



Mariners Trust Statement : Changes to Bar Operation post Port Vale

Following the statement by the club regarding new operating procedures due to incidents at the Port Vale match we are pleased to clarify our involvement as follows.

We conducted a review with the club focusing on a particular issue that emanated from one of the bars managed by the Mariners Trust. The CCTV clearly shows a number of supporters watching the final stages of the match in the bar situated in the lower Young's stand. When the equalising goal was scored a group ran from the bar, many with glasses still in hand, into the void area between the home and away fans. At least one of the glasses was thrown and also three of the individuals encroached from the area onto the pitch.

We had a similar incident last season against Luton when a last minute penalty save by James Mckeown resulted in the door into the void area being kicked in.

This was the extent of our review of the day, we have not been party to reviews between the police and the club. We have however communicated our surprise at the decision not to have police present in the ground.

Following the post-match investigations an emergency Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meeting was called to review all aspects of the day's events. SAG meetings take place on a regular basis throughout the season but emergency meetings are rare and are only called following any significant incidents. The SAG is a very important body who as the name suggests are responsible for safety at the ground and are the safety licencing authority for all events at Blundell Park. They have the power to revoke all or part of the licence at any time. The SAG is made up of representatives from the following: GTFC, Police, Fire, Ambulance, NELC and the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA). The meeting is chaired by NELC. Although we do not normally attend SAG meetings we did feel on this occasion it might have been useful for us to be represented but realistically we doubt the outcome would have been any different.

The changes now implemented are a direct result of the SAG meeting and although we are frustrated by the outcome we fully respect the decision as spectator safety and security has to be our number one priority. Ultimately the change that affects most users of the bars is the move to plastic glasses which has come at cost of £500 for rest of this season but this brings us in line with virtually every other football club.

It is a shame that the changes have been made necessary by the actions of a few but rest assured we will continue to make the bars a friendly and safe environment for supporters to enjoy their match day refreshments. UTM



