



## Newsletter of the South Shields FC Supporters Association

### ONWARD AND UPWARD



#### THE SEASON'S START AND PROGRESS TO DATE

It is indeed a real pleasure to comment so favourably on our start to the season and of the club's most satisfactory progress to date. Without dwelling too much on injuries and suspensions, which all clubs inevitably sustain and incur from time to time, unless very fortunate, the team have performed very well, and there is much to applaud the standard of collective play, the number of points gained and not least of all the commendable league position. As of yet at the time of writing, what we perhaps may consider as the best eleven has probably not been seen, and the selection availability soon of Duncan O'Brien and Simon Fitzpatrick when fully recovered from operation and injury and Stephen Ramsey from multiple suspension will give us all that opportunity. The level of team performance and potential may then be hopefully further enhanced and assessments considered as to analysis of our genuine full season possibilities, in what will be a most interesting scenario.

The Supporter's Association membership continues to grow, and recruitment is being now assisted by a series of 'road shows' held in large pubs in the town with displays of club merchandise, memorabilia, literature and information with a panel of members to reply to queries and questions from interested listeners. The membership total now exceeds 200, and all current members are sincerely requested to please assist as is possible to increase this figure amongst their family circle, neighbours, social friends and work colleagues etc etc. Membership application forms are always available on request from the club shop on match days and the 'Furniture Den' on Stanhope Road, or phone the membership secretary John Prendergast 0191 454 6850 office hours, or 0191 4200 338 evenings. In addition all are also encouraged to assist in any level of club sponsorship activity, and where any interest is forthcoming from local firms, shops, individuals etc to please inform club committee members.

Gradual and sustained improvement and growth in all areas of committee and association work and activities continue apace, and efforts are continually in motion to that end.

Behind the scenes and not yet in evidence, numerous efforts are being mounted to advance and enhance the club and its profile, and announcements will be made at the appropriate time of such matters. On team affairs, hopefully the current level of performance will be maintained, this is ultimately the barometer of success, and for the committee and the Supporter's Association to steadily 'raise the bar' to continue to improve, expand and grow to be bigger and better. By the turn of the year perhaps the club may witness some changes to its material circumstances that will be greatly welcomed and the team will continue to bring us pleasure, enjoyment and satisfaction.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

The football club annual Christmas party presented, organised and hosted as a joint venture as per past practise by the club committee and the supporter's association will be held on Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, full details and all arrangements, admission tickets etc will be made known in due course, this announcement is only for an early date for your diary.

## A GUIDE TO THE NORTHERN LEAGUE

Copies of this A5 size 52 page booklet, researched, compiled and produced by the Supporter's Association are available for the modest purchase price of £2.50p from the club shop on match days, the 'Furniture Den', top of Stanhope Road, telephone 0191 454 6850 and South Tyneside Central Library information desk in the main foyer on Prince George Square. This interesting and informative publication contains introductory notes by SSFC and Supporter's Association officials, a short history of the club, a numbered contents page, and a page for each of the 42 member clubs of the Skill Training Ltd Northern League's two divisions with stats, data, records and items etc of the clubs, plus a handy road direction route guide for your benefit to all grounds for SSFC's travelling support. It has an attractive colour front cover featuring the association logo and is an indispensable and handy pocket sized aid for Mariner's supporters. Buy your copy while stocks last.

## THE 2009 – 2010 SEASON FIXTURE CALENDAR

This A3 size superior card SSFC season's fixture calendar is illustrated with superb team colour photographs, and is an ideal feature record keeper for all the Mariner's results at a glance throughout the season. Priced at only £1:50p it comes with a complimentary same size annual datal calendar as a goodwill gesture for your support.

Buy your copy before stocks run out, from the same purchase sources as above.

## CLUB COMMITTEE MEN WANTED

Volunteers are much requested to please come forward and join the committee to help with the running of the club on and off the pitch with the jobs that are all necessary and important for the successful operation of the club behind the scenes. If you would like to get involved with SSFC, please contact the chairman Gary Crutwell 07947 480054 and /or secretary Phil Reay 07847 173235, who would be pleased indeed to welcome you.

