



South East Poolies News - April 2019!



Finally we have a quiet month, which has allowed me to have a bit of a rest and concentrate on other parts of my life! Seriously after a few busy months it was good to take a breath, but only to allow some preparation for next season. In order to do this it was important to get some feedback from members. This feedback will allow us to make some decisions and changes that will be on benefit to our members and HUFC. The initial response to this feedback is included in this newsletter.

Although on the pitch the season didn't perhaps live up to expectations, off the pitch the club is far more secure and starting to be run in a professional manner again. This is a huge relief and gives supporters confidence that any fundraising that they do will be put to best use. This being the case, I expect another active year ahead and as always ideas are welcome!



Members Feedback

As I have already mentioned, all members were asked to provide feedback via an online survey. Many thanks to all who took the time to respond to this, there was some fantastic suggestions brought up. I plan to discuss much of this with those who attend the Whitstable Trip, but in the meantime the initial responses are included below.

Do you plan to renew your membership for next season? If not could you please let us know why?

From those who responded the response was an absolute yes. The concern is that those who don't plan to renew, possibly wouldn't have responded. It is important to know why they won't renew as at the moment we are pretty much running at our maximum at what we can do with our resources. It might be that the SEP simply isn't for everyone.

We have always had a £10 membership fee for adults. Do you believe that this is a fair amount?

The general feeling was that it is good value for money, but with many saying that they would be happy to pay more. There is a reluctance to set this higher as we risk losing many members.

Some members suggested a method where they could donate additional funds on a regular basis. What we don't advertise is that there are currently 2 members who do donate a set amount on a monthly basis. I will advertise how this can be arranged in the coming weeks.

Do you believe that we should offer a reduced fee for children and retired members?

The feeling was that although we should offer reduced child membership, we shouldn't offer reduced membership for retired supporters. There was also a lot of interest in a family membership. I am currently working on the arrangements for these and expect to have something in place in a week or so.

It is important that we work hard to attract younger members. Do you have any ideas as to how we can do this?

Although members agreed with this statement, achieving it was seen as difficult as we are not based in Hartlepool. There were a couple of suggestions, but this is an area that we need to focus on in the coming year.

It looks like we will be handing over around £1,200 to HUFC. Other than this what would you say has been our biggest success?

A wide variety of responses to this question, including; merchandise, ticket donation, increased membership numbers and raising of our profile amongst supporters. What was great was that people said that they were proud to be associated with the SEP.

What is your opinion on the use of the Newsletter to communicate with both members and non-members?

This was seen as a real area of success and members said that they enjoy reading it. It is clear that a lot of members prefer the use of this rather than the WhatsApp group to stay informed. There were comments that the WhatsApp group can have a lot of chat that is not relevant to them, something that I will try and stay on top of. It is a great tool, but only if it is used appropriately.

Do you have any suggestions as to what else could be included in the Newsletter?

This prompted some great responses. one of which was a members profile section, looking at their life of following Pools. This was trialed recently with a great piece from Alan Drew. The plan is to send set questions to a random member each month to answer, focusing on some of the less prominent

members, which will help to mix things up a little bit.

Another suggestion was some articles from current players or backroom staff, which will also be looked at.

We have an active social scene, meeting up at games as well as trips to Hartlepool and Whitstable. Do you have any suggestions for future events?

There was some real interest in this area from Pool & Darts competitions to brewery tours and general meet ups in London. There is absolutely no reason why we couldn't do any of these, as long as we have the interest to attend. I am hoping to get a couple of members to take on this responsibility so that we get some variety that will appeal to the group as a whole. I know that I will definitely be there, especially the brewery tour!

We currently have a simple, non-elected structure, as this has worked so far. Do you think that this does enough to promote fairness and inclusion?

An overwhelming yes to this, but several people commented that sharing some of the workload would make my life easier. I am thankful for this and hoping to get a couple of people to take on key roles that would help us to achieve some of the goals already mentioned.

Are you pleased with the quality, pricing and range of goods that we have been selling?

A definite yes to this with members saying they love the badge as well. There were a few comments that we could introduce more items. Whilst we can loom at this, we need to sell a handful of each item to keep their unit costs reasonable.

Have you got any further suggestions to help us improve as we move forward?

A lot of these suggestions have already been covered above. In addition there was a want to keep responding to promotions that the club run.

Any other comments?

A lot of well done and thank you comments in this section. Very overwhelming was the thank you for sending flowers to Leicester City when their Chairman was tragically killed and helping support other good causes and small clubs who are in trouble. The money for these was completely separate from our main funds and was donated from members only.

Merchandise

Our next project is the 10 year pint glass. I have been researching this, with an aim to have some details and



prices within the next month. These have been gaining a lot of interest from members and non-members, with regular requests for updates. It's important that these are put on hold until we have used this seasons funds for their intended purpose. The money raised from the glasses will then go into next seasons funds and avoid any complications during the interim period. These are expected to be in a presentation box and hopefully with a SEP coaster.

Whitstable Summer Trip 2019

Our annual summer trip to the seaside town of Whitstable has been arranged for Saturday July 20th. This has been organised by Rob Wilson for a good few years now and is always well attended. Rob works hard to put together a pub crawl of good boozers and people come and go throughout the day. This is also a very informal AGM, with latest happenings and ideas discussed in a light-hearted manner. Full details will be announced closer to the date.

Finances

I plan to speak to HUFCSA over the coming week to make arrangements for using our donation. The preference is for us to make a purchase of required kit for the Youth Team for the costs of around £1,200. Similar to how the HUFCSA donate their funds. Once I know what this will be I will send out an update.

Looking at the funds we made huge profits from the caps, duts, Hartlepool weekend and football cards. Alongside this there has been a great deal of donations made.

| Incoming | Amount | Outgoing | Amount | Incoming | £5,747.06 |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| Membership | £408.26 | Player Sponsorship | £150.00 | Outgoing | £4,418.84 |
| Football Cards | £420.00 | Donations | £57.00 | Cash at Bank | £1,328.22 |
| Raffle | £100.00 | Hotel | £575.00 | | |
| Savings | £217.00 | Train | £740.00 | | |
| Hartlepool Trip | £1,668.76 | Trophy | £75.00 | After Pending | £1,523.22 |
| Polo Shirts | £902.98 | Football Card | £210.00 | | |
| | | Polo Shirts | £819.59 | | |
| Donations | £214.68 | Caps/Duts | £614.74 | | |
| Caps/Duts | £704.00 | Cap/Dut set up cost | £9.99 | | |
| LCFC Donation | £27.00 | Flyers | £26.49 | | |
| Ticket Offer | £1,084.38 | | | | |
| | | Polo set up cost | £9.99 | | |
| | | Ticket Offer | £1,110.00 | | |
| | | New Flag Bag | £21.04 | | |
| | £5,747.06 | | £4,418.84 | | |

Social Media/website

Having been rested and had time to catch up on other things, I plan to get the Luke James interview on the website this weekend. Thank you to Greg for his huge efforts in arranging these throughout the season and El Tel for his excellent pictures.

General

There will be a lot going on behind the scenes over the coming weeks to get ready for next season, in particular the need to set some key objectives coming from the feedback. I will also be looking to share a bit of the work amongst the group, mainly around articles and social events. We have made huge strides and this is due to the massive amount of work across the whole group. I am proud of what we have achieved and amount we have raised for the club that we love. We need to keep working hard and with the club to move forward. Some ideas this season were simply unimaginable, but we pulled them off. I wonder what we can achieve next season!

Thank you all for your time,

Never Say Die

Stu Miller

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