



From the Mill

The Newsletter of the Stags Supporters Association
Issue 4 - Season 04/05 - March 2005



Contents: Fans Forum & TM AGM, Carlton Palmer, membership, supporters bar, away travel, new merchandise, Player of the Year, Safety Advisory Group

Welcome to the latest SSA newsletter, we will be sending one more to you at the end of the season containing admission and season ticket prices plus a comprehensive list of SSA Membership benefits for season 05/06.

Fans Forum & Team Mansfield AGM

The next Fans Forum is to be held at Field Mill on Saturday 2nd April (after the Grimsby home match). The Forum starts at 6pm and as usual is held in the **Sponsors Lounge** in the West Stand. At present just the manager Carlton Palmer and Assistant Manager Paul Holland have confirmed their attendance, it is not known whether the Chairman will make an appearance. The event is open to SSA and TM Trust Members, non-members can join SSA on the night, and enter the forum, for the special reduced rate of £2 with kids just 50p. Team Mansfield will hold its Annual General Meeting prior to the Forum in the **Supporters Bar**, it will start at 5.30pm, all TM Trust Members are invited to attend.

Carlton Palmer

SSA would like to formally welcome Carlton Palmer to our club after his permanent appointment as our manager by Keith Haslam earlier this month. Although it would be fair to say he would not be everyone's choice the decision to appoint Carlton was made purely by Keith Haslam. There can be no doubt that since the Keith Curle affair began some 5 months ago a cloud of uncertainty has hung over our beloved football team which has had an unsettling effect on all with Mansfield Town Football Club at heart. SSA welcomed the fact that this uncertainty has been ended with the appointment of a permanent manager. SSA felt the abuse given to the then caretaker Manager and certain players before the home fixture with Shrewsbury by a section of the crowd was not warranted, upset many fans and following players comments afterwards about the negative atmosphere at Field Mill it appears no coincidence that away performances have been better. We have sadly had to accept following the disruption to this season the Stags are now in the process of building a new squad and would urge all supporters to now back the manager and his players. In reality SSA received one complaint out of almost 1300 members about the managerial situation, the letter asked us why a fans forum had not been organised earlier. We were unable to do this until a permanent manager was in position. SSA will back the football club and the team regardless of who the owner or manager is as we want our club and team to succeed. Having leapt forward immensely over recent years as an organisation by backing first and foremost the Football Club we all love we have worked hard to maintain a reasonable working relationship with key figures at the club which has enabled us to grow as an organisation and provide excellent benefits to you our members. These benefits include discounts off season tickets, match admission, club shop goods, forums, supporters bar, installation of televisions, reservation of priority tickets etc, etc and the relationship between us and the club is a balancing act. Rest assured in our monthly meetings we do privately criticise face to face aspects of the club as advised by our members and we encourage as much feedback as possible. It is hard to explain how difficult it is to negotiate sometimes with the club but this is slowly improving. The recent kids for a quid deal is a good example which the Chairman agreed to after years of negotiation by SSA. Working from within the club in this way allows us to influence change, for us to not back the football club publicly would mean the loss of our relationship immediately, the loss of all dialogue and benefits and back to the days of a couple of hundred members with no real voice loud enough to be heard. We are very much still involved with the board of Team Mansfield and our immediate target is to ensure supporter representation at board level at Mansfield Town with our ultimate aim of ensuring that no one person has full control of all affairs at our club. We thank all our members for their encouragement and of course should you wish us to take up anything on your behalf do not hesitate to contact us. We are next meeting with the Chairman before the game against Grimsby.

Youth Team

SSA have agreed a deal to sponsor the Stags Youth Team for the foreseeable future. Since the original sponsorship deal collapsed the youth team has been without a sponsor and so much needed revenue has been lost. It is vital to a club our size that we continue to bring through players like Alex John-Baptiste and Jake Buxton and therefore we consider our sponsorship a vital aid in achieving this goal. The youth team finished 2nd in their league and we hope that our support will help them go one better next season.

Membership

Current membership totals: Amber 212, Blue 648, Junior 416 – TOTAL = 1276

SSA membership for the rest of the season £24 Amber, £3.50 Blue and Junior Membership just £1.

Supporters Bar

Those of you who use the bar regularly may have noticed a few more in there recently. We have started an experiment of inviting official travellers from away teams into our bar pre-match. This worked very well before the Shrewsbury match. We would remind all our members that for the remainder of the season entry to the bar is free for all Amber, Blue and Junior members.

Away Travel

For late travel news read the Away Travel page of The Stag matchday magazine, or read the "View From The Stands" column in the Football Post on Saturday evenings, or simply log onto www.stagsnet.net. To book call our travel hotline on 07967 689597 or e-mail travel@stagsnet.net. Below are departure times and prices of our last few away games:

Date	Opposition	Depart	Cost
Mon 28 Mar	Kidderminster	11am	£10 (adult) £8 (U16) £5 (U10)
Sat 9 Apr	Yeovil	8.30am	£15 (adult) £13 (U16) £8 (U10)
Sat 23 Apr	Macclesfield	12 noon	£10 (adult) £8 (U16) £5 (U10)
Sat 7 May	Leyton Orient	9.30am	£15 (adult) £13 (U16) £8 (U10)

New SSA Retro Stags Shirt



In conjunction with Hero Sports, specialists in retro sportswear, SSA are to produce our own retro Mansfield Town football shirt. The shirt is the famous blue and amber halves shirt from 1924 (see pic right), used not long after Mansfield Town moved to Field Mill. The shirt has a "grand-dad" style collar with lace and will be adorned with the 1974/75 Stags badge on one half and the SSA badge on the other. These high quality shirts are available exclusive to SSA members only at the discounted rate of £25 (these are normally £30).

To order this fantastic shirt either go to our on-line shop at www.stagsnet.net, see one of the committee members in the supporters bar or send a cheque (payable to "SSA") for £25 plus £2 P&P to SSA, PO Box 6430, Kirkby-In-Ashfield, Notts, NG17 8RA

Player of the Year

We are now taking votes for the SSA Player of the Year. You can vote by a variety of means, by e-mail to ssa@stagsnet.net, by phone to our mobile 07967 689597 or by post to SSA Player of the Year, PO Box 6430, Kirkby-In-Ashfield, Notts, NG17 8RA. One lucky entrant will win a copy of the PC game Football Manager 2005, to be drawn at the final match of the season when the trophy will be presented. CLOSING DATE FOR YOUR VOTES IS WEDNESDAY 27TH APRIL.

Safety Advisory Group

As you probably know, SSA send a representative to the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Meetings held fairly regularly between the football club, the Council, Fire Service, Police Service and others to discuss important safety issues at Field Mill. Recent issues discussed have been revolved around the lift saga. There are lifts in both the Quarry Lane End (it is NOT the South Stand) and West Stand, but both have been unserviceable for years. At last, work is set to commence on these lifts in May and they should both be operable in time for the new season. Also discussed was the future of the Bishop St Stand, safety work is still outstanding to allow spectators to use it. The Chairman is considering whether to close the stand completely or have the repairs carried out. If you have any concerns over safety at Field Mill, then let us know and we will approach the SAG directly.

Contact SSA

We value your comments in whatever form, therefore if you wish to contact SSA, you can do so by any of the following: E-Mail: ssa@stagsnet.net. Phone: 07967 689597 or post SSA, PO Box 6430, Kirkby In Ashfield, Notts, NG17 8RA.