

Win a European Football Weekend!

Sign up a friend and win!

That's right! Two lucky Trust members will be jetting off to a European city for a football weekend for two. As part of our 'AIM HIGH' campaign, we are offering flights, accommodation and a pair of tickets to a match at a European city!

All you have to do to enter the competition is sign up a new member to boost our membership. The new member can be anyone, as long as they have never been a Trust member in the past. The more people you sign up, the more entries you will have in the draw - which will take place on Saturday April 15th.

We are hoping that everyone can sign up at least one person - doing this would double our membership and our monthly income in one fell swoop. All the additional revenue for the following 12 months will be gifted to the BRFC Youth Initiative.

We are sure you'll agree that this is a fabulous prize and a big incentive for you to sign up a friend, a member of your family or a workmate. Don't forget, you can enter as many times as you like by signing up as many people as you can. Membership forms are available from the Club Shop, Berwick Youth Project or on our Website (www.berwicktrust.co.uk). We will also post membership forms out soon. When we receive a completed membership form, which has been referred by you, we will enter you into the competition.

If you have any questions, please get in touch on 01289 333100 or email: trust@berwickrangers.co.uk.



PS.G.



Roma



Barcelona



Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

Working for Club & Community

Trust Members Newsletter • Winter 2005/6 • Free to Members • Issue No. 7

from the chairman...

A very happy New Year to you all!

I hope this latest newsletter finds you in good health and looking forward to 2006.

After such a glorious start to the season there was always the chance that the Dream Team would come down with a bump, and my, what a change in fortunes over recent weeks! The last six games haven't even brought a goal, and although there have been matches where we've clearly been the better side, I'm sure John Coughlin's trying to sort out our lack of 'cutting edge' at the earliest opportunity.

Unfortunately the Manager's job is not made easier by the lack of strength in the squad. Injuries to key players have really made an impact, and with Jay Shiels returning to Hibernian and the increasing likelihood of suspensions taking their toll, we can only hope for some inspiring activity in the January transfer window.

To help in this process, the Trust Committee agreed in December to make an offer to the Club of £1000 to assist in efforts to bring in new players.

This was only possible due to the continuing efforts of Trust members to support our objectives, and membership numbers are slowly rising over time. This steady stream of membership fees is

hugely important to the development of the Trust, and if every member could sign up one other person, it could bring in several thousand pounds of extra revenue. Please pay special attention to the 'Aim High' campaign that's described in more detail elsewhere in this newsletter.



Work is almost complete on the new Membership Pack, which will be sent out to all existing members and new ones as they join. Enclosed with that will be the new Trust lapel badge, based on Paul Smith's excellent design - wear it with pride!

The Trust raffle brought in several hundred pounds (still being counted!) and grateful thanks go to Dave Stewart who co-ordinated the effort and the many companies and individuals who donated prizes and, of course, those of you who bought tickets! The list of prizewinners are published later in this newsletter.

As always, members are most welcome to join in the fun with ideas for fund-raising and other activities.

Hope you enjoy reading this newsletter - if you've got any helpful comments then drop us a line. Perhaps there'll be space for a letters page in the next edition!

All the best, John

inside...



Win a European Football Weekend



Trust New Year Bash a Success



Trust Members Christmas Stall



Berwick Rangers - Our Half Term Report

New Trust Directory Enquiries Service: 118813

Calls cost 49p, of which 9p is donated to the Trust Youth Fund

where sold -

50p



Join Our Aim High Campaign!

This newsletter marks the launch of a new initiative. This new initiative being our "Aim High" campaign. What this means is that we intend to aim high with regard to increasing our membership.

You may have noticed, but our membership number has become rather stagnant of late. At the time of writing we have 128 members. Now, given our average home gate, and potential market that figure in itself is not bad, but its dangerous at any time to stand still and we hope that this campaign may go some way to addressing that.

Its quite simple really, what we are asking our members to do is to sign up one new member each. Yep that's it, just one new member. We don't think that that is beyond anyone's capability. Hopefully you won't prove us wrong!

The campaign will run from now until the end of April or the end of the season whichever you like. Membership forms can either be down loaded from the Trust site at www.berwicktrust.co.uk or sent to you by post. Any extra copies of this newsletter which may assist you are also

available. Contact us via the site for both. If all of you were to be successful we'd double our membership, and don't forget monthly income, which in turn will make more finance available to the Trust to assist the club.