## THE CLUB WEEKLY CASH DRAW

Tickets priced £1 each or in books of five, are available from the club shop or Bob Scott 07920 554377 and Gary Crutwell as above, drawn every Sunday evening. Please support the club in this direct manner, all profit monies are for the team budget, and every ticket sold is important. All members and supporters are please requested to buy on a weekly basis; this would be greatly welcomed and very much appreciated, thank you indeed.

### OUR TRAVELLING SUPPORT

Mention must be made for all the grand efforts that Mariner's fans make to support the team at away games; this is greatly appreciated for their physical presence, vocal support enthusiasm and encouragement. We are without doubt one of the best-supported clubs in the league, and already this season we have outnumbered the home support on more than one occasion to date. The committee and not least the players are most grateful and wish to place on record their sincere thanks, so thank you one and all.

### THE GREAT NORTH RUN

Special thanks is also gratefully extended to our runners in both the senior and junior events, and to all who most generously sponsored their efforts on behalf of funds for the Supporter's Association. A donation has been made to the senior runner's selected Alzheimer's Society, and this the association was most pleased to do, plus an appropriate presentation award for the junior entrant.

### THE CLUB SHOP

New items of club merchandise have recently been added to the quite extensive range now available for your purchase for either club match day wear or fashion wear, or as a present for a friend at home or overseas. Bob Scott at the shop would be pleased to accommodate your requests and enquiries, and to supply full details as necessary. Out of shop openings on match days he can be contacted on 07920 554377.

### THE SUPPORTER'S ASSOCIATION

As outlined elsewhere, a series of road shows is to be presented soon in numerous local pubs in the town on Sunday afternoons by the Supporter's Association with a large display board of memorabilia etc and a table of merchandise of SSFC, and members in club colours present to reply to queries and questions and to promote membership. Details will be announced in the Shields 'Gazette' and on the club Internet message sites.

### WEDDING BELLS

It is with much pleasure on behalf of all Mariner's supporter's that we wish team captain Lee Paul Scroggins and his bride to be Marie Tate all the very best for their big day on October 24<sup>th</sup>, with hearty congratulations, good luck and much happiness together.

### IAM BURN, OUR PHOTOGRAPHER AND REPORTER

SSFC are indeed most fortunate to have within the membership of the Supporter's Association a gifted and dedicated photographer who this season has provided the club blog with most excellent match photographs and also first rate extensive captions and reports. He is to be sincerely congratulated for his quite superb work on our behalf, that many Northern League clubs would greatly envy. Well done indeed, and thank you.

## SO FAR SO GOOD

Well, it's been a total contrast from last season, I know its early days but if we continue to show the same endeavour in our play I am sure we won't be far away. This good form I put down to the players hard working attitude in training and matches. Players who have surprised a few people this season are the same players last year who weren't good enough to hear some people's views, these so-called supporters have been absent of late, can't think why? There is nothing better than proving the critics wrong time and time again; I bet that humble pie tastes good boys and girls?

We believe that all the hard work done last season by staying in Division 1 has given us a platform to build upon, and progress on and off the pitch year after year therefore raising the profile of the club and attracting better players as well as business investment to achieve long term stability, with that comes increased attendances and greater support base.

The young players like Stephen Ramsey, Tony Coe, and new additions like Tony Stephenson and Craig Armstrong have done well so far but we are looking for them and other players to get better and better as the season goes on. Gary and myself are always looking to improve the squad, competition for places we feel is the key, if we can keep everyone fit and free from suspensions our strength in depth should allow us to keep the results coming in and the performances positive. Two players who have come back to the club and have made an impact are Davey and Hal Graham who's performances have been crucial to our good start, I feel Davey has a lot more to come and Hal will get better and better with games under his belt.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all supporter's and committee for their hard work, loyalty and positive outlook over the last 12 months, I know its been a roller coaster, believe me Gary and myself know how hard its been. This continued support of the management and players has not gone unnoticed. Where as others were quick to point blame and cause unrest in the club, the majority have seen the bigger picture.

