



CHELTEMHAM TOWN FC

SWDFEF Newsletter February 2017

sharing experiences to improve disabled access and services for disabled fans



South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum



Ian James



Nick Saunders



David Munn

Co-Founders: Nick Saunders (Exeter City DSA) & David Munn (Yeovil Town DSA)

SWDFEF, Coral Gables, 18 Lincoln Close, Feniton, Devon, EX14 3EQ
Tel: 01404 850962 Email: d.g.munn@btinternet.com

Editor: David Munn (Yeovil Town DSA) Mobile: 07891 986053



T.E.A.M.

Together Everyone Achieves More

**Bristol City; Bristol Rovers;
Cardiff City; Cheltenham Town;
Exeter City; Newport County;
Plymouth Argyle; Swansea City;
Swindon Town; Torquay United
& Yeovil Town**

Bristol Rovers DSA

As advised to most of you in December, we have a new DSA being set up in our Region. Kieran Reynolds (LPF) together with Sam & Daryl Parsons are now in the process of setting up Bristol Rovers DSA, under LPF's "Working Together" project, with their inaugural consultation meeting with the supporters, plus myself, on 26 April. We wish them every success and welcome them to our Forum. This means that 9 of our 11 clubs now have a DSA or DSG (1 club). Just 2 more clubs to go to make a full house.

You can contact Sam & Daryl Parsons on:-

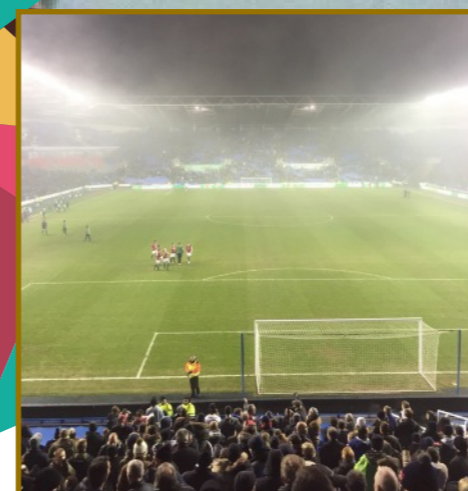
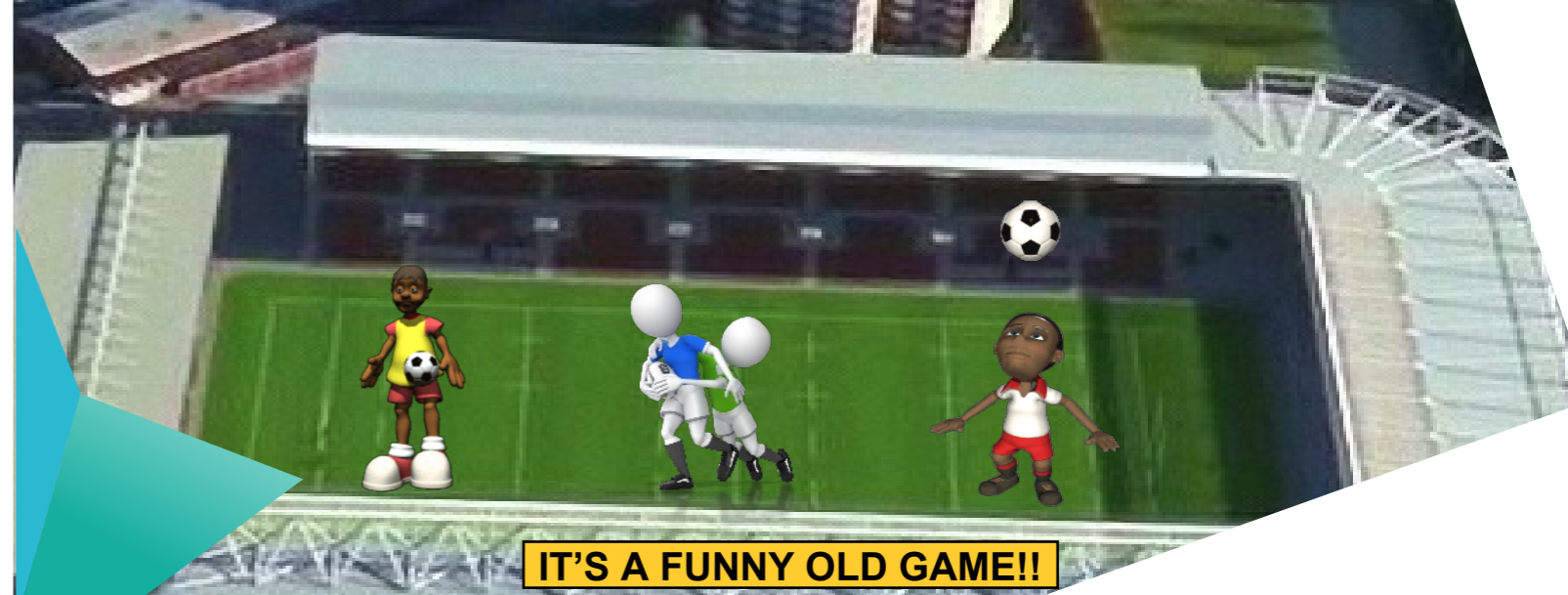
Sam - gas700girl@yahoo.co.uk & Daryl - bs13gas@yahoo.co.uk