What's in it for me, I hear you ask, or maybe not ! Well to make it a bit more interesting , every member who signs up a new member will have their membership number entered into a draw where the winner will win a football weekend to a European City!!

This will be for two people to take in a game at a European stadium, possibly the Nou Camp, Stadio Olimpico or even a UK ground. Accommodation in a 3* hotel is included, as are flights. Hopefully you'll agree this ain't a bad prize for a small amount of effort.

So its over to you, the members, get out there and get em ! Any help you need to get the job done get in touch. Lets make the campaign a resounding success and something we can all be proud of.

Colin Pike, Vice-chair
More details on the back page



The Nou Camp, Barcelona



Stamford Bridge, Chelsea



Amsterdam Arena - Ajax



New Year Draw - Winners

First Prize: £250 - Simon Landels
Glenburn Single Malt - Paul Pateman
Keela Jacket - Ashdown
Voucher for Sixth Sense - Stella Rutherford
Boots Gift Pack - Tracey Brown
Compact Disc - Chris Thompson
Bottle of Brandy - Graeme Jerdan
One Month Gym Membership (FX Fitness) - J Rodger
Gary Lineker DVD - Walter Deicher
Shaving Set - Jean Booth
Russell Hobbs Travel Kettle - Jerry Mills
Phillips DVD Player - M Campbell
George Foreman Grill - Jean Fishbourne
Address Book - Angela Wheaton
Famous Grouse Whisky - Ann Easton
Bottle of Port - Ian Calder
Teachers Whisky - Rodelle Purvis
Cadburys Roses - R Bell • **Simpsons Socks**- Richard Swanston
After 8's - Ian Dow • **Box of "Smellies"** - A Young
BRFC Scarf - A Welsh • **BRFC Replica Shirt** - Belinda Gray
Hospitality Package for 4 at BRFC - Cilla Keay
Thank you to the following people for donating prizes: BRFC, Sixth Sense, John Bell, Boots Berwick, George Thompson, David Cook, FX Fitness & Mark Swanston



David Gregory

It was with great sadness that we learnt about the death of original Trust member David Gregory. As a neighbour of Davie I often had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the Dream Team. In that time I got to know a man who genuinely loved the game and the club and was never put off by the weather or the team's poor fortunes, a true supporter. Our deepest sympathies go out to his wife Anne and his four children (Ian is also a member).

Thanks for the support Davie

Gordon Dickson

Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust Newsletter - Issue 7

Committee: John Bell (Chairman), Colin Pike (Vice Chairman), Ronald Kirk, Keith Hall, David Cook (Secretary), Gordon Dickson (Treasurer), Eddie McCall, Mark Swanston, Bill Purvis, Derek Purvis, Paul Smith, George Thompson, Nick Vagg, David Stewart

Edited by Paul Smith. Designed & Printed by Shiel & Morrison, 11 Main St, Tweedmouth.

Cover picture by Kevin McCormick. Thanks to **Fuel Card Express** for sponsoring this issue.

Any future contributions can be sent to: 9-12 Golden Sq, Berwick. Or email trust@berwickrangers.co.uk



Christmas Market Stall



Committee member Mark Swanston meets Newcastle United defender and ex-local lad Peter Ramage.
Inset: L: Another sale. R: Our stall, decorated with our new Trust banner

On Sunday 4th December, the Trust held a stall at the Christmas Market in the Bridge Street area of town. The market has established itself as a thriving annual event. Committee members Paul Smith, Mark Swanston and Gordon Dickson took the initiative and were there early to set up their stall.

The lads manned the stall from 10am until 4pm and had a steady stream of customers buying scarves, hats, mugs and home shirts. They even managed to recruit new members on the day. Newcastle United defender Peter Ramage also stopped by the stall to say hello.

Members of the public stopped for a chat about the Trust and what we are all about- many asking who we are and how are we different to the football club. Many took away newsletters and free gifts. The day raised over £300 in sales, and we gained a handful of new members.

We plan to host another stall at the Bridge Street Easter Market in March. If you wish to volunteer your services, please get in touch.



