he became another fan, just like us, which in my opinion proved to be his downfall for several reasons, firstly, he had not worked the Welsh people out at that time and was unaware of how tribal we were, for example, Swansea supporters should come and join us in our fight against the English, that was never going to happen. How our love could turn nasty at a drop of a hat, no grey areas with the Welsh, black or white, that's it.

He started spending big money on players, over paying for them, and not really getting the return from them. The sort of thing a normal fan would do thinking with his heart not his head, he was trying to fast track us to the top, get the stadium started, set up the academy,

upgrade Ninian Park, all at the same time. We didn't care, we had this multi millionaire with deep pockets, or so we thought, we were all in love that is until the media started to attempt to discredit him with documentaries, trying to link him to hooligans and past shady dealings at other football clubs. As a consequence, the council got a bit nervous and delays ensued as restriction after restriction was imposed on his proposed development. Also, the first signs of suspicion from some of our own ranks, Sam decided to go underground, but the damage had already been done, little did we know the money that was being spent on the team to take us up two Divisions and maintain Championship football was the investment money to construct the stadium, so unknown to us, the delay had been catastrophic for Sam's dream and our football club.

This is a man I had seen live, breath the dream during his 6 years at the club, working tirelessly around the clock trying to make this dream work. He was criticised from all corners some deserved but the majority undeserved, the sad part about it was a lot of this criticism came from people within the club, local press and our own fellow supporters, who had turned their back on him or were jealous nobody likes a winner in this country, you've got to be bottom of the tree for anyone to like you e.g. Eddie the Eagle, the ski jumper in the 80s was idolised by the British because he came last at every event. ►

Also a hung council did not help regarding the red tape with the stadium, it slowed the process down as every party were able to have a say.

I personally think people struggled to understand his actions and words at times, probably due to his origins being from the Lebanon where culturally it is totally different from our Western European values and traditions, we tend to be more reserved and less emotional, where as they are very emotional and do not like to show failure or weakness hence some of the bizarre statements made by him during tough times.

A bit like the Iraqi war minister in that comical press conference with American tanks in the background - same part of the world. I've seen him in tears, fits of laughter, I have watched his insatiable appetite for learning Welsh history and culture, he fully embraced Wales and tried to understand the past and present struggles the Welsh people had gone through.

He loved to go for walks around the Welsh countryside which he would enjoy because it reminded him of his childhood back in the Lebanon where he was brought up in the mountains, he would sometimes hold audience with supporters during these walks and they would listen intently and then have a healthy debate. Sam thrived on this, you could see it in his face as he would argue his case. He loved the family bit and was always at ease when with the supporters, he included us fans in a lot of the decisions within the club e.g. choosing the kit, picking the badge etc.

When the announcement was made at the Norwich game about Sam stepping down I was stunned, it took me by total surprise. I didn't believe it at the first, then after speaking to people in the know it was starting to sink in that it might be true, although I was suspicious all day due to the different rumours flying around, what had brought this decision I asked myself at the time?

People can draw their own conclusions on his decision to step down but knowing how he had fallen in love with the club I knew what he had done for the future of the club and after speaking to him the following day it confirmed it, he could have carried on running the club but he would have had to keep selling players to make ends meet. The Stadium would have been very basic if the council had allowed it to go ahead at all, considering the relationship between Sam and the council hardly a match made in heaven, he said this was the only way the club could progress forward and after he fully explained his position, I had to agree with him.

I was personally gutted; I had fallen in love with the man because of the passion, belief, success, and recognition he had brought to our club. We were nobody or nothing when he arrived 6 years ago and in that short space of time, through hard work he had moved us forward 36 years, the position we are in now is where we were in 1970 arguably our last good era. I think back to his early statements this will be a long journey and the Welsh public will have to take the mantle at some point. I will start it off he said, sadly this was not the case with no local businessmen putting the financial resources required to

sustain the growth with the exception of Paul Guy, who I have quite rightly criticised in the past, but in his defence during the last 12 months he has not asked for any of the millions he initially invested back. Indeed, he invested more money in, so credit to Mr Guy. However, he has left us, in my opinion, with a very professional chairman in Peter Ridsdale, who has been very successful in the business world and has learnt about running a football club the hard way with Leeds. Sam brought Peter to the club to sort the debt out and progress the stadium, so marks out of ten? Twelve!! Success on both fronts, he was also responsible for getting Dave Jones here, brilliant move.

I will miss Sam running the club, although he has left it in safe hands, I will keep in touch, after all, the supporters and Sam went through so much together. He has put us on the map regards football, created loads of extra jobs in doing so, including jobs for reporters in the local media, he has left us with PRIDE, BELIEF, and no longer a laughing stock as we were for 25 years, as he said he would start us on the road to our journey but somebody else would need to finish the job because it would be too big a task for him to do it on his own, he said them words the first day I met him back in June 2000, how true were them words to me just 6 years on.

THANK YOU SAM FOR CHOOSING OUR FOOTBALL CLUB, WE WILL MAKE SURE YOUR DREAM NEVER DIES, WE WILL BE AS BIG AS BARCELONA ONE DAY, YOU HAVE SHOWN US GLIMPSES OF WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE. ■

# CCSC AWAY TRAVEL SERVICE 2006-07

**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 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

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.

## 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

## CONDOLANCES

**We at CCSC were saddened to hear that Eddie Alm, father of Vince and grandfather of Supporters Club members Matthew and Rebecca passed away recently**

**Lifetime Bluebird Albert Bewick, also sadly passed away recently at the age of 86**

**We would like to express our condolences to all family and friends**

# Just a Perfect Day

## By Leeds Blue

**It all began when the fixtures were published: I got a phone call “How do you fancy Catterick races, prior to Sunderland?” “Not a problem” I said.**

There would be three travelling up from Cardiff, meet at the services and I would drive the rest of the way.

Fast forward several months and there was I waiting for the early coach at Wooley Edge services and met up with 40 other like minded horse racing / City fanatics!

The initial 4 had blossomed to a coach, and thus enabled me to have a few beers at the races before being dropped off back at Wooley Edge (thanks Vince).

**And so onto Catterick:** on the hour or so journey we swapped horse selections for that afternoons card – almost every race, we came to the same horse! We were either all going to lose, or a have an excellent days racing.

At the same time, my mobile did not stop as I was trying to get badges for the meeting (I know a lot of northern jockeys from the nightclubs I have managed in York & Leeds). This resulted in 6 badges being left at the Main entrance – owner’s badges at that – as the afternoon carried on, the only owners we were of, was pints of bitter! Pete was in training, doing plenty of 6oz curls!!

We got to Catterick in plenty of time for the first race, resulting in a quick visit to the pub just outside (most of the other lads went directly into the course). Three quick beverages later (Pete’s hollow leg has developed into a hollow arm & a leg), it was time to nip across have a look at the parade ring (last time of the afternoon), and then to the betting ring – first of many visits – both to give the money to the bookie, and to

collect! Then onto the bar – lovely bar staff, great Pork & apple rolls, and great beer!

And on to the first race, 40-1 winner! And we all had the second, as it turned out not a bad omen.

As the meeting progressed, all I kept seeing in the betting ring, were happy smiling City fans, picking up winnings (the majority anyway).

I should mention ‘Taffy Tips’ – for those who don’t know – it’s Gwilym. He gave out three tips for the day and they all won! I was as shocked as he was – Templegate watch out!

As the day progressed, ‘Hollow leg Pete’ (only joking mate), and myself had a £2 rolling bet – up £20 odd quid, it was all on the horse that the following day would make national headlines for falling over just before the finish line! That was it, I privately thought, an omen for the game tonight.

Any way a great afternoon was ended with us all giving Taffy Tips, £20 each for his selection for the last race, and the horse WON!

On to the coach, and after another short journey we were pulling in to a pub for some additional refreshment – don’t think the staff knew what hit them, but as normal all were patient as the staff on duty tried to get us served. The only problem being they could not understand our accents (not joking).

Then on to the meeting with the police, and RAMS coaches, and the short trip off the M1 into Sunderland.

**The Stadium of Light:** I remember the first time we went there, three or four years ago, (had Reg with his hollow leg with us that time), being excited about visiting it, having read about this fantastic stadium, and being disappointed when getting there – good ground but for Sunderland say, Reading Wigan etc.

Anyway, into the ground and a cup of Bovril was required – it was cold! Loads of us in the concourse and a great atmosphere. Then out into the stadium, it was freezing! The wind was blowing directly into us.

And then the challenge came, if City are winning with 10 mins to go, we all take off our tops, and swing them around. Now we are all in our forties, and this would not have been a pretty sight, but the guys stood just behind us with their tops off (big up to you), had got us going!

As it turned out, I did it, after Chops second and have had a cold for two weeks since – (Confucius say – forty plus, year olds, not try to re-capture youth).

The game, mostly played in the Sunderland half during the first half, with the City back to their quick passing / closing down style of football, that I being 48

have never seen in my 30+ years of following them. It is such an enjoyment these days to watch them – thank you Dave Jones – and Sam for starting the dream! 2 -1 up at half time and my 1-0 Chops bet once again down the drain – not that I minded.

Half time passed with another Bovril, and we played out for another away win. I don't remember a season like this when we won so many times away from home.

On to the coach, and we were in a sort of daze, at the time I think we didn't really believe that the City had won away at Sunderland, and maintained our position at the top of the Championship. I will say again **TOP OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP.**

As an exile, and living in Leeds, (season ticket holder), I see the way the media portray us from a different point of view, to all you guys and girls in South Wales. Normally being 'Over achievers', 'False position' etc.

But on that Wednesday morning I believe we had woke the media up, we have a strong possibility of getting promotion, as crazy as it seems (to us old un's). How will they handle us if we get to the Premiership!