[Yeovil Town DSA](#)

The only wheelchair bays at Huish Park are all at ground level in the Screwfix stand (opposite the Tamburino stand, which is the main stand). At certain matches (Checktrade Trophy for example), because the attendance is very low, the Screwfix stand is closed. To overcome the wheelchair bays being unavailable, John Fry (YTFC Chairman) has asked us to contact him and he will arrange that the wheelchair supporters are able to use the warm areas upstairs in the Tamburino stand, alongside the corporate boxes area.

Give us your questions

Plymouth Argyle DSA have suggested that, as an enhancement to our annual Forums, anyone who has a subject that they would welcome input and comments from other clubs, in between Forums, please email them to me at d.g.munn@btinternet.com and I will circulate them. Once ALL replies are received (no more than two weeks after I have raised the question), I will send all input and comments to every club. Thanks.



Reading v Fulham 30Dec16
Match abandoned due Fog



Yeovil v Portsmouth 30Dec16
Match played for full 90 minutes

Yeovil Town DSA

As well as installing RADAR key locks in the accessible toilets recently, baby changing drop down trays and wall mirrors are now to be installed in each of the accessible toilets that currently do not have them, this will assist anyone who has any medical procedure that they have to undertake during a game, with a clean surface to lay out equipment etc that they may need. The accessible toilet upstairs in the Tamburino stand has these facilities already installed.



Their Striker is like a jigsaw - he goes to pieces in the box!!



Plymouth Argyle DSA

PADSA members enjoyed a Christmas event at PAFC green taverns suite. Our sponsored player Jake Jarvis joined us. We had a disco, buffet, raffle and a photo booth which brought lots of laughter. Disappointment though was not playing bingo (seems this is a favourite of our members and players too).



Steve Helley, our chair and his wife Mary, attended the Plymouth Community awards on December the 7th at the Holiday Inn. Quite an occasion and a lovely meal. We didn't win but the event shows those who give their time in volunteering to help others are recognised. Volunteer week this year is 1st to 12th June 2017. We attended the sponsors lunch on December the 8th taking 2 of our supporters who are both in their later years but have been supporters since children, when attending with their dads. They certainly entertained Jake Jarvis, Craig Tanner, Marc McCallum and Craig Brewster with the tales from the olden days. A book ready to be written?



Liverpool 0 v Plymouth 0 on 08 January 2017 (FA Cup)

Many of us made the early 5am coach on a very cold January morning, reaching Anfield at 11.30am. The only complaint was that the travel coaches were parked a good 20 minutes walk away or some were in Goodison Park. If we were told of this before, as it seems that the coach drivers were not told either, arrangements could have been made to get help for those with disabilities and the elderly who struggle with walking. I actually went to find the DLO and they said stewards would help if needed. They did provide wheelchairs to help some and steward 797 escorted a member back as he was struggling with the mobility scooter he was using, being afraid it would run out of battery. We had lots of compliments of the stewards being helpful to other members outside and inside the ground. The game was a classic and will always be remembered considering the PAFC team was no money to put together but £116 million in the team and subs bench for Liverpool. The atmosphere was brilliant and yes when they sang "You'll never walk alone" it's a chilling moment but also a quiet one, to remember the 96 of Hillsborough. The noise made by the green army certainly had the Liverpool supporters looking and even the stewards commented on never hearing such away fans. Journey home, many fell asleep on the coach but at the service station the noise of the green army could be clearly heard even though it was 8pm. A tip from our vice chair Roger. He used the toll road and would use again, worth the £4.80, they had a quiet journey and the service station was clean not packed so no long queues for the toilets and the food excellent. Great to see Jethro a sniffer dog (was it an omen as we have the famous comedian living in the west country) that picked out those who try to sneak in smoke bombs and pyrotechnics. They are a nuisance to all, especially those with breathing issues and are not liked by the fans.

