

Programme Notes v Carlisle

Good afternoon and welcome to this afternoon's game against Carlisle who are on a good run of form and pushing for a place in the play offs. Like ourselves, despite the geographical disadvantage, their fans always travel in good numbers and we hope they enjoy today's visit to Cleethorpes and have a safe journey.

Over the last couple of weeks clubs having been supporting the kick it out campaign which is aimed at tackling all forms of discrimination within football. As a society we have come a long way in stamping out discrimination but unfortunately it is not completely eliminated and of late we have seen an increase again in racial abuse with several high profile instances both home and abroad. It is difficult to believe in this day and age that people can behave in this manner. The campaign doesn't just cover racism but all forms of discrimination such as sexism, homophobia, ageism and disability and it's objective is to raise awareness of inclusion and inclusion and put in place actions to actively encourage all parts of society to attend football. So, what are Grimsby Town doing to embrace this?

The club is about to begin a government funded project aimed at establishing best practices and embedding a culture throughout the club which will reflect total inclusion. We are very pleased to be included as part of the project which is being led The Equality Practice and also includes the GTFC Sports and Education Trust, Stadium Manager, Press Officer and the Board through John Fenty.

There are one or two initiatives already underway one of which is to organise a pre project survey for fans aimed at establishing a start point of understanding and attitudes and this will then be repeated at the end of the project to measure the impact. Also, we are starting to plan this years Family Fun Day which will be on Sunday July 28th and the theme for this will be about inclusion.

Some of the other initiatives identified are training in schools, activities at home games, social media campaign, LBGT fan club, Female fan club and extension of the graffiti wall. As part of trying to understand more about who is attending the matches at Blundell Park the number of females were monitored at the last match and the result was 23% of the crowd that day were female. In terms of facilities etc the club doesn't cater for that proportion, and it is increasing, and that is why there is work currently taking place in the stadium to improve that situation.

If we look at the cultural mix of Grimsby, Cleethorpes and the surrounding area and compare it to the mix of supporters attending games we can see that there is a big opportunity to improve and make us truly a community football club and we intend to play a big part in making that happen.

Finally, a date for your diary. On Saturday June 1st, in conjunction with our friends Message in a Bottle, we are organising our first ever real ale and cider festival. As well as 10 different ales and 3 ciders we will also have a selection of canned "Docks Beers" as also Indian food served up by the amazing Marsala Masters. Entrance is free and we also have music, GTFC footage on the screens, children's activities and much more. Should be a great day and hopefully will become an annual event.

Enjoy the game. UTM