

big ed's bit.....



Hello, good evening and welcome to Princes Park, home of The Darts. For another FA Cup replay.

Tonight we welcome, the players, officials and supporters, from way up the A12, Leiston. A place that I am ashamed to admit, had never even heard of before the last rounds draw. We hope they enjoy their short stay with us, and have an uneventful journey home.

The away day blues struck again on Saturday. Following on from last Saturdays 3-0 reverse at Eastleigh, we travelled to deepest, darkest Suffolk, hoping that we may rekindle a small part of the away form that served us so magnificently last year. It was not to be, as tonight's visitors, from the Eastern Counties League, turned in a stubborn performance that, try as we might, could not break down. In the end, I think a draw was a very fair result, that reflected neither teams ultimate superiority. Both camps then shared the excitement of gathering around their TVs on Sunday lunchtime to see if the

eventual winners could be paired with one of the lower level big boys, i.e. Charlton, Sheffield Wednesday, Southampton etc. A home tie with Port Vale came out of the pot. So that is the prize awaiting tonight's winners, plus of course, the not inconsiderable sum of 12.5 K. Should tonight game not be decided after 90 minutes, there will of course be extra time, and then the dreaded penalties. I have no real reason to remind most of you how it all works following our epic 9-8 win over Canvey in the last round, so just for the record really.

Next Saturday we are again on the road, when we travel down to bottom of the table Lewes, in search of our first three points away this season. Having seen that 3rd bottom Dorchester disposed of table topping Braintree last Saturday, we must be aware, as if we weren't already, that there are no "gimmies" in this league. However, the points drought has to finish somewhere, and the quaintly named "Dripping Pan" ground is surely as good a place to start as any?

REARRANGED GAMES

The Basingstoke game, postponed from Saturday, has been re-arranged for Tuesday 16th November KO 1945. Also now arranged is The Kent Senior Cup game with Tonbridge Angels - Tuesday 30th November KO 1945. Please note that should we prevail tonight the next scheduled home match against Staines Town on 6th November will be postponed, as we would have the small matter of Port Vale here that day.

Keep Smilin'

Tony

the darts board

who does what, at dfc

No. 5 the kit man

For those that don't know me, my name is Mike Whybrow and I am the Kit Man and Laundry Man for the first team. I have been supporting the Darts for over 30 years having moved to the area from Cambridge (Cambridge City being my real team!). About 8 years ago, a former director, Fred Leach asked me if I would like to be Kit Man and when we moved to Princes Park, I also took on the role of Laundry Man.

On match days I am assisted by the legendary Terry Skelton and Ken Brown (they asked me to say that). For home games we arrive at the ground soon after 12 O'clock. The first tasks are to put the kit on the pegs in the dressing room. Then a lot of the little jobs, filling water bottles, bagging the ice, checking that our new electronic board is working, making sure jumpers and sub suits are available, getting enough electrical tape for socks, pumping up balls etc. I also have to make sure Dave Phillips tea is ready for him or else he will be grumpy all day. When the players arrive, I get them to sign programmes for the mascots, and any balls or shirts that are requested. During the game, I sit on the bench to operate the electronic board for substitutions and added time, sort out the half and full time drinks and the food for the players after the game, usually pasta, and anything else that they need (like sweets on the bench!). It's just like being at home with the kids, always wanting something!

After the game all the kit is put into dustbins in the laundry room to soak, either over night or over the weekend, before I come in to wash it. Depending on how dirty the shirts are, it will take at least 2/3 hours to wash the kit. Its a bit easier this year with no reserve team. Fortunately our chairman, Dave Skinner, washes the Academy kits because he really doesn't have much else to do. Only joking Dave; he also gets the balls off the roof.

The home and away dressing rooms are swept to give the cleaners a start. It is amazing the mess left behind, including pants, socks, towels, and other assorted



items. I give away to charity each year a pile of towels at least three foot high. Pants and socks I don't keep.

Do I enjoy the job? Most of the time, except when players wind me up or moan that they can't find any socks or shorts, when I can see them on the pegs! For example, at our last home game, the new socks had arrived, having been ordered during the summer. The players had been moaning that the old socks we had been using were either stretched, laddered or had holes in them. So all the players had new socks, and what happened, one player asked to have the old socks back because the new ones were slippery! You can never win.

A lot goes on and is said in the dressing rooms which can be a laugh. Tony's half time talks can be very educational! However, as the saying goes, what goes on in the dressing room, stays in the dressing room, which will be a relief to people like Ryno, Rooky and Whitey ?. I will have my revenge. The spirit in the dressing room is fantastic. They are a great bunch of lads, with no prima donnas, who all like a good laugh, but who are all very serious when it comes to the football. Come on you Darts.

from the captains table.....

Welcome to tonight's game against Leiston.

It is not a secret that things are not going well at the moment. If we are all honest, we have been poor for a while now, both individually and collectively. There have been glimpses of what we are capable of but not on a consistent basis. We have been conceding goals regularly and failing to score when it matters. Everyone needs a little bit of luck to change the tide, but I think there are far too many excuses flying around at the moment. There comes a point as a player when you have to stop waiting for your fortunes to change and start making it happen. We have a lot of talented and experienced players, and I think it's time for us to pull together and get on with the job.

I am sure everyone is aware of the draw. Many of us will not get a better opportunity to get in the first round proper and with a home tie against Port Vale at stake, there is no better incentive to perform well. If you can't get up for this game you are in the wrong place, so I hope you can get behind the team, and get us through to the next round.

One big win can change the course of a season.

Now is the time to forget the past few weeks and move on.

Bradders



Y	DARTARA	ANA HOVERD GRANDA
J H & Mrs A JOYCE	WILLIAM JOHNSON	
N	KEVIN & HARRY TAYLOR	CYRIL NEWMAN
CATHIE HUMPHREY	KEN BROWN	
URST	COUNCILLOR IAN ARMITT	JOHN HOVERD

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tony burmans' diary

I would like to welcome the players and officials from Leiston FC, to Princess Park for tonight's FA cup replay. I would also like to thank all the supporters who travelled to Leiston on Saturday to give the team their full support.

I have to say that although our opponents worked very hard against us, our own team performance was again below par.

I felt we started the game ok, but once a couple of chances were missed the belief started to be questioned again.

Obviously we can play a lot better than we have, and I realise it upsets many of you but please don't think it doesn't upset me, my coaching staff or the players.

We will be working very hard to put things right and believe me I will get things right.

Although the performance was under par Saturday, on a more positive note we are still in the FA cup and tonight's replay has the added incentive of a home tie against league opposition.



We will be giving Leiston the respect they deserve, but I will be getting the players as fired up as much as I can, and encourage them as much as I can to help put in a really good performance to progress to the next round of the competition

Thanks for your support

Tony

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