The potential that we all know this club has in abundance must be captured to achieve the dream. I know some of you may scoff because there has been too many false dawns over the years. But this time in my opinion I feel we have taken the first step in the right direction towards becoming a bigger name on the non-league scene. I am not saying this is going to be an easy task, but the ripple effect has already begun.

Thank you for your continually loud support home and away.

Regards,

Justin Perry,

Assistant manager.

## FROM THE CLUB SECRETARY

It's certainly a good time to be associated with South Shields Football Club, we currently lie in 5<sup>th</sup> position in the league with 22 points and its only the end of September, last season it took 25 games and we were into mid February for us to accumulate 22 points, I feel this is a tangible measure of the progress we have made this season.

As I have said in my programme notes, pre season is a vehicle to learn the strengths or otherwise of the players we have at our disposal and is not an accurate measure of how the side will perform in competitive games. There were some detractors in the close season who reappeared when our form took a dip at the start of the season and I am sure that should results go against us at some future point they will once again resurface, however I hope that the lads have won over the majority of our superb support and will continue to do so as the season progresses.

In recent weeks Studs has brought new players into the squad and as a result players have left the club, the net effect is that we have a stronger squad that will be able to cope when the inevitable injuries and suspensions kick in throughout the season. Tony Stephenson certainly looks to be settling in and he is finding his goal scoring touch, cue the celebrations with the Mariners faithful ever present behind the opposition goal week in week out; he has built up a good rapport with Ramma and the fledgling partnership with Craig Tait appeared to work well against Morpeth Town.

Most of the supporters will remember Craig in his first spell at Filtrona during which time he was regularly on target and also won the inaugural Keith Wealands Memorial Trophy for the young player of the year, hopefully Craig will weigh in with his share of goals. It is also good to see Duncan O'Brien looking to be near to a return to competitive action, he has continued to work on his fitness and should be in contention to return to the squad very soon. Also on the injury front Simon Fitzpatrick has had the wires removed from his hand and should be fit to return to the squad in mid October. Once we have a full squad of players to select from the management team will have a headache when it comes to team selection, this is a much healthier position to be in as competition for places should bring the best out of the players.

As a result of the improved performances on the pitch we continue to see healthy crowds at all our home games and also have a strong following away from home, on many occasions already this season the Mariners faithful have outnumbered the home support, several secretaries have commented to me that they look forward to our visit as we swell their coffers. The players also enjoy playing in front of our vociferous support and it is good to see that they reciprocate the appreciation shown to them at the end of each game.

On a less positive note I would like to remind everyone of the Respect Programme, good, bad or indifferent the officials should be shown respect, without them we have no game. I know comments are made in the heat of the moment but we need to take care, should we be reported to Durham FA the club could be sanctioned at the committee will have to take action. I would also like to remind everyone that all match officials are appointed by the Football Association and not by the Northern League, and the chairman of the league

plays no part in appointments; it was embarrassing for the club to have the league chairman abused on his recent visit to Filtrona Park.

In recent weeks the supporters have made suggestions they would like to see included in the match programme, if anyone has ideas please contact me and I will endeavour to include some new items, this will depend upon time and space, I look forward to receiving your comments. In light of the suggestions received I will discuss with the management team the possibility of including some comment from them. We have a difficult series of fixtures in the next month or so we need to continue to get behind the lads and I am sure we will remain

Onwards and Upwards.

Phillip Reay,

Secretary, South Shields FC

### SUPPORTER'S ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP REPORT

In football circles I have often heard it said that hard work, positive belief and loyalty will pay dividends in the end. I am pleased to say that this certainly appears to be the case with our club at present. While I would be the first to acknowledge there is no room for complacency, it is good to see that all the hard work put in by the management team, the committee and indeed our loyal supporters is beginning to reap rewards. Furthermore it proves that success can be achieved providing you can get everybody connected with the club pulling together – no room for non-contributing pessimists who serve to hinder our club rather than help.