Trust Annual General Meeting

The Trust will hold its Second Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 12 noon on Saturday, 15th April 2006 in the main function room at the Black and Gold Social Club, Shielfield Park. We're at home to East Fife that day. All Trust members are invited to attend, and will receive formal notice of arrangements closer to the date of the meeting.

We'll also be seeking to appoint members to serve on the Trust Board. Initial appointments were for a period of two years, and expire at the time of the second AGM. The model rules of the Trust state that the membership of the Trust Board must be no less than 5 or more than 15.

We will be seeking nominations to serve on the Trust Board. New appointments will be for a period of 2 years. Serving Board members stepping down at the AGM are entitled to stand for re-election. To stand for election to

the Trust Board, you must be a Trust member.

Nomination forms will be sent out to you with details of AGM arrangements. Your nomination must be seconded by another Trust member, and you will need to include a brief statement explaining why you should be elected and what skills/experience you can bring to the Board. In considering whether you want to stand or not, you should be aware that being a member will be hard work and that you will be expected to take on responsibilities for specific pieces of work. You'll get your reward in Heaven.

If there are more candidates than vacancies, an election will be held, with Trust members being asked to cast votes in favour of their preferred candidates. If there are fewer than 15, and all nominees meet the required criteria, they will be appointed to the Board without an election being held.

For more information, please contact David Cook, Trust secretary.



Membership Update by Bill Purvis



Membership of the Trust currently stands at 128, with six new members since the last newsletter.

One measure that we are introducing in an attempt to boost the membership is the "Aim High" Campaign. Between now and 15th April 2006 every member who signs up a new member will have their name entered into a Prize Draw, (the more new members you sign up the more entries you will get), with the chance to win a football weekend in a European City! So get those membership forms coming in and remember to add your name (and membership number if possible) to the reverse of the form. (N.B. You can download blank membership forms etc from our web site).

It is also rumoured that ex-players Dave Smith and Gordon Forrest intend to join the Trust. We'd like to hear from any other ex-players who'd be interested in joining up. New Members since Autumn: Darren Moffat (Wooler), Michael Bell (Tweedmouth), Elizabeth Renton (Chirside), Martin Smith (Hexham), Gareth Patterson (Spittal), Karen Thorburn (Berwick).

HALF TERM REPORT

ON AND OFF THE PARK



Few of us who witnessed Rangers' poor pre-season would have anticipated the riches that were to follow. The first 14 league games of the season saw an unheralded side produce a bonanza of sexy samba soccer that lit up an admittedly poor quality division. That said, you can only beat whatever is put in front of you, and John Coughlin's side laid waste to all-comers, studded with the type of performance last seen when Dave Smith danced across Shielfield in his white boots.

The 4-0 evisceration of East Fife is one of the most brutal destructions of a team I've seen at any level in football.



Championship win since 1978-79.

But for those of us who've been around long enough, the years have taught us to expect the worst even when the opposite gave rise to hopes of the first Championship win since 1978-79. Although Rangers built a Chelsea-like advantage at the top of the table, it seemed clear that the squad was too weak to withstand the impact of the injuries and suspensions that affect every team at some stage of the season.

Those fears have come to pass. Rangers have been firing blanks in their last 6 matches, suffered one of the most humiliating cup exits

in their history, and could struggle to hold on to a play-off place. As the late George Best was famously asked, where did it all go wrong?

Some of it has to do with footballing reasons. Once teams tumbled to the fact that Rangers could pass them off the park, they got tighter, cut off space to play, and generally got in their faces. The lack of a Plan B is a worry, but John Coughlin cannot be faulted for the way he sends his team out to play. It'll be interesting to see how long it takes before people start to pin the blame for the recent poor run on Coughlin.

This would be unfair. He's done as much as he can with limited resources.

When fit and in form, Rangers' starting eleven is of a higher calibre than either Stenhousemuir or Cowdenbeath. The real problem is that the fringe players don't appear to be good enough, and the quality of the players available for selection drops when injuries and suspensions kick in. The lack of a decent-sized squad has been evident from the start of the season, but was disguised by the brilliant start to the campaign. Now that the team's form has dipped, the



manager is left with little alternative but to select players carrying injuries (Haynes, Cowan and Horn spring to mind). The consequences are that these players aren't given sufficient time to recover and struggle to return to their best form. This weakens the team.