As long as there are race meetings in the afternoon prior to an away night game, they will love us.

Anyway, a swift journey South after the game, and I was soon dropped off at Wooley Edge,. I remember the coach being quiet as most of the lads and lasses on board preparing themselves for the long journey back to South Wales, and at one point Gwil said, 'Could you imagine a day like today, several years ago. **It has to be the perfect day**'.

After being dropped off it was a short drive home and a glass of wine to celebrate a perfect day.

**Many thanks for a day that will be remembered to:**

Davy Jones

The Cardiff City team

Vince Alm

Pete & his hollow arm and leg

Gareth – just for being Gareth

Taffy Tip's – you should have taken 9/2 in the last race

All CCFC supporters – we are the best

The bar staff at Catterick race course, and the horses that won for us

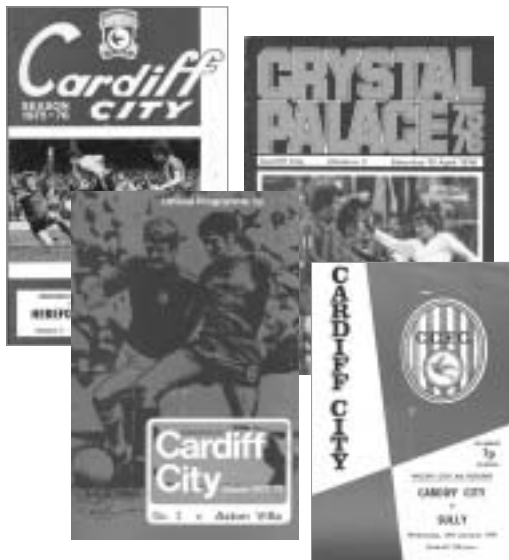
Sam Hamman – for starting the dream.

## **10 February 2007: CCSC coach to Coventry City and floodlight horse racing at Wolverhampton**

After the successful day at Catterick races on the way to Sunderland, the supporters club are organising a coach that will go to the Saturday evening meeting at Wolverhampton racecourse after the afternoon fixture at Coventry City.

Names to Vince if you are interested.

# CCFC PROGRAMMES AND BADGES



## NEED TO FIND THOSE MISSING PROGRAMMES?

The Supporters Club shop has a large selection of Cardiff City home and away programmes from last season back to the early sixties.

### Either send your wants list to:

CCSC, P.O Box 1927, Cardiff CF11 8YH  
or alternatively e-mail Clive Francis at:  
clivefr@lineone.net

This seasons' programmes – limited number of the following available priced at £3.00 each (plus 80p p&p per programme).

**Homes:** West Bromwich Albion, Coventry, Barnet (Cup), Birmingham, Luton, Southampton, Derby, Burnley and Queens Park Rangers.

**Aways:** Plymouth

## PIN BADGES

Very limited number of high quality Welsh badges available, commemorating competitive and friendly matches.

All badges are finished to a high standard and display national emblems, date of fixture and, if a competitive match, the competition.

**NEW: North American Tour 2006 badges**  
(£2.50 plus 50p P&P) limited edition.

**Qatar v. Wales.** 23/02/00 (red)

**Croatia v. Wales.** 21/08/02 (purple or red)

**Finland v. Wales.** 07/09/02 (white)

**Azerbaijan v. Wales.** 20/11/02 (white)

**Wales v. Bosnia Herzegovina.** 12/02/03 (white)

**Russia v. Wales.** 15/11/03 (red)

**Wales v. Russia.** 19/11/03 (white)

**Norway v. Wales.** 27/05/04 (red)

**Wales v. Canada.** 30/05/04 (red or white)

**Latvia v. Wales.** 18/08/04 (black)

**Azerbaijan v. Wales.** 04/09/04 (white or blue)

**Wales v. Northern Ireland.** 08/09/04  
(red or white)

**England v. Wales.** 09/10/04 (white)

Please send payment to: CCSC, PO BOX 1927, Cardiff, CF11 8HY.

All cheques should be made payable to CCSC.

The Supporters Club have an extensive selection of Cardiff Badges available. These can be viewed and purchased on match days at the club shop.

**Wales v. Hungary.** 09/02/05 (white)

**Wales v. Austria.** 26/03/05 (white)

**Austria v. Wales.** 30/03/05 (white or red)

**Wales v. Slovenia.** 17/08/05 (white or red)

**Wales v. England.** 03/09/05 (red)

**Poland v. Wales.** 07/09/05 (red)

**Northern Ireland v. Wales.** 8/10/05  
(Green or white)

**Cyprus v. Wales.** 16/11/05 (purple or white)

**Wales v. Azerbaijan.** 12/10/05 (red or white)

**Wales v. Paraguay.** 01/03/06 (white or red)

**Czech Rep v. Wales.** 02/09/06 (red or white)

**Brazil v. Wales.** 05/09/06 (blue or yellow)

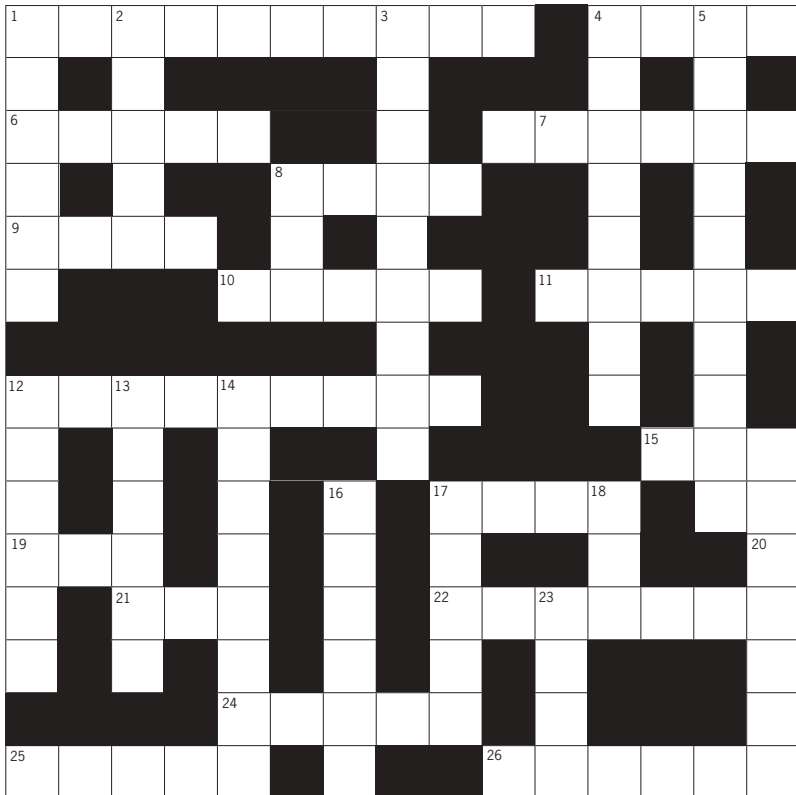
**Wales v. Slovakia.** 07/10/06 (red or white)

**Wales v. Cyprus.** 11/10/06 (Red or white)

**Wales v. Liechtenstein.** 14/11/06 (White or red)

# CCSC CROSSWORD

By Nia, Lucy and Martin Stockwell



## Across

1. Where Jerome is now (10)
4. Lower league club (4)
6. Egg-chasing (5)
7. Lanky Liverpoolian (6)
8. Capital of Peru (4)
9. In our World Cup group (4)
10. (and 12 across) Seasons greetings (5 and 9)
11. Fred or Jason (5)
12. See 10 across
15. Phil Dwyer (3)
17. Sporting cat (4)
19. They play at Deepdale (3)
21. \_\_\_ Thomas, Welsh centre-half (3)
22. Japanese midfielder (7)
24. \_\_\_\_\_ Gibbins (5)
25. Player associated with Noah! (5)
26. Chimes (6)

## Down

1. Fans board member (6)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Hoy, ex player (5)
3. Top striker (9)
4. Gary and Dave are these (8)
5. Ex midfielder with girlie hairstyle (10)
8. Jarman or Baddeley (3)
12. Is he a monster? (6) (no – he's brilliant!!)
13. Could be Blackburn or Tranmere (6)
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Liege, ECWC opponents (8)
16. Welsh golfer (6)
17. He likes us Welsh – not! (5)
18. I put our leader in again! (3)
20. A prickly issue! (5)
23. I haven't got one but you might! (4)

Answers on page 31.



# Fans Forum

As seen by Gwilym Rees

**On 15th November, with City standing at the top of the Championship, new chairman, Peter Ridsdale along with manager Dave Jones attended a Fans Forum at the Marriott Hotel.**

**Around 250 supporters were there on the evening and I think most would agree that this was a refreshing new initiative by the club.**

What follows is a summary of how I saw events from the evening, I apologise if there are any inaccuracies – some of my mates reckon I've got Alzheimer's.

In Peter Ridsdale's **opening address** he said that what we will get during his period as Chairman, is honesty and the truth, even if it's not what we want to hear.

Peter was quizzed on the **finances involved in the new stadium development:**

The whole project, the new Athletics Stadium, Indoor Gym, Retail Park and new stadium is said to cost £53 million with the new stadium costing £38 million of that. Peter mentioned that there is planning for a 60,000 seater, but initially, because of keeping within the budget it would be around 30,000 seats.

Increasing the capacity in the future was also debated, and although it will be technically difficult to do so, it can be done.

A fan asked why the cost of the new stadium has reduced by about £20 million from earlier reports. Peter pointed out that we were now not having a nightclub and hotel within the complex – the stadium will be just for sport.

The new Chairman refused to criticise previous administrations of the club, but when pressed, added that when he joined the club the new stadium was 'dead in the water' with no tenants or money to progress the project.

