

Programme Notes v Port Vale

Good afternoon and welcome to this afternoon's match against Port Vale and a special welcome to the Valiants fans who have made the 270-mile round trip from Staffordshire.

Our first ever game against Port Vale (Burslem) was in 1893 when we won 2-0 and since then we have played each other a further 90 times and so far we have a slight advantage in the head to heads winning 40 compared to Vale's 33 with the rest being drawn. Recent games have all been very close and this afternoon's match promises to be another tight affair.

A reminder that we have two tickets for each game to give away to good causes and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to nominate either an individual or organisation to receive these tickets. These will be allocated on a first come first served basis and so be quick in order to avoid disappointment. So far, we have committed to helping the following great local organisations- Sands, GTFC Disabled Supporters, Friendship at Home, North Somercotes Karate Club, Linkage Trust, West Marsh Community Trust, Mayfair Dance Academy, Just4Children and Women's Aid. Although our main objectives as an organisation is to represent the supporters and assist the football club we are rightly proud of the community work we do and as well as the above, over the last year we have also supported other local organisations such as the Internet Mariners, Broadley FC (Bloodwise), Food Bank, Sporting Memories, St Andrews Hospice and Hospital Radio. We have also been working closely with the GTFC Sports and Education Trust on phase 2 of the common ground project which is ensuring Blundell Park is a welcoming environment for all. Promoting the club in this way is vital for us to truly be a community club. The work the GTFC SET team do is very impressive but the one downside is that they do not shout about the great work they do enough. We intend to work with them even closer going forward and look forward to sharing some of the initiatives with you over the coming weeks and months.

Last week the club had a meeting with the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) about enforcement of all seater policy and have shared the information with us. They have had this meeting with all clubs that hold an all seater licence to re-emphasise the conditions of the licence and to notify of the intention impose sanctions if reasonable steps are not taken by the club to enforce policy. Conditions of the licence issued by SGSA are:

- 1) Only seated accommodation is to be provided for spectators at a designated football match.
- 2) Spectators shall only be permitted to watch a designated football match from seated accommodation

Penalties for not taking sufficient steps to prevent persistent standing will be imposed and could range from a fine to withdrawal of licence.

We remain committed to campaigning for safe standing at both Blundell Park and at the new stadium should it come to fruition. As things stand that can't happen without a change to legislation but hopefully that will happen in the not too distant future or there will be a change in policy as a result of pressure for change from clubs and supporters. In the meantime, we would ask all supporters to co-operate when stewards ask you to sit down, they are doing so not because they are trying to spoil your match day experience but

because they are trying to ensure your safety and also ensure the club do not receive any sanctions from the SGSA.

After our appeal for anyone wanting to join the Trust board or simply just help out on an ad hoc basis we are delighted to announce that Colin Hodgson has been co-opted onto the Trust board. An avid Town fan for many years Colin is now retired from the Police force and brings a wealth of experience to the team. We still have room for more board members and so if you feel you have the time and commitment please do not hesitate to contact us.

Enjoy the match.

UTM

Mariners Trust Board.