While our main competitors are strengthening their squads with players who've got proven track records, we're signing relatively inexperienced youngsters from Falkirk. Time will tell whether the new signings will help kickstart the promotion challenge.

If we don't go up this season (or even if we do), will the club be able to retain its best players?

The only people who can answer these questions are the Board and they seem to have adopted a policy of absolute secrecy on virtually everything to do with the club. This is not healthy and a lack of communication breeds mistrust and division. Some supporters are becoming increasingly concerned at the way in which the club is being run. What are the Board's future plans for the club?

What are their ambitions for this season and in the future? Why wasn't the team



strengthened earlier in the season in order to maintain Rangers' lead at the top of the league? Can they back a promotion campaign?

As a Trust we are committed to working with fellow supporter's organisations, like the Supporters Club, to try and make sure that supporters views are represented and that their interests are taken account of. Without supporters, a football club is nothing. We pay through the gate, support events connected with the football club and subscribe to fundraising schemes.

We have an important role to play and the club will not progress until that message is understood.



What seems to be happening is that the Board is increasingly distancing itself from the Club's supporters, both those who follow games regularly and those in the wider community who provide sponsorship and services. We were told that Jimmy Crease was appointed to help build bridges with fans and help communication. To date, there has been little evidence of any attempt, let alone success, on that front.



Trust New Year Party

Hogmanay was enthusiastically celebrated by around 120 revellers at the Black and Gold in Tweedmouth, and those lucky enough to secure a ticket for this event were treated to an excellent evening of live music, disco, food and a fantastic firework display.

This end of year celebration, the second of its kind, was organised by Kirsty McLeod of the B & G (with the fireworks expertly handled by Jim!) and the Trust lent a hand with advertising and ticket sales. It proved that there is a demand for family events at this time of year, as parents were able to bring in the New Year with their kids in a safe and secure environment.



It was great to see a full house at the Black and Gold, and we'd like to invite comments from Trust members as to the kind of events they would like to see in 2006.

Our two most recent fund-raising evenings, the 70's Disco and the Gangsters of Ska, barely covered costs, despite having done well when organised before. So now's your chance to make your views known! And as always, some extra pairs of hands would be most welcome.

You can contact us at 9-12 Golden Square, Berwick-upon-Tweed. Or at the Trust Shop inside the ground on matchdays. You can also email us- mail@berwickrangers.co.uk.



Chairman John Bell and ex-Berwick defender Neil Oliver make the New Year Draw



Trust Donate Strips to Adult Centre

Following a meeting between Trust Vice-chair Colin Pike and Chris Irish, the Manager at Berwick Adult Training Centre based in Castlegate in the town, when the subject of the centre's proposed football team was raised, wheels were put into motion to "kit" the lads out.

Colin takes up the story: "in my daytime job I deal with the Training Centre and Chris knew of my involvement with the Football Club and Supporters Trust and happened to mention that they were thinking of starting a football team made up from some of the guys who attend the centre. Trust Chairman John Bell had told me a few days previous that he had very kindly received a number of football shirts from local businessman Graham Thomson who had asked they be given to a good home.

So one thing led to another and the Training Centre and the lads involved are now looking forward to their first session wearing their new shirts." Chris Irish, the manager has been in touch to express his gratitude to the Trust who are extremely happy to have been able to help what is a very worthwhile cause.

The Trust are currently looking at any other ways they can help this budding bunch and would welcome any ideas or pledges of support.



The lads are fully kitted now!

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Committee Profile - Gordon Dickson

Each issue we will be focusing on a specific member of the Trust committee, so we start with Gordon Dickson, a supporter of 35 years, our Trust Treasurer and Trust Shop Manager.

Your name - Gordon Dickson

Where do you live - Berwick-upon-Tweed

Why you support BRFC - They're my local team, never felt an affiliation to usual suspects (Mags, Makens, Huns etc).

How long have you supported the Black & Gold - Since the early 70's. Had a 50p season ticket for the wing stand.

What was your first game - A league game against Motherwell in 1969, Harry Melrose's first game in charge. We had the same design of strips then as we have now.