On **football matters**, Peter was asked if he was going to re-new the clubs efforts to get back into European Competition:

He said, although the new stadium is the priority at the moment he would soon be looking at this issue, strongly believing it is currently wrong that the club don't have a route into Europe. Interestingly, he said, he would pursue this through the English system, reasoning that the English TV money for these competitions would be significantly more than the Welsh TV money.

(I sat there thinking to myself, it's easier to win the Welsh Cup – I'm a football fan though).

On the subject of **home attendances**, Peter acknowledged that the break even gate for the season was 13,000 but was disappointed that only 6,500 season tickets had been sold to date. He was also surprised that hardly anyone had taken advantage of the clubs initiative to give out, up to two free season tickets for under 9's to adults purchasing a season in the Canton Stand.

Fans wanted to know if we would be **playing at the Millennium Stadium** if were promoted.

Peter's response was:

Whilst acknowledging there is a long, long way to go in the promotion race the club had to plan ahead. He thought that as long as the New Stadium was happening, the licensing authority would grant another extension to use the terraces at Ninian Park.

He also said, he had found to his cost whilst at Leeds, what an advantage a packed Ninian Park can be to the home side. The top clubs wouldn't fancy coming down here but if it was at the Millennium Stadium they would see it more as a home game because they have played there so often.

There was a question on seats for **season tickets holders** in the new stadium.

Peter said he would keep it affordable for the fans and prospective season ticket holders would have the opportunity of a virtual reality tour of the stadium when selecting their seats in the new stadium.

During the latter part of the evening the majority of questions were directed to manager Dave Jones. He displayed a lot of scouse wit and humour and had the assembled fans clapping and laughing in appreciation at frequent intervals. One hapless member of the audience in

particular got the full works off Jones, as he 'dug himself a hole', when he asked if he could sell official merchandise from a stall in Cardiff market instead of the unofficial gear he currently sells. Whilst protesting his innocence, it was agreed that his name and address would be passed on to JOMA, or was it the police!

**Ground sharing with Cardiff Blues** was discussed at length and in particular the playing surface. Dave Jones said that he had consulted with the groundsman and there are options for the type of pitch that could be laid, they vary in price from £800,000 to £1 million. If a pitch with 3 parts fibre 1 part grass were to be used he believes that it would stand the stresses of both rugby and football. Jones went on to say that 10 years ago he wouldn't have been for ground sharing but more recently he had come around to the idea, pointing out that sharing would also cut costs. Already, the clubs are going to share training facilities at the Vale of Glamorgan. ➤



There was a lengthy debate about **attendances** and the **clashes with the Rugby Internationals**, and the effect, along with Sky coverage and 'Children in Need night' would have on the Friday night game with QPR, with people possibly choosing not to come down. After about 5 minutes a fan changed the line of questioning. 'Is Thomo going to be fit for the QPR game?' As quick as a flash, Jones told him to, 'get down there on Friday night and find out'. More applause!!!

Jones fielded some questions on the **strength of the squad**, particularly the full back position. Cast your mind back to mid November, Chambers had just been recalled for bench duty at Watford, Gilbert had recently dislocated his shoulder in training. Although Jones acknowledged he was looking for a suitable player to bring in on loan, he said he hoped he couldn't find one because it would give 17 year old, local product, Chris Gunter an opportunity. (Two days later Gunter lined up for his league debut against QPR and was one of the better players on a dismal night for City).

Asked about **Chris Barker**, currently on loan at Colchester, and the possibility of recalling him in January, he said, that he had made a decision at the start of the season that Chris didn't give him what he wanted on the pitch, and now that we are top of the league that decision hasn't changed. Pointing out that one of the main reasons for this seasons success so far is that the full backs are playing

10-15 yards further up the field, thus pushing the wingers further forward. However, if Chris did return he would be treated the same as any other member of the squad.

On the subject of the **Academy**, the club are confident that they are now getting the best talent in the area, whilst acknowledging that some will still join the biggest clubs because of the financial rewards they offered. But as with the first team, the bar has now been raised and the management are looking for more quality.

Jones said it is a sign of progress that the clubs youngsters are now being loaned out to lower league clubs, Andrea Ferretti had a spell at Scunthorpe, at the time of writing Jamal Easter was at Bristol Rovers, and a proposed loan to Torquay for Joe Jacobson had been blocked by the Torquay chairman.

On **discipline**, Jones said there are 3 rules, time keeping (I had noted this fans forum had commenced right on time), no mobile phones switched on at work and dissent on the pitch. The fines are substantial and there is currently £7,000 in the kitty.

Jones was asked how he compared the City squad with his one at Wolves, he said, they were similar with around 13 players able to cope with life at or near the top of the Championship and the camaraderie was excellent at both clubs. He went on to say, in 3.5 years at Molineux there was a 30,000 sell out every match.

The extra revenue made it easier to sign a player.

On other subjects, Peter Ridsdale said the words Cardiff City FC would appear on next seasons badge instead of Bluebirds – apparently we are the only team that currently don't have our name on the club badge.

Ridsdale will challenge the decision of Wolverhampton to ban our supporters from the away fixture in January – more to follow on that one.

I'm sure other stuff was discussed but as I mentioned earlier, memory loss had kicked in and I was in need of a Brains.

Overall it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening, and when they have the next one I would strongly encourage you to attend. Neither, Ridsdale or Jones, ducked a question, their honesty was reassuring, many things that I hadn't been quite clear about regarding the club were answered on the night. Jones came over as a very funny man, the type of guy you would be happy to work for, and he didn't miss an opportunity to throw in a 'one liner'.

Finally, I had attended the evening with one of Cardiff City's more sceptical fans over recent years, Reg (the one who looked asleep in the 2nd row, in the Echo's picture of the event). Speaking to him afterwards, he seemed very impressed, and praise from him is praise indeed!

Well done City, more of the same please. ■

# CARDIFF CITY DREAM TEAMS

**We have asked some season ticket holders to pick the best team they have seen in their time supporting the City.**

## Vince Alm – 4-3-3

GK Neil Alexander	(01-06)
RB Mark Delaney	(98-99) 34
CB Don Murray	(62-74) 483
CB Glen Loovens	(05-06)
LB Kevin McNoughton	(06)
M Dave Bennett	(81-82) 85
M Ian Gibson	(70-72) 109
M Jason Koumas	(05-06) 44
F Willie Anderson	(72-76) 142
F Tony Evans	(75-78) 145
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178

## Howie – 4-4-2

GK Bill Irwin	(71-77) 210
RB Phil Dwyer	(72-84) 531
CB Glen Loovens	(05/06)
CB Danny Gabbidon	(00-05) 197
LB Gary Bell	(66-73) 265
M Barrie Jones	(66-69) 128
M Ian Gibson	(70-72) 109
M Peter King	(60-73) 431
M Jason Koumas	(05-06) 44
F Brian Clark	(67-72 & 75) 240
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178



## Steve Evans – 4-4-2

GK Bill Irwin	(71-77) 210
RB Peter Rodrigues	(63-65) 103
CB Don Murray	(62-74) 483
CB Kevin Ratcliffe	(92-93) 29
LB Gary Bell	(66-73) 265
M Dave Bennett	(81-82) 85
M Phil Dwyer	(72-84) 531
M Ian Gibson	(70-72) 109
M Willie Anderson	(72-76) 142
F John Charles	(63-65) 80
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178

## Gwilym Rees – 4-3-3

GK Bill Irwin	(71-77) 210
RB Robbie James	(92-93) 62
CB Mike England	(75-76) 40
CB Danny Gabbidon	(00-05) 197
LB Kevin McNaughton	(06)
M Ian Gibson	(70-72) 109
M Doug Livermore	(75-77) 107
M Jason Koumas	(05-06) 44
F Willie Anderson	(72-76) 142
F John Toshack	(65-70) 193
F Michael Chopra	(06)

## Reg Salter – 4-4-2

GK Ron Healey	(73-81) 241
RB Lindon Jones	(78-83) 157
CB Mike England	(75-76) 40
CB Danny Gabbidon	(00-05) 197
LB Kevin McNoughton	(06)
M Dave Bennett	(81-82) 85
M Doug Livermore	(75-77) 107
M Ian Gibson	(70-72) 109
M Willie Anderson	(72-76) 142
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178
F Brian Clark	(67-72 & 75) 240

## Phil Hallam (Leeds Blue) – 4-3-3

GK Ron Healey	(73-81) 241
RB Gary Bennett	(81-82) 85
CB Don Murray	(62-74) 483
CB Phil Dwyer	(72-84) 531
LB Kevin McNoughton	(06)
M Jason Koumas	(05-06) 44
M Steve McPhail	(06)
M Peter King	(60-73) 431
F Willie Anderson	(72-76) 142
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178
F Michael Chopra	(06)

## Gareth Rees – 5-3-2

16 years old – 8 years a season ticket holder

GK Neil Alexander	(01-06)
RB Mark Delaney	(98-99) 34
CB James Collins	(00-05) 66
CB Danny Gabbidon	(00-05) 197
CB Mike Ford	(98-99) 232
LB Andy Legg	(98-03) 175
M Gareth Ainsworth	(03) 9
M Graham Kavanagh	(01-05) 142
M Jason Koumas	(05-06) 44
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178
F Kevin Nugent	(97-01) 99

## Martin Stockwell – 4-4-2

GK Neil Alexander	(01-06)
RB Lindon Jones	(78-83) 157
CB Kevin Ratcliffe	(92-93) 29
CB Mike England	(75-76) 40
LB Andy Legg	(98-03) 175
M Dave Bennett	(81-82) 85
M Jason Koumas	(05-06) 44
M John Buchanan	(74-81) 264
M Willie Anderson	(72-76) 142
F Robert Earnshaw	(97-04) 178
F Phil Stant	(92-94) 96



# The Hamma

I remember walking down Queen  
billboard 'Sam Hammam to buy  
me, there was a renewed enthus

Amongst the hype of the coming days it didn't go unnoticed that a number of Wimbledon fans were sending their condolences to our unofficial websites. That said, during the early press conferences, you couldn't fail to be impressed with the energy, commitment and ideas Sam was going to bring to the club - a club that had been in the doldrums for to long.

