

Programme notes v Newport

Good afternoon and welcome to today's FA cup game against Newport County and especially to the visiting fans making the long return journey from South Wales. As with the other cup competitions the interest in the early rounds of the FA Cup tends to be quite low but it should be remembered that this particular competition can provide a vital financial lifeline for lower league and non-league clubs. Indeed, our visitors today have benefited hugely from good runs in the cup in the last two seasons including many televised games which has provided vital additional revenue which in turn has enabled them to be more competitive than may be they otherwise would have been. The winners today will receive £36,000 and then second round winner receive £54,000 and third round £135,000 so as you can see the rewards are quite significant.

On the subject of financial performance, it was good to see the club report a profit for last year of £150,573 which came as result of player trading and reaching the FA cup third round against Crystal Palace. If we analyse the results over the last few years you can that we very much work on sustainable basis which is something we should be proud of, particularly when we see what has happened to other clubs recently.

2015 (£78,000)

2016 £59,062

2017 £1,069,791

2018 (£36,328)

2019 £150,573

The large profit in 2017 was principally a result of player trading and has been used to help reduce the club's debt, notably paying off the bank loan of £350,000 (we no longer have any debt to the bank) and also some director loans. This certainly helps make the club more attractive to any future investors. The profit also supported investment in ground improvements and in the academy which as we have seen is reaping rewards with seven of the current squad coming through the academy.

A reminder that on Tuesday (12th November) we have a football quiz night which will include a team of players and a team of management. It is just £5 per team to enter and starts at 7.30pm in the Trust bar, tickets can be purchased online or you can pay on the door, just message us to tell us in advance so that we can cater for numbers. As well as the quiz we will take the opportunity to have a short Q & A.

Finally, we have to mention the fans who made the long trek down to Plymouth only for the game to be called off. I was with a group who went down on the Friday and stayed over until Sunday and so obviously we were absolutely gutted when we got the news as were the many others who were also either staying over or had virtually got all the way before turning back. When we saw the photo of the damage to the roof it didn't look too bad but to be fair if it had blown off during the game and hit someone there would have been hell to pay. Safety must come first and realistically there was

no other decision that could have been taken, it is just one of those things and hopefully we will have better luck when we go back on a Tuesday night. The one consolation our group had was that on the Friday night we got to meet up with Stuart Brace who played over 200 games for Town scoring 81 league goals and was top scorer for three seasons on the trot in the late 60's/early 70's. He started his career at Plymouth, which is where he still lives, and is in fact an Argyle season ticket holder, but there is no doubt that he still has massive affection for our club and describes it as his best time in football. He was an absolute gent to speak to and we had two hours of wonderful stories during which time he didn't have a single bad thing to say about the club. Not only a great player but also one of the nicest people you will ever meet.

Enjoy the game and let's get right behind the team, it would be great to go on a good cup run, not just for the finances but also as a reward for the fans.

Up the Mariners

Mariners Trust Board.