Our membership has already exceeded last season's total as our numbers continue to grow. We are constantly looking for new initiatives with a view to promoting the club and boosting membership. One such initiative will be the SSFC Supporter's Association Road Show. This is seen as an ongoing project, which will take the football club and the supporter's association to the community. It will comprise of a combined presentation of memorabilia, merchandise and information. The "road show" will cover various areas of South Shields beginning on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> October at 'The Lord Ashley', Stanhope Road from 12.00am. This will be followed by a further presentation at 'The Vigilant', Harton Village on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> October from 3.00pm

We hope that all you "Shields" supporters will come along in your club colours to help promote these events showing the townspeople that our club is on the up and that they have a role to play in our progress.

We will keep you informed of new venues / dates.

Until next time onwards and upwards!

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, JOHN PRENDERGAST.

## BOBBY OWEN 1924 – 1999 – A TRUE INSPIRATION

### A Tribute to the Memory of a Great Mariner - by the Editor Bob Wray

Bobby Owen is deservedly widely regarded as the most outstanding player of SSFC in all the post WW11 years, a gentleman whom I was privileged to know on a personal basis, and one whom I am pleased to write this tribute to his memory and achievements.

He was born in Whitburn, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1924, where he attended the local village school, and where his football career began. His formative years were spent with Marsden FC and later Hylton Juniors, where he played alongside Ernie Taylor, later of Blackpool, Newcastle United and England. He then moved to Boldon CW and later Murton CW, who were regularly watched by 4,000 plus spectators. At 18 he was the youngest in a team which would give 11 players to the professional game.

He signed for Huddersfield Town in 1944, but returned to Murton CW the following year. In January 1945 he returned to the professional game with Lincoln City, where he subsequently appeared in some 300 games for the Sincil Bank club as a right half. He played here for nine seasons and won two Division 3 (North) championship medals 1947 - 48 and 1950 – 51. Present in the team was goalkeeper Archie Wilson, well remembered no doubt by those now of a certain age, like the writer - of the late 1940's at Horsley Hill with South Shields AFC, and Andy Graver and Doug Wright, both ex Newcastle United.

On returning home for domestic reasons, he decided to sign for South Shields, and renew acquaintance with manager Charlie Thomas to play a part in his efforts to bring a higher standard of football to Simonside Hall. In seven seasons with the Mariners, in North Eastern, Midland and Northern Counties Leagues, he had the distinction of being team captain in every game he played. An honour he recalled with great pride was that of being captain of the Midland League representative X1 against 'Posh' Peterborough United, at that time league champions.

He was an inspirational influence on the team and a great crowd favourite with his sterling brand of attacking play and resolute defence. Bobby was the lynchpin of an outstanding Shields team, which developed to be nationally acknowledged as one of the country's strongest in non-league competition. Testimony to that are such highlights as six league championship and runners-up honours, and the magnificent 5-0 FA Cup replay victory against Crewe Alexandra on a Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1958 afternoon in front of a 12,000 crowd at Simonside Hall.

Indeed in those halcyon days in which Bobby played such a major part, the club boasted a ground record attendance of 20,000 and a supporters club with an over 13,000 membership. His most notable playing career ended with Shields in 1963, and with it the most outstanding contribution to the club's post-war player history. Thereafter he went into management with Whitley Bay FC and built the Hillheads club into a major force in the Northern League. The club were twice winners of the League Championship, runners-up three times; winners of the Northumberland Senior Cup on nine occasions, and twice had the distinction of appearing in FA Amateur Cup semi finals.

With 11 years service, he remains Bay's longest ever manager. Bobby gained a full FA coaching badge and possessed a tremendous knowledge of the game. He retired in 1974 but remained in contact through his scouting activities for Graham Taylor at Watford for some time thereafter.

He will always be remembered with affection and gratitude by all those who saw him in action at Simonside Hall wearing the Mariners traditional and formerly much loved colours of red and green - port and starboard of a seaport town.