The deal was agreed during late July 2000 and Sam paid around £3 million for control of the club clearing the existing debt. By all accounts it was Bobby Gould who had steered Sam towards a move to Cardiff, but it came as a shock, particularly to those that had been traipsing around the world following Wales's fortunes, when Gould was appointed to replace Billy Ayre as manager. Billy was relegated to assistant manager, then shortly afterwards to head coach and was subsequently sacked early in the October.

We soon had the hint that Sam was going to 'flash the cash' when an inexperienced Danny Gabbidon was taken on loan from WBA and signed a few months later for around £500,000.

That, along with getting City back into a reserve league, were the best bits of business Bobby Gould did for the club, and for that he must take some credit. But things weren't really happening on the pitch, City were mid table. Ex Wimbledon stalwart Alan Cork had come in as assistant manager and within 3 weeks he had taken over as manager with Gould moved upstairs as 'Director Of Football', as fan pressure grow.

Cork appointed Ian Butterworth as his assistant late in October and Sam's cheque book came out again as Rhys Weston (£300,000 from Arsenal), Gavin Gordon (£550,000 from Lincoln, shortly after a couple of goals against us at Ninian Park), and £450,000 for David Hughes from Shrewsbury had followed £300,000 worth of Leo Dine-o into the club.



In those first few months, Sam had announced that a new stadium would be built and he and, then, Council Leader Russel Goodway were seen visiting various possible sites around the capitol. Improvement was also in the pipeline for the existing facilities at Ninian Park. It was announced that a roof would be built on the Grange End and the Bob Bank terrace would be reopened.



More importantly, a licence to sell beer on the Bob Bank was approved - many a happy hour has been spent in the 'Village' since, disappointingly, it was soon years before Clark's Pies arrived.

On the field, the new players had settled in and a run of form right through until April had got us promotion with 3 games to go.

Street and seeing a  
out City'. Immediately within  
iasm for the new season.

# am era

## Summer 2001

Sam really cranked up the spending in the summer, to levels that us City fans could hardly believe, after years of dabbling in the Free Transfer market who could blame us. Spencer Prior joined from Manchester City for £700,000 and Graham Kavanagh became the first million pound player when he joined from Stoke.

Off the field Bobby Gould, with his job done, didn't have his contract renewed and Ian Atkins joined as a coach. Season tickets were selling well, the ground improvements had been completed and a new club shop was commissioned.

Summary of Sam's first year at Ninian:

- £4 million spent on new players
- Promotion out of the dungeon - finished 2nd
- £50 million new stadium plan announced
- Elected to a reserve league
- Nearly enough under 21 Internationals to make a team
- Met UEFA top brass to try and pave a way back into Europe

## As seen by Gwilym Rees

- Improvements to Ninian Park, capacity increased to 20,000
- Beer on the Bob
- First million pound Bluebird
- 3 Managers & 3 Assistant Managers in 12 months
- Average crowds up 1,067 to 7,962

### Season 2001/02

City didn't start life in League 1 (Division 3) particularly well, Manager Alan Cork came under early pressure from the fans for the style of football played, many thought it was the influence of coach Ian Atkins, an experienced manager in his own right but with a particular brand of football, that was running the show. Sam again weald the axe and Atkins was gone after barely 10 weeks at the club.

Peter Thorne a £1.7 million record signing joined from Stoke, and City inched their way up the table but to many games were drawn. With Cork still under extreme pressure Sam appointed Lennie Lawrence, who had just been sacked by Grimsby but who had vast managerial experience and had gained promotion twice to the

Premiership previously with Middlesbrough & Charlton, as Director of Football.

In front of a packed, partisan, Ninian Park, City got their best result since beating Real Madrid back in the early 70's, when they beat Leeds, top of the Premiership at the time, in a 3rd Round FA Cup tie. Unfortunately, this was overshadowed by events off the field when crowd trouble marred the end of the game, the media attention turned to Sam, he was criticised for his walks around the pitch during the game and the London Press were reporting that Sam's 'Ayatollah' was some sort of signal to the Cardiff hordes who were massed on the terraces.

The spin off from all this was that Sam was either banned or chose not to (can't quite remember) parade around the pitch in future. Indeed, he had some hassle at one or two clubs about sitting in the dug out around that time. From this point, for the stadium to progress, the club had to be seen to be Whiter than White with regards hooliganism and general crowd behaviour. ➤

In fairness to Sam, the club has come a million miles under his leadership regarding these issues, we may have taken the odd step back along the way but I don't believe there has been another clubs administration who have been as pro-active as Cardiff City – we thank you for that Sam.

Back on the pitch, Sam sacked Alan Cork 6 weeks later, after a disastrous defeat at Wigan. The loyal away support had had enough and Sam had to act. Lennie took charge of the team, he was given £900,000 to spend on Andy Campbell, which looked good business at the time, and the team went on an amazing run (won 11, drew 3) to take them into a Play Off game against Stoke. As you are all aware, we lost this in controversial style late in the game. This must have been Sam's biggest disappointment on the pitch, he had invested heavily but we had missed out. Hindsight is a great thing, but up to that point, we had simply had to many changes at managerial levels in a relatively short space of time.

During the summer Sam splashed out £600,000 on full back Chris Barker from Barnsley

### **Sams 2nd year at Ninian**

- Spent 3.2 million on major signings (including another record signing)
- Beat Leeds Utd in the FA Cup
- Beaten in the Play Offs
- Won the FAW Cup
- Took steps to combat the hooligan issues surrounding Cardiff City
- Average crowd 12,523 (up 4,561)

### **Season 2002/03 Division 1**

There appeared to be headway regarding the new stadium in September 2002 when Sam and then Council Leader Russell Goodway signed a heads of terms agreement, which gave Sam the green light to go ahead and carry out a major impact study.

It was noticeable that the big money transfers we had just become use to didn't continue during the season, that said, the team were there or thereabouts for promotion the whole season, and although our form faltered a bit towards the end, we found ourselves in the last play off place when it mattered. The next few weeks would go down in Cardiff City folklore when we finally overcame Bristol City, after many years of trying, then 35,000 City fans were at the Millennium stadium to see us win promotion to the Championship against QPR.

### **Sam's 3rd year at Ninian**

- No Managerial changes (stability at last)
- No major money signings
- Won promotion at the Millennium Stadium
- Average crowd 13,050 (up 527)

### **Season 2003/04 in the Championship**

It had been 19 seasons since we had last played at this level. The City fans eagerly anticipated the start of the season, with over 10,000 season tickets snapped up. The management went for experience in their pre-season signings, Welsh International, John Robinson was snapped up on a free from Charlton and



Aussie International Tony Vidmar finally joined (we nearly signed him the previous season) on a free from Middlesbrough. It appeared Sam was still prepared to 'flash the cash', when an attempt to bring in Jody Morris collapsed just before completion.

However, with the season just underway Alan Lee and Richard Langley were signed for £850,000 and £200,000 respectively. At around this time, a £1,000,000 transfer of Gary Doherty from Spurs fell through. So it was fair to say that the intent and ambition was there to kick on. The team started the season well and played some superb football and although we were occasionally on the wrong end of some high scoring games, the fans were certainly enjoying it. With lots of new grounds for the fans to go to, the travelling support where out in high numbers and the various supporters clubs saw their memberships grow.



The team were on the fringes of the play-offs until a poor run of form during December, where we only picked up 5 points from 8 games. With half the season left, Sam, perhaps unwisely, branded the season a waste. Although within reach of the play offs, the financial belts were tightened – at a time when everyone around us was strengthening. Successfully loan player Julian Gray wasn't signed in December when Crystal Palace had given us the opportunity, but a change of manager there, Ian Dowie coming in, saw him recalled shortly afterwards.

Rumours became rife that the club was in financial melt down.



However, there was better news in January, the club were informed that their application for Academy status had been approved, the large sums of money this involved indicated that perhaps the club wasn't as skint as the sceptics had us believe. Paul Parry was also signed from conference club Hereford for £150,000 and although this didn't exactly get the pulses racing, he did well.

But in March, figures released from Companies House showed debt of £21 million, the following month midfielder Gareth Whalley was dropped

from the squad just before his 'games played' bonus kicked in. This became public knowledge and there was much debate about 'who's right, who's wrong', in the local press.

City completed the season 7 points outside the play offs, overall it had been an enjoyable first season back at this level and we had been watching at the time, probably, the best City side for over 30 years.

There was more controversy at the end of the season when Sam authorised letters to go out to City fans on the database, asking them to support the Labour administration, under Councillor Goodway, at the forthcoming elections. Wrongly believing that this would strengthen the push for the new stadium.

#### Sam's 4th year

- Best team assembled for over 30 years
- Plenty of good football, particularly during the first half of the season
- Academy approval granted
- Sam made negative announcements to supporters (season wasted!)
- Massive debt announced
- Player 'bonus payments' influencing team selection (with regards Whalley, I agreed with Sam on that one)
- Poor PR with political letters sent to fans
- Average crowd 15,569 (up 2,519)

#### Season 2004/05

With continued uncertainty regarding the stadium project, Sam announced his hands

where tied in the transfer market, although another business plan had been submitted during the summer, there was no positive news on that front.

The pre season was a disaster, the planned tour of Scandinavia was cancelled and a hastily arranged programme in the UK saw the City turn in some very moderate displays.