Your best game - Lots of games, beating Forfar with 9 men, 3-4 against Morton (both games featured terrible refereeing). Best has to be the 0 - 0 against Rangers at Berwick. The game was great but later on Claudio Cannigia held the door open for me in the corridor leading to the tunnel and the following De Boer let me past. It was great to be around such great players, even if it was in a corridor!

Your favourite player - In a time when hard men were allowed to be hard, Davie Moyes made Roy Keane look like Graham Norton. Can't remember anything specific that he did, I just

recall that he would prowl the pitch looking for prey. He used to scare me and I was in the stand!

Next issue we will be featuring a relatively new addition to the committee - David Stewart.



Trust Backs Youth Initiative

For the current season the Trust chose to give its financial backing to the newly formed BRFC Youth Initiative. Having spoken to the new head of youth development Dave Buglass, his obvious enthusiasm was clear to see, and the Trust committee decided this was an extremely worthwhile way in which to demonstrate the Trusts financial support for the football club.

Results may not have been what the coaches would have hoped for thus far, but at this level results are not the over riding concern, albeit important. Over the course of the season so far several of the initiative players have appeared on the first team team sheet and some have even made their first team debut. This can only auger

well for the future and we all look forward to the time when one of the lads can stake a permanent claim to a first team shirt.

The Trust pledged £4,500 over the course of the season, which prompted Initiative boss Dave Buglass to comment "we are delighted that the Supporters Trust have taken this fantastic opportunity to donate these monies to the Youth Initiative and the £4,500 will go a long way towards securing our future with the squads we now have

in place. Working out the expenditure for running these squads at the beginning of a season is always quite daunting and to be given an injection like this will secure our day to day operation and allow us to move onto other longer term goals such as increasing



Colin Pike hands over the cheque to Dave Buglass



Who's in Charge?

After the Trust acquired a significant shareholding in Berwick Rangers PLC during 2005, many supporters were asking the question, 'what does it actually mean?'

It a nutshell, the Football Club is a Public Limited Company, owned by its shareholders. BRFC PLC has a share issue of 300,000 shares, almost all of which are now issued. There are about 300 shareholders, many of whom hold one or two shares bought largely for sentimental reasons in the 50's and 60's, although the £1 cost of a share counted for a bit more then!

The passage of time has seen larger quantities of shares being issued by the Club, and shares changing hands between individuals.

The current situation, as at December 2005, is that there are 16 shareholders who have more than 2000 shares (In case anyone thinks this is divulging secret information, the share register is available for inspection by shareholders and you can get your own copy for £22 - although it is held in an office in Edinburgh!):

BRFC Supporters Club	26,117
BRFC Supporters Trust	54,000
David Cochrane	5,305
Jamie Curle	2,000
Robert Darling	5,050
George Deans	8,525
Robert Elliot	6,000
Craig Forsyth	5,100
James Grant	5,333
Robert Hogg	2,000
Moray McLaren	6,005
Brian Porteous	6,000
Lance Robson	2,500
James Rose	5,005
RCR Holdings*	54,880
Robert Wilson	49,500

*RCR Holdings is a company owned by Craig Forsyth, Robert Darling and Robert Wilson, which received the shareholding formerly held by Jamie Curle for the sum of £540.

So you can see that the current Board of Directors hold between them 126,535 issued shares. As the Board are appointed by the shareholders, they can effectively out-vote everyone else and keep themselves in post, no matter how badly they might perform as Directors. The main supporters groups, despite having more than 80,000 shares between them, remain in a position where they have to rely on an invitation to join the Board, rather than be there by right. (The Trust rejected an offer of a seat on the Board at a price of a £5000 bank guarantee - this was thought unfair as John Bell still remains liable for a £10,000 guarantee from his time in office). This also ignores the fact that the Supporters Club is undoubtedly the single biggest funder for the Club and the leaseholder of the stadium.

Ironically, some Directors awarded themselves 40,000 previously unissued shares in August 2005, despite accusing the Trust (when buying 10,000 shares for £10,000 in June) of preventing external investment by buying up unissued shares!

What do Trust members and other supporters feel about this situation?

118813

New Trust Directory Enquiries Service

Calls cost 49p, of which 9p is donated to the Trust Youth Fund

*Active from early February