A 1954 cartoon that was featured in a report for the cross Tyne North Eastern League local derby between South Shields and North Shields at Simonside Hall, SSFC won 5-0.





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50

**Official Programme**  
Saturday, December 23rd, at 2

**SOUTH SHIELDS**  
v  
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**NORTH EASTERN LEAGUE**  
Saturday, September 21st, 1963 Kick-off 3-15 p.m.  
Today's Visitors **BLYTH SPARTANS**

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**OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 2½p**



**Today's Visitors**  
**MACCLESFIELD**  
NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE  
**SATURDAY, 23rd OCT., 1971**  
Kick-off 3-0 p.m.

Four match day programmes of early post war years to the early 1970's, souvenirs of bygone days.

FOOTY LIMERICKS AND JOKES

There was a young striker from Reading  
who bumped his brow on a door at a wedding,  
it made his head swell  
but he said “Just as well,  
‘cos now I’ll improve on my heading”.

A player who turned out for Dover  
had no shirt, so he wore a pullover,  
but the thing was too long,  
and he put it on wrong,  
so that all he could do was fall over.

There was a goalkeeper called Walter,  
who played on the island of Malta,  
but his kicks were so long,  
and the wind was so strong,  
that the ball ended up in Gibraltar.

One chap to a friend, “My wife told me last week that she’s leave me if I didn’t stop  
spending so much time at football matches,  
Friend - “What a shame,”  
The chap - “Yes, I shall miss her”!

A woman was reading a newspaper one morning and said to her husband “Look at this  
dear, there’s an article here about a man who traded his wife for a season ticket at  
Tottenham Hotspur, you wouldn’t do a thing like that, would you “?  
“Of course I wouldn’t”, replied her husband, “The season’s nearly over”!

A Sunday league team were in the dressing room, one player short, “Where’s Bill”?  
asked the full back to the captain. “Oh, I hear that he was getting married at 2.30”, said  
the captain. “Hell”, said the full back,” That means he won’t get here till the second half”.

What’s the best way to contact your long lost relatives? Win the football pools!

Striker – “I had an open goal but still couldn’t score, I could kick myself”. Manager – “I  
wouldn’t bother, you’d probably miss!.

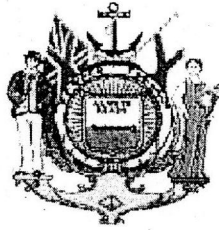
A bad football team is like an old bra – no cups and little support!

At the end of the day, football means not having to go to Asda on Saturdays.....



When you have read this newsletter, please do not ‘bin it’, but give it to any interested  
family member, social friend or work colleague, they might join the association.....  
The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm at Filtrona Park,  
all members and would be members are always most cordially invited to attend.

# South Shields F.C.



## Supporters Association

### Application for Membership 2009 – 10 Season

This supporters association is an independent organisation of supporters which aim to:

- Act as a collective voice, representing the views of supporters in discussions with the club and others.
- Act as a body to help promote and to support South Shields Football Club on and off the pitch.
- Provide members with benefits.
- Provide a travel club to assist supporters attend away fixtures.
- Arrange social, fund raising, and other events.
- Keep members informed of developments through regular newsletters and other means.

#### Member Details

Name .....

Address .....

Postcode ..... Tel No:.....

E-mail Address ..... Mobile No:.....

(N.B. E-mail address for ease of contact purposes only, for games, team info, meetings, minutes etc. NOT to be passed to any third parties).

Subscriptions for 2009 – 10 season.

£5.00 Adults.

£2.00 Juniors.

Please return this form to:

John Prendergast  
Membership Secretary  
40 Westhope Road  
South Shields  
NE34 6JT  
Tel: 0191 4546850 (Monday to Friday)  
Tel: 0191 4200338 (Evenings & Weekends)

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to: **South Shields F.C. Supporters Association.**

If you are able to interest your family members, social friends, neighbours, work colleagues and acquaintances etc. for Association, recruitment and membership, it would be much welcomed and sincerely appreciated.