Poor displays continued into the season proper and it was with some surprise that Sam authorised the signing of Jobi McAnuff for £250,000 from West Ham. However, within a few days City fans were stunned when it was announced that (the family silver) Robert Earnshaw had gone to West Brom for £3.5 million, Sam had to fend off serious criticism from angry fans. Rumours where rift that we were getting some West Brom players in return. Manager Lennie Lawrence would only say that they wouldn't be part of the Earnshaw deal, which indicated to me that a deal might be done separately – it never materialised.

In early September, Sam freshened up the management team when Ian Butterworth was sacked and replaced by Terry Burton from Watford. Lennie survived, even though he had asked to be judged after 12 games (which had not very impressive). ►

A decent performance in the League Cup at MK Dons saved Lennie from the sack and from that point results did improve. Lennie signed, midfielder, Gary O'Neill on loan from Portsmouth and it was an inspired acquisition. Many Bluebirds would have him in their 'all time greats City team' – that's how effective he was.

But early in November, O'Neill was recalled to Pompey and City were still in a relegation battle. The New Year began with better news off the pitch; various Planning Permissions had been approved for the new stadium complex.

But what following, didn't have the fans worrying about relegation, but indeed, the clubs continued existence. In March 2005, it was reported that there had been a problem paying the staff's wages, probably the result of further stadium delays. The bombshell came on Friday 4th March when captain Graham Kavanagh was sold to Wigan to ease the financial pressure on the club. It was announced that debts had risen to nearly £30 million. This was the low water mark in Sam's reign at Ninian.

In fairness, he came out fighting, refusing to let the club slip into administration. On the 25 March 05, Sam appointed Peter Ridsdale as a consultant, on a 3 month contract. Tasking him with sorting out the clubs precarious situation.

Lennie Lawrence managed to squeeze enough points out of the remaining players to avoid relegation with 1 game to go.

Massive change in playing staff was obviously on the cards and I believe the timing of Lennie's departure as manager was right.

At the end of May, Sam announced that Peter Ridsdale would take up a position as Executive Deputy Chairman and on the same day Dave Jones joined as manager.

Jones knew he would be starting with a clean slate, literally, as high earners McAnuff, Thorne, Collins, Gabbidon & Vidmar left the club.

### **Sam's 5th year (a year of turmoil)**

- Pre-season tour cancelled
- Academy established
- Sold Earnie and Kav during season
- Sacked assistant manager, Ian Butterworth – appointed Terry Burton
- Survived relegation battle (just)
- Further stadium delays – massive debt announced – wages paid late
- Dave Jones replaces Lennie Lawrence as manager
- Peter Ridsdale joins – becomes Deputy Chairman
- Average crowd 12,976 (down 2,593)

### **Season 2005/06**

After the mass exodus of experienced players, new manager, Dave Jones had to assemble a side that would be competitive in the Championship. A whole host of players (7) were signed on free

transfers, of these, only Ferretti and Cooper remain, at the time of writing this article, 16 months later.

It was a case of getting bodies in. That said, Sam made money available to Jones to sign an excellent captain, Darren Purse from WBA, for £750,000. But arguably the best additions to the squad, were the season long loans of, Glen Loovens from Feyenoord and Jason Koumas from WBA. Who that was there, will ever forget JK scoring with his first touch for the club against Leeds!



After a pre season in Scotland, which had been arranged before Jones' arrival, City started the season slowly, 5 points from 6 games, but they picked up quite well after this and spent the bulk of the season just outside the play off positions. In January, Jones went into the transfer market and bought in Steve Thompson and Ricky Scimeca. However, 1 victory in the final 9 games put paid to any hopes of the play offs, as the season fizzled out.

Throughout the season the council had extended the deadline on a number of occasions for the club to prove the viability for the new stadium scheme.

## Sam's 6th year

- Wage bill slashed.
- Team performed better than was expected.
- Further stadium delays.
- Manager Jones, starts to build a team to seriously challenge for promotion.
- Average Crowd 11,720 (down 1,256 and 3,849 from 2003/04)

## Season 2006/07

Jones, with a season of stabilising behind him, had a full summer to prepare properly for the new season. Top scorer, academy product Cameron Jerome had moved to Birmingham for £3.5 million and this certainly gave Jones the opportunity to wheel and deal. He bought in 12 players (I think I've counted them all) with only Michael Chopra costing a fee, a bargain £350,000. Although still working under strict financial constraints, the club went for a pre season tour to Canada and North America. The players came back very fit and well gelled but importantly, displaying an excellent team spirit.

Hindsight is a great thing, but the best start ever to a season must be attributed to that trip.

It wasn't all good news though, season ticket sales were slow and the club had failed in their attempts to sign Jason Koumas on a permanent basis. I believe there is a definite connection there. Sam kept the number 7 jersey open for him and I must admit I was absolutely gutted when the deal was finally called off (that was my low, during Sam's reign). Was it Sam's fault? – I don't know.



What happened next was unbelievably, I'm a betting man, every season I have had a few bob on the City – apart from this one!! The first 12 games yielded 29 points, the football in nearly all the games was top draw and great entertainment. It was good to see us rip teams apart at NP.

City were 6 points clear at the top of the Championship and whilst we waited for the game to start at Norwich, news broke that Sam was leaving the club, to say people were gobsmacked was an understatement.

In a nutshell, Peter Ridsdale had found some serious investors who could take the club and the new stadium project forward, unfortunately for Sam, they didn't want his involvement.

## Sam's last few months July-October 2006

- Failed to sign Koumas
- Top of the Championship (6 points clear when he left)
- Average crowd 17,658 (up 5,938 from last season)

When Sam joined us he promised us a roller coaster ride, a new stadium and the Premiership within 20 years. So its disappointing that he has had to step down when we are so close to achieving his dream – although we did get the roller coaster ride.

In his 6.5 years, I only got to speak to Sam on two occasions, once was on a CCSC coach to Carmarthen, he appeared at his happiest amongst the fans, for an FAW fixture and the other was when the supporters club stopped at Aston Villa's training ground to watch our academy teams play. What struck me was his passion for our club and his interest at grass root level, he displayed an in depth knowledge of all the youngsters playing in the academy – I wouldn't have thought that was the norm for other club Chairmen.

Sam was a colourful, flamboyant leader of Cardiff City, for 4.5 seasons the fans sung his praises, at what other club did/does the Chairman get that sort of recognition over the manager! When it all went financially 'pair shaped' he finally employed a good management team to support him. Then, from a position of extreme adversity, he managed to preside, for a short period, over the best City side in living memory (if you are under 50).

In summary, Sam's years, have been my most interesting and enjoyable years supporting the bluebirds.

Thanks Sam \o/ /o\ \o/ /o\





Many of the motions that have been passed at the conferences we have been able to contribute to, for example, police and stewarding; there is now a report filled in after every away game on the 'home stewards' and policing performance regarding their treatment of the away fans, this was put forward by Gwyn Davies from the valley Rams and has just been implemented.

## FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS FEDERATION (FSF) Who are we and what do the FSF do?

**The FSF was formed when the National Federation amalgamated with the FSA in 2002, to have one voice for football supporters: it currently has over 120,000 members from all levels of football.**

The FSF is broken down into several regions Midland, Northern, Southern, South West, and Wales, which covers North Wales. The Cardiff supporters clubs are full members and the region we have been allocated too is the South West.

We have been members since 2003 along with the Valley Rams supporters club. Since our joining of the organisation we have become very active members, with us hosting meetings at Ninian Park and having the privilege of also hosting the an AGM in 2005 at the quality Hotel in Cardiff.

We originally joined the FSF to improve our relationship with other football league clubs throughout the country which was at a all time low after the trouble during the FA Cup victory against Leeds, after we got slaughtered by all sections of the local and national press some deserved majority undeserved and full of lies, basically it was open season on

Cardiff City FC as regards the media and what was worst other football supporters believed the hype. This is when serious action needed to be taken and many partnerships were formed in tackling the problem including CCFC supporter groups joining the FSF to help portray the correct Image.

Once we joined we realised this voluntary organisation was fighting the same causes we were moaning about e.g. Ticket prices, 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon Kick off times, safe standing areas, the fair distribution of television revenues throughout the leagues, etc. We attended our first meeting in 2003 at Exeter football club and from that day on we have become heavily involved with the FSF.

We have attended all of the FSF AGMs, the first one was held at Highbury in June 2003 and there have been obviously three since, which we have had representation at.

We had a huge say on the MK Dons / AFC Wimbledon debate with our proposals after a meeting in Cardiff being Implemented allowing MK Dons members to join the FSF as individual members only and not as a supporters club. We have also proposed a motion of pursuing a more lenient sentence for drunken entry to grounds; it's unfair to have the same punishment as a hooligan who may have used violent disorder and a person who may have got drunk for a reason like a birthday or bereavement.

I have personally been involved in national debates on national radio regarding the safe standing debate and have recently joined the National council for FSF Cymru as a liaison officer.

FSF Cymru is a new organisation that organise Embassies at Wales away games to help any Welsh supporters who might need help e.g. lost passport, lost money, muggings, assaults, missing persons, arrests, directions, transport around City and country, places to eat and drink to name but a few of the things we get involved in.

An example of this was our last Euro Qualifier, away in the Czech Republic, where FSF Cymru organised 32 coaches and numerous mini buses, taxis to transport 2000 fans from Prague to Teplice.

In addition, we have been involved with the FAW regarding ticket allocation, flags in the stadium and future funding for FSF Cymru.

FSF Cymru was set up in 2003 and have successfully held embassies in Milan, Moscow, Baku, Warsaw, Vienna, Belfast, Limosol, Bilbao, Gratz, and Prague, during these embassies we have helped numerous Welsh supporters abroad with a wide range of issues. We are a sub committee of the main FSF who help us with advice and funding regarding running international

embassies, the FSF have been pioneering embassies successfully since the early 90s, driven by Kevin Miles, who has become the face of English supporters abroad.

