

## Programme Notes v Newport

Good evening and welcome to tonight's rearranged fixture against Newport County. As we well know from earlier in the season in cup the journey midweek is a real test of commitment and we salute all the Newport fans who have made the long journey today. As always, we extend a special welcome to Podge and Jamille who will never be forgotten for what they did to help get us back into the Football League.

This evening we would like to take a look at the analysis for Ifollow and the pros and cons of the introduction of live coverage for midweek games and Saturdays outside of the blackout times. When it was first introduced there was a lot of worry that attendances would be affected but the counter argument was that it would give the chance to exiles and others who can't make the game to still be able to watch live.

The analysis is interesting, and you can make your own judgement on whether it is a good or bad thing.

### **Last Season**

Here are some interesting statistics from last season:

- Grimsby Town had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest Gross Revenue for Ifollow in league 2 at £83,350
- Total match passes sold 3737 of which 2277 were from the UK and 1460 were International
- In total there were 2502 different subscribers whether it was for the monthly pass or just one off match passes.
- There were 1031 monthly/annual subscribers in the UK and 137 from International supporters
- The highest number of match passes was for the MK Dons away game which was 540 followed by Carlisle 360 and Bury 358.
- The highest home game was 198 v Tranmere which compared to the away games, is relatively low, which is reassuring in terms of fans not staying away and watching on Ifollow instead
- This is further evidenced when you look at location of those subscribing to the monthly pass which shows 63% located 40 miles or more from the stadium

The numbers seem to suggest that the introduction last season was positive and there was little or no impact on home attendances.

### **This season so far**

We have also received the analysis for the first part of this season which shows purchases down by 8% compared to last season which probably reflects the dwindling interest in the club prior to Christmas. Interestingly the highest match passes purchased in the period covered was 277 for the Salford away game which is well below some of the figures from last season. However, the report doesn't capture the Colchester away game which sold as many as the highest from last season at 540 reflecting the return of the feel good factor. It will be interesting to see the numbers for some of the remaining games such as Plymouth away.

One opportunity we think is being missed with this is when we have to move to an early kick off on police advice why not kick off at 12.30pm rather than 1pm? If that was to happen then the match could be shown on Ifollow as it would fall outside the blackout period which is 2.45pm to 5pm. With 1pm kick offs the match finishes around 2.50pm to 2.55pm which means it cannot be shown. The upcoming game against Scunthorpe is a prime example for this when we know that our allocation of tickets will sell out and there will be many more who will be desperate to watch the match live. We have raised this issue with club for future consideration.

We will continue to monitor this subject with interest but at the moment we would say so far so good. Having said that, although the evidence at the moment doesn't suggest an impact on attendances, we wouldn't want to see it extended any further.

Enjoy the match.

UTMM

Mariners Trust Board.