Currently the FSF are dealing with the following issues affecting our game:

- Anti-social behaviour (homophobia)
- Horizontal Segregation e.g. Wolverhampton Wanders
- Banning Orders
- Fit and proper person test (FAPPT)
- The use of sporting sanctions
- Football Foundation Grants
- Restrictions on the availability of away match tickets to official away transport.

- Independent European Sports review
- Regulation of agents
- Registered home ground

If you would like to find out more about the FSF and how we are progressing with the above you can visit the website at

**www.fsf.org.uk** and e-mail any comments to **info@fsf.org.uk**

You can also join as individual members at a cost of £14 per year, if you require any further information you can call me on **08714 779441**, or call in the supporters club shop where you will be able to pick up a membership form for either FSF or FSF Cymru. I'm located in the portacabin behind the Canton Stand opposite the Ticket Office.

**Vince Alm**

**WEAR RED FOR WALES**  
Organised travel abroad with CCSC to watch Wales



## EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FIXTURES

**SLOVAKIA v. WALES (Bratislava)** Wednesday 12 September 2007

Mon 10 Sep (4am from Cardiff) – Thurs 13 Sep (2300 in Cardiff)  
Stansted – Bratislava return flight £118.00 (at time of going to print)  
3 nights in Bratislava (coach transfers, hotel & match tickets, price TBC)  
25 City fans already booked on this trip

**GERMANY v. WALES (by coach)** Wednesday 21 November 2007

Sunday 18 November coach to Cologne (4 nights)  
Coach Transfer to Frankfurt on match day  
Return Cardiff Thursday 22 November

Names to Vince, Price: TBC

If you are interested in travelling to the above International fixtures with the CCSC, book at supporter's club shop/booking office now.

### CYPRUS and SAN MARINO

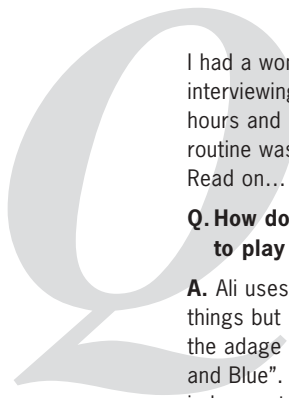
The supporters club are looking into the possibility of organising away travel to Cyprus 13 October 2007 & San Marino 17 October 2007.

Make your interest known to Vince so that we can gauge numbers to see if these trips are feasible.

### SAVINGS SCHEME

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

Between Sep and Nov 2007 Wales have four important away fixtures.



I had a wonderful time interviewing Ali over a couple of hours and how he prepares his routine was very interesting. Read on...

**I think you'll agree the match-day entertainment provided by Ali Yassine at Ninian Park has to be among (if not) the best in football.**

**The thoughts that go into it along with the variation tries to capture ALL the fans – not just a select few.**

**Q. How do you decide what to play at each game?**

**A.** Ali uses a combination of things but mainly centres on the adage "Old, New, Borrowed and Blue". He uses his judgement and is always open to suggestions and requests.

**Q. What about dedications and requests?**

**A.** Obviously the Club provide some content e.g. presentations, sponsors etc. Ali firmly believes that "A Football Club IS the Fans" and tries to connect with the fans. He always thinks "Don't let any popularity go to your head".

end of the game when the score was 0-0. Ali was not keen on the timing of the request but the Safety Officer (who can override the Tannoy at any time) went ahead. Many people believed Ali had done this and jinxed the result ('cause we all know what happened). That's the record put straight on that one!

**Q. What was the best moment?**

**A.** "Sam's Prayer". Ali believed this to be a turning point although the Club did receive one complaint that it was offensive. At the next match, Ali offered his apology which received a standing ovation from the crowd and really touched him. Also enjoys having tannoy announcers from other Clubs coming to watch –

# Match-day with Ali

**Q. How far in advance do you prepare?**

**A.** Typically, Ali has the outline for a game prepared at least a couple of matches ahead. There are usually things the impact that such as news items, player changes etc and he has to be flexible.

**Q. What was the worst moment?**

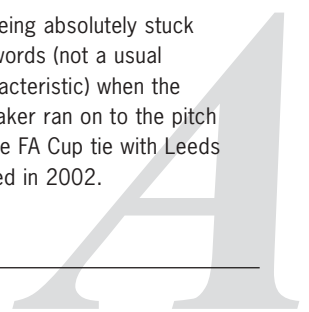
**A.** Ali says "Without question, being mistaken for the Safety Officer at the play-off semi-final with Stoke". He was asked to give out a message asking fans not to run on the pitch at the

most recently Birmingham tannoy-man came to Ninian Park. Humour is a great gift but Ali has concerns over the level of Political Correctness required should we ever get to the Premiership.

**Q. What was the funniest thing you can recall?**

**A.** Being absolutely stuck for words (not a usual characteristic) when the Streaker ran on to the pitch at the FA Cup tie with Leeds United in 2002.

An interview by  
Steve Evans



**Q. When did you start the job and how did it come about?**

**A.** Ali arrived about the same time as Sam Hammam. He recalls his first game vividly – against Crystal Palace in a pre-season friendly. Ali got in a right state when both teams effectively made 11 substitutions at half-time. He got the job by sending in a letter to the Club around the time Phil Suarez was taken ill and was about to leave his role. The letter suggested new methods and different ways of linking to the fans. It was a bit like Yosser Hughes – “Gissa Job”! Ali was given a trial and the rest is history.

**Q. Do you do anything else around the Club?**

**A.** No.

**Q. Do you have a day job?**

**A.** Ali actually started out as an aircraft fitter when he left school but soon began looking for new challenges. He currently works in broadcasting (directing programmes such as Eastenders) and presents a number of programmes in the Welsh language. So lots of TV work.

**Q. Why did you learn Welsh?**

**A.** Basically, growing up in Cardiff and not feeling “Welsh”. Ali believes strongly in the Language and Culture of Wales and does all he can to promote this.

**Q. Do you speak any other languages (apart from English)?**

**A.** Ali speaks some Arabic – which comes in handy since his wife is an Arabic speaker. (Always good to know what they are saying about you).

**Q. Do you still work for the FAW at the Millennium Stadium?**

**A.** Not at the moment. He fell out with a Sky TV Production Manager who was trying to dictate what should be happening to ensure the best TV broadcast. Of course, this guy had no idea that Ali was a broadcast director – despite some Sky cameramen knowing him and being highly embarrassed. He is, however, hoping to get back soon.

**Q. Best moments working with the Wales set up?**

**A.** Standing in a corridor after a Wales defeat and being approached by the Wales Team management and being told “You had a great game!” Funniest moment had to be the pre-match sound check with Goldie Looking Chain – the spoof rap band from Newport. Lead singer runs out and shouts “HELLO WEMBLEY !!” Absolutely hilarious!

**Q. How long have you supported Cardiff City?**

**A.** 35 years. Ali had a mate who used to live next to Ninian Park. They used to use his mother’s ladder to climb over the wall to get to matches. This had to

stop when one day they left the ladder behind and there was an endless stream of people walking through his mate’s garden and climbing the ladder into the game. His mother took it away after that.

**Q. Favourite all time Cardiff City player?**

**A.** Earnie. Always admired the way Earnie would go out of his way to pose for photographs, sign autographs etc. A real “fans” player. Most skillful player had to be Jason Koumas – breathtaking sometimes.

**Q. Best and worst moments as a City fan?**

**A.** Best – Play-off final victory over QPR.

Worst – Nearly going out of business as a Club and of course, “The Durban Years”.

**Q. Any life ambitions you still wish to realise?**

**A.** Really proud of his University degree (Ba (Hons) in Drama and Communication Studies) achieved as a mature student. Would like to go on and do a PhD. He wants to continue in broadcasting and to make TV programmes and Promote the Welsh Language – improving the number of Welsh speakers.

Ali is 43 and lives in Cardiff with his wife and 3 children (all girls).

If you want to contact Ali direct with suggestions or about a request or announcement, please e-mail him at: [aliyassine@hotmail.com](mailto:aliyassine@hotmail.com)

# DOWN MEMORY LANE

**On the 31st January 2007 it will be exactly 40 years to the day that I saw my first Cardiff City match. When you have supported one football team for that amount of time your memories and recollections of games and goals, players and managers go on forever.**

When the team you support is Cardiff City then the ups and downs, and there have been plenty, is even more magnified.

Over the years I have seen several promotions and just as many relegations, great wins and horrible defeats. A European Cup Winners Cup semi-final, that win against Real Madrid and that defeat against Weymouth. Games that made me laugh and games that almost made me cry. A play-off final and relegation dog fights.

Numerous managers, hundreds of players, some good some not so good and some absolutely awful. You could even have a discussion on kits. From the classic of the 70's with the yellow and white stripe, and still probably my favourite, too some dodgy ones which resemble dandruff all over the shoulders and a black and grey thing which resembled an explosion in a paint factory.

Everyone remembers something different and these are just some memories of my 40 years. This is not a list of top ten games or goals or even a best of. There are games we won games we drew and even some we lost. Some of them were not even particularly good games as far as I can recall, it's more the occasion and the times they represented. Some will be obvious and some obscure.

It's a bit of a rollercoaster being a City fan and here are some of the reasons why!

## **31st January 1967 Cardiff City v. Barnsley**

I was just 10 at the time. I came home from school and my father asked me if I wanted to go and see the City. For me it was like being asked did I want to win the lottery. Unlike today, where the average 10 year old can see more wall to wall Premiership football and games

from all over Europe, without even leaving the settee, the only way for a 10 year old to see football then was to see it live.

In those days you saw the FA Cup Final once every year and you got a small ration of internationals. That was about it.

We travelled down on a coach from Caerphilly, which was common then, as most of the travel to games was done on coaches and trains. Not everyone had a car then and we certainly didn't.

City won 2 - 1. To progress to the 4th round of the FA Cup. George Johnson scored the first ever City goal I saw, from a penalty. I can vaguely remember that. City sold him to Arsenal for £20,000 before the end of the season.

I don't remember much else but my most vivid recollection was how green the pitch looked under the floodlights and how big the ground seemed. We sat in the canton Stand and that seemed huge to me, mind you it was about 3 times the size it is now. It had 29 rows of long brown bench seating. No blue plastic tip-up seats then!

The ground held over 50,000 people, as the Bob-Bank and Grange End were huge terraces. The attendance for my first game was 21,020 and that's a lot of people for a ten year old. It was fantastic. On the way home, our coach managed to hit a car on a roundabout and we got home late. I should have known then that this was an omen and supporting Cardiff City was not going to be an easy ride over the next 40 years.



My first ever City team that I saw was - Wilson, Coldrick, Ferguson, Williams, Murray, Harris, Lewis, Johnson, Brown, King and Bird. Sub Jones.

We lost in the 4th round to Manchester City, 3 - 1 in a replay. We drew the 1st game

1 - 1 at Ninian Park and I saw that game from the enclosure, which is now the Lower Grandstand. I sat on the wall and it poured with rain. I got soaked. The attendance was 37,206.

We travelled home on the train from Ninian Park Halt. It was packed and I remember drinking hot chocolate out of a flask. It's funny what you remember as a 10 year old!

I had now seen 2 games in 3 weeks, which meant I was now a City fan forever. I loved it and couldn't wait to go again. But did I really know what I was letting myself in for? Probably not.

### **1967/68 Season. Cardiff City v. Hamburg**

We qualified for the European Cup Winners Cup via the Welsh Cup, which we won virtually every year.

I saw all the European games that season, against Shamrock Rovers, NAC Breda and Torpedo Moscow. We were now playing Hamburg for a place in the Cup Winners Cup Final. We had drawn 1 - 1 in Germany in the 1st leg and City were now just 90 minutes away from a European final. I sat in the Canton stand that night and the ticket cost 10 shillings and sixpence (that's 55 pence in today's money).

We lost 2 - 3 and Uwe Seeler who had captained West Germany in the 1966 World Cup Final scored 2 goals, including the winner in the last minute. Bob Wilson in the City goal managed to let a half hit shot squirm over his hands and roll into the net. I can remember being near the wall close to the goal. Did I cry? I think I did. And I think the other 43,070 did as well. We would have played Inter Milan in the final, not that I would have been there, I think the final was in Sweden or Holland that year and travelling in Europe is not like it is now. I was only just getting used to going to Cardiff.

The other thing I remember about that night was that their goalkeeper was a Turkish international. I didn't even know where Turkey was!

So City had made me cry for the first time but probably not the last. We had nearly reached a final but just missed out and I eventually found out where Turkey was.

### **1968/69 Season. Cardiff City v. Arsenal - FA Cup 3rd Round**

We drew 0 - 0. Nothing special about the game other than it was the biggest crowd I have ever been in at Ninian Park, 55,136.

Arsenal were always a big club and the ground was absolutely packed. I was standing in the corner with my father, where the Bob-Bank and Canton Stand meet, near the flood light pylon, where the box for the kids party is now.

I was 12 and couldn't see a thing. 5 minutes before kick-off, my father disappeared and reappeared carrying a cardboard box containing 2 large breeze blocks. He put it down



on the floor, I stood on it and could now see everything in glorious detail. I thought this was great, the bloke behind me didn't. I don't know where he got the bricks from, even to this day.

Can you imagine in today's day and age, some bloke walking around a football ground carrying 2 breeze blocks? That's a 5 year ban at least.

Some of my memories are not even to do with what happened on the field and this was one of them.

### **1970/71 Season. Cardiff City v. Real Madrid.**

An obvious one I suppose, but this game has gone down in City folk law. The official attendance that night was 47,500. I stood in the enclosure again, at the Canton end, which is now the Lower Grand Stand.

I was now going to virtually every home game on a regular basis and was remembering games and goals in much more detail. This was memorable not only because we beat Real Madrid but I was probably 10 yards away from Nigel Rees when he crossed the ball and right in line with Brian Clark as he scored THAT GOAL! ➤

For the record we finished 3rd in the league that year, just missing out on promotion to division 1, and we sold Toshack. I almost felt like crying again. But I kept going down the City. If I had a pound for every time I have heard someone say "I stopped going down the City when they sold Toshack" I would be a very rich man!

### **1974/75 Season.**

#### **Leeds United v. Cardiff City FA Cup 3rd Round**

Not memorable for the result, we got hammered 4 - 1. This was more a memory of the occasion.

This was probably my first real trek into veryho hostile territory. If you think the trip to Leeds being scary is a new phenomenon, then think again.

This was the 1970's and large scale football hooliganism was at a peak. We travelled by football special train which was much favoured in those days. We arrived at Leeds station to be met by scores of police, police horses and dogs (I suppose some things never change).

We were then escorted via the long route to Elland Road, where I sat crunched up high in a stand in the opposite corner of the ground to where we have been housed in recent visits. Leeds had been a dominant force under Don Revie for a number of years and still had a powerful team containing Eddie Gray, Joe Jordan, Duncan Mackenzie and Paul Harvey to name a few.

We were 3 - 0 down in about 15 minutes and 4 - 0 down by half time.

As the police had informed us there wasn't going to be an escort back to the station, it was going to be every man for himself. We decided to leave 10 minutes before the end, as we thought it was more important to stay alive than clap the team off. As a result we missed the only City goal in a 4 - 1 mauling, but I can't say I was particularly disappointed. I had survived Leeds by train. THANK GOD!

We got relegated that year, to make it a season to forget.



### **1975/76 Season.**

Relegated the year before we bounce straight back. We wore the classic kit with the yellow and white strip. We had Alston, Evans and Anderson. We scored loads of goals and played that game against Hereford at Ninian Park on a Tuesday night.

#### **Crystal Palace v. Cardiff City**

I remember there being a really big away following, bigger than anything I had been in before and probably on par with Scunthorpe away over 17 years later. Malcolm Alison was their manager, very flamboyant with big hat and cigar. It didn't help them we won 1 - 0.

I was really getting more and more involved in supporting the team now as I got older and it meant a lot to beat a big rival

on their own patch. I remember being stood with a huge contingent of City fans on a big open terrace behind the goals. When Alston scored the winning goal everybody seemed to cascade down the terrace and I finished about 20 yards from where I was standing.

After the game Alison had sarcastically remarked that we would be lucky to get 20,000 at our ground for game against Hereford the following Tuesday. He was right, we got 35,549.

#### **Bury v. Cardiff City**

On a Tuesday night in May we won 1 - 0. Alston scored again and we were promoted. It was my first taste of success with the City and it meant a hell of a lot. It may only have been back to the old 2nd division (now league 1), but it was a promotion and that's all I cared about. I had seen my team get some success at last.

What followed over the next 25 years or so however was a yo-yo existence up and down the lower leagues. It was a constant slog with as many downs as there were ups.

The Len Ashurst teams of the early 1980's which included the Bennett brothers, Hemmerman, Gibbins and Phil Dwyer, gave us another promotion.

Phil Dwyer is still my favourite City player, if only for the fact that no one will ever get near to the number of games he played for the Bluebirds. Hard as nails, never took a backward step. Not the most gifted player but he would make my favourite City XI every time.

The Frank Burrows team also gave us some success but nothing was ever sustained.

I have to admit to lapsing during the Alan Durban era. When the football was dire, crowds dwindled to a pitiful level and there seemed no light at the end of a very, very dark tunnel. This was about as low as it could get.

The next real success came with the team managed by Eddie May under the chairmanship of Tricky Ricky Wright. In 1992/1993, we won the 3rd division title. It may only have been the 3rd division but after 25 years, I had actually seen Cardiff win a title.

I had seen us win loads of Welsh Cups, but never a league title. At last I could say we had won a Championship.

The obvious game to pick from that season was at Scunthorpe where we wrapped up the title, and celebrated in style. Terry Yorath, Kenny Hibbitt, Phil Neal and Russell Osman all followed as managers in the 90's with pretty dire results.

The next ray of hope came in 2000/2001 when Sam Hammam arrived. The next 6 years were a roller-coaster but what you can say is that we came up through the leagues and stayed up. There are games in this era like Leeds United in the FA Cup, but I'm not going to pick that one as its too obvious. Here's a couple of my favourites from that era.

### **2001/2002 Season Oldham v. Cardiff City**

A 7 - 1 away win and Andy Campbell scoring a hat-trick. How could I ever forget that? City were on an unbelievable charge into the play-offs and Campbell couldn't stop scoring. We were 5 - 0 up at half time, we could hardly believe it. I

have never seen so many home supporters leave the ground before half time. I doubt that I will ever see City score 7 away from home again, so this game must be one for my trip down memory lane.

That season was not to end on a triumphant note however, as we ran into Stoke and for a second time in my days of supporting City we had missed out on a place in a final losing a two legged semi final to devastating late goals.

### **Season 2002/03 Bristol City v. Cardiff City Play off semi-final 2nd Leg**

After losing to Stoke the year before this meant even more. Defending a 1-0 lead from the first leg was never going to be easy, they had beaten us twice in the league that season and were very confident of overturning a one goal advantage.

The game was so tense it was unbearable at times and I know a few people who couldn't watch the last ten minutes and spent the time in the toilet. Bristol hadn't battered us but they had a lot of the ball in the second half and kept coming at us.

When Tinnion got free at the far post mid way through the second half and aimed a downward header low to Alexander's right I was waiting for the inevitable, it never came as Neil managed to turn the ball around the post with a brilliant one handed save.

That was as close as they got, we had weathered all they could throw at us and got a

0-0 draw. Without doubt for obvious reasons this was the best 0-0 draw I had ever seen. I cannot describe what it felt like when the final whistle went that



night I didn't cry this time, I was getting a bit too old for that but there were more than a few standing around me who did. The support had been superb and the atmosphere in the city end in those 20 minutes after the game was unbelievable. We were off to the Millennium and I was at last going to see my team in a final in our own city. I had seen enough play off finals when scores of fans invaded Cardiff to see their team play, now it was my turn.

The journey home was as good as it gets, in fact it was one of the occasions when I wouldn't have cared if that trip had gone on all night. As strange as it may sound I have spoken to a lot of people who were there that night and they rate their memories of this game as highly as the final, if not more so.

I think that sums up just what it meant to everyone.

### **25th May 2003 Cardiff City v. QPR 2nd Division play-off final**

Looking back over 40 years its such an obvious choice but impossible to leave out. It was the biggest occasion that city had been involved in since 1927 and it was in our own back yard.

We all have their own memories of that day and could talk for hours about them. ➤

I cant say I enjoyed the match, it meant too much and to be honest until that final whistle blew it was horrible. Over the 90 minutes QPR probably created the better chances. In extra time we started to look stronger and came very close to breaking the deadlock when Priors close range header was turned over. Then with six minutes left came that goal. I cant even remember how I felt when the goal went in, everything seemed to stop for a split second and then the ball rippled the net and everyone went absolutely crazy. I was sitting right behind the goal that we scored in that day at the front of the top tier. I was amongst a large contingent of the Cardiff City Supporters Club Members and Valley Rams.

I think we were all feeling the pressure that day and until we scored I have never seen so many strained looking faces.

All of the people around me had been travelling all over the country with the supporters club that season and we all decided we would be together for the final. I personally did not want to be sat amongst anybody that day who did not live eat and breathe Cardiff City.

It may sound strange to someone who isn't that way inclined but if you asked anyone sat with me that day they would know exactly what I meant.

I have photographs in frames of that day and loads of shots I took myself. Pride of place is one taken by a friend of mine from behind the goal.

It shows the QPR keeper flat on his face on the floor and the ball just hitting the net. It tells the story in one split second of a day ill never forget.

So those are just a few of my memories of games that I have seen over the years. There are hundreds of others I could have mentioned and some like Leeds and Man City which I have deliberately left out. As I said at the start they are not the best games I have seen, or in some cases not even the most important. They are I suppose just memories of growing up and from my first game on 31st January 1967, supporting the only team I have ever been interested in - Cardiff City FC. ■

**Garry Lee**

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## ROUND UP OF RECENT NEWS

### **NEW STADIUM**

Nothing is done until it is done, but the new Stadium came a step closer on the 27th November, when Cardiff Council gave the green light to the project.

Bluebirds Chairman, Peter Ridsdale said to the Echo: "Today's announcement is truly a milestone for Cardiff City. Many people have been involved in getting to this stage where talk has now turned to reality.

From a position where the clubs existence was in question, we can now look forward to the day when we will be playing in a new stadium which will give us a real chance to compete with the very best in professional football'.

Work will commence in March and the new stadium will be ready in December 2008.

### **TOTTENHAM IN THE FA CUP**

Nearly 30 years to the day since we beat Spurs in the FA Cup third round, we have been given the chance to repeat history.

Who that was there, will ever forget Peter Sayer's winner that day. It was that good, it was used on the opening clips of 'Match Of The Day' for the remainder of that season.

### **NEW GOALKEEPER ON NEW YEARS DAY**

It has been reported that David Forde will be joining the club when the transfer window reopens on New Years day. Forde, no 26, currently plays for Irish side Derry City and helped them finish second in the Eircom league.

### **DAVE JONES ON EUROPEAN SCOUTING MISSION**

Manager Dave Jones was in Budapest recently, running the rule over players with the January transfer window in mind.

### **5K FAMILY FUN**

Our first 5K family fun run (or walk if you prefer). It will be held on Sunday the 11th March 2007 at 11.30am at Bute Park in Cardiff. Full details to follow.

### **CCSC COACH TO CARMARTHEN TOWN FAW Q/F**

Tuesday 9 January 2007.

Please book early so we can gauge numbers.

# FIXTURES AND RESULTS 2006-2007



## 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	986
Sat 12	Coventry	H	FLC	W 1-0	594
Sat 19	Leeds	A	FLC	W 1-0	564
Tue 22	Barnet	H	CC1	L 0-2	150
Sat 26	Birmingham	H	FLC	W 2-0	1,800

## SEPTEMBER

Sat 9	Preston	A	FLC	L 1-2	1,136
Tue 12	Plymouth	A	FLC	D 3-3	948
Sat 16	Luton	H	FLC	W 4-1	390
Sun 24	Southend	A	FLC	W 3-0	701
Sat 30	Wolverhampton	H	FLC	W 4-0	1,451

## OCTOBER

Sat 14	Crystal Palace	A	FLC	W 2-1	2,226
Tue 17	Southampton	H	FLC	W 1-0	1,018
Sat 21	Norwich	A	FLC	L 0-1	990
Sat 28	Derby	H	FLC	D 2-2	931
Tue 31	Sunderland	A	FLC	W 2-1	713

## NOVEMBER

Sat 4	Colchester	A	FLC	L 1-3	781
Sat 11	Burnley	H	FLC	W 1-0	810
Sat 18	QPR	H	FLC	L 0-1	290
Sat 25	Sheffield Wed	A	FLC	D 0-0	1,809
Tue 28	Stoke	A	FLC	L 0-3	760

## DECEMBER

Sat 2	Colchester	H	FLC	D 0-0	231
Sat 9	Ipswich	H	FLC	D 2-2	
Sat 16	Hull	A	FLC	L 1-4	
Sat 23	Leicester	A	FLC		
Tue 26	Plymouth	H	FLC		
Sat 30	Crystal Palace	H	FLC		

## AS

## JANUARY 2007

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

## FEBRUARY

Fri 2	Barnsley	H	FLC		
Sat 10	Coventry	A	FLC		
Sat 17	Leeds	H	FLC		
Tue 20	WBA	A	FLC		
Fri 23	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	Sheffield 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

### Answers to Crossword

**Across:** 1, Birmingham. 4, Bury. 6, Rugby. 7, Crouch. 8, Lima. 9, Eire. 10, Merry. 11, Perry. 12, Christmas. 15, Joe. 17, Puma. 19, PNE. 21, Rod. 22, Inamoto. 24, Roger. 25, Flood. 26, Pompey.

**Down:** 1, Borley. 2, Roger. 3, Hemmerman. 4, Brothers. 5, Richardson. 8, Lee. 12, Chopra. 13, Rovers. 14, Standard. 16, Dredge. 17, Prior. 18, Alm. 20, Holly. 23, ASBO.

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are undernourished has increased from 600 million to 800 million (FAO 2001).

There are a number of reasons for this increase. One of the main reasons is the increase in the world population. The world population has increased from 5 billion in 1987 to 6 billion in 2000, and is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050 (FAO 2001). This increase in population has led to an increase in the demand for food, which has led to an increase in the number of people who are undernourished.

Another reason for the increase in the number of people who are undernourished is the increase in the number of people who are living in poverty. The number of people living in poverty has increased from 1 billion in 1987 to 1.2 billion in 2000, and is projected to reach 2 billion by 2050 (FAO 2001). This increase in poverty has led to an increase in the number of people who are unable to afford enough food to meet their basic needs.

A third reason for the increase in the number of people who are undernourished is the increase in the number of people who are living in rural areas. The number of people living in rural areas has increased from 3 billion in 1987 to 4 billion in 2000, and is projected to reach 5 billion by 2050 (FAO 2001). This increase in rural population has led to an increase in the number of people who are unable to access enough food to meet their basic needs.

There are a number of ways to address the problem of undernutrition. One way is to increase the production of food. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in agriculture, by increasing the amount of land that is used for agriculture, and by increasing the amount of fertilizer and other inputs that are used in agriculture. Another way to address the problem of undernutrition is to increase the distribution of food. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food distribution sector, by increasing the amount of food that is distributed, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food distribution.

There are a number of other ways to address the problem of undernutrition. One way is to increase the number of people who are working in the food processing sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food processing sector, by increasing the amount of food that is processed, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food processing. Another way to address the problem of undernutrition is to increase the number of people who are working in the food retail sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food retail sector, by increasing the amount of food that is sold, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food retail.

There are a number of other ways to address the problem of undernutrition. One way is to increase the number of people who are working in the food service sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food service sector, by increasing the amount of food that is served, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food service. Another way to address the problem of undernutrition is to increase the number of people who are working in the food production sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food production sector, by increasing the amount of food that is produced, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food production.

There are a number of other ways to address the problem of undernutrition. One way is to increase the number of people who are working in the food distribution sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food distribution sector, by increasing the amount of food that is distributed, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food distribution. Another way to address the problem of undernutrition is to increase the number of people who are working in the food processing sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food processing sector, by increasing the amount of food that is processed, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food processing.

There are a number of other ways to address the problem of undernutrition. One way is to increase the number of people who are working in the food retail sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food retail sector, by increasing the amount of food that is sold, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food retail. Another way to address the problem of undernutrition is to increase the number of people who are working in the food service sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food service sector, by increasing the amount of food that is served, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food service.

There are a number of other ways to address the problem of undernutrition. One way is to increase the number of people who are working in the food production sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food production sector, by increasing the amount of food that is produced, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food production. Another way to address the problem of undernutrition is to increase the number of people who are working in the food distribution sector. This can be done by increasing the number of people who are working in the food distribution sector, by increasing the amount of food that is distributed, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on food distribution.