Football is a game in which a handful of men run around for one and a half hours watched by millions of people who could really use the exercise.



Newport County DSA & Level Playing Field

On 22 December last, I raised Colin Faulkner's question below with LPF.

Recently we have noticed a spate of visiting supporters using abusive wording against disabled people or abuse directed at specific disabled people. If homophobic or racist language and/or abuse is used there is a zero tolerance stand, yet it seems to be lacking with disability, like using the word "retard" and so on frequently.

Could I suggest that perhaps LPF could start a campaign with posters possibly commencing with social media stating that we ALL support zero tolerance and using our logos to show our support on the graphics. Perhaps this could then escalate to a poster campaign in clubs and around stands reiterating this and encouraging people to report it to stewards and LPF and make a concentrated effort on it.

Tony Taylor (Chair of LPF) immediately replied:

Many thanks for this and I am naturally shocked to learn about this spate of abuse and a zero tolerance approach is something I wholeheartedly support.

I will be speaking with Ruth Hopkins (General Manager of LPF) who is currently on leave, along with the guys in the office, about putting something together and hopefully we can get this up and running early in the New Year.



WATCH THIS SPACE

[Plymouth 0 v Liverpool 1 on 18 January 2017 \(FA Cup Replay\)](#)

PADSA had offered to help our disabled supporters to obtain tickets for this game. There were 2 of us who volunteered to do this as we were concerned that many struggle to queue, carers or support staff may not have the time to queue, access to the telephone plus they cannot book online.

We received many emails and telephone calls from people trying to get tickets (never been to PAFC before). Our aim was to help those who are season ticket holders, white members and have been to Argyle match by match. It is very sad to say we had requests from non disabled people trying to get tickets this way, shocking and unbelievable.

We have encountered issues which we have learnt by and hopefully can improve upon. Our aim will always be to support our disabled supporters.

Editors Note: I could substitute PADSA with YTFCDSA in this article, when Yeovil played Manchester United in the FA Cup, at Huish Park on 04 January 2015. We had some very inventive reasons for being considered disabled and thus possibly qualify to be considered for a ticket.

Yeovil Town DSA

On Monday 05 December the DSA celebrated their end of year Christmas Meal, in the Legends Lounge with 77 members and guests, which included John Fry (YTFC Chairman), Darren Way (YTFC Team Manager), Terry Skiverton (YTFC Team Assistant Manager) & Artur Krysiak (YTFC Goalkeeper). The Raffle raised £347 and the Auction raised £200 which all went into the DSA funds.



Karina Parsons & John Fry



Brian Hussey & John Fry

There is a story behind the signed Everton shirt that we had in the Auction. YTFC played Everton on 23 August 2016, at Goodison Park, in the Football League Cup. Our DSA formed a good working relationship with Everton's DSA and Disability staff, especially after we reported the kind gestures of local neighbours who lived near the ground (the report was in our YTFC DSA October Newsletter) and featured in the Liverpool Echo and Western Gazette. Everton kindly supplied us with a signed shirt which went into our Auction. Unbeknown to us at our Christmas meal, Karina Parson's daughter was about to be married to an Everton supporter. Karina made sure that she won the auction and the shirt was given to her new son-in-law at the wedding reception. Needless to say, it was very well received.

Soccer Sight Aid for YTFC matches

Towards the end of 2016, we found some free software for the iPad called TacticalPad Lite. We know that there is other similar software but found this to be the best one. It is a great help and reduces the amount of rubbing out and additions using pen and paper. Screen for YTFC V ECFC 26 Dec. match is on the left.



'10 million wouldn't buy him, and I'd be one of them.' – Bill Shankly

LPF

Working Together

2016 has been a very successful year for the Working Together project. We have supported the establishment of three new DSAs at Watford, Arsenal and Crystal Palace and organised Regional Forums in Wales and the South Coast.

We already have exciting plans for 2017 including the first North West Forum which will be taking place at Manchester City on Wednesday 8th February 2017. The second Welsh Forum will take place on Wednesday 15th March at Wrexham AFC. We are also continuing to work with clubs and fans to establish new DSAs including the establishment of a new DSA at Bristol Rovers FC.

Weeks of Action

Weeks of Action 2017 will take place from 4th- 19th March 2017. This year's Weeks of Action theme is all about leading and inspiring change. We are celebrating the 'Game Changers' who make a difference to the enjoyment and experience of disabled sports fans.

Work with your club to organise a matchday event or activity:

You could celebrate a 'game changer' at your club with a pitchside presentation, or even a half time parade around the pitch for your DSA members.

You could use a home game during the campaign to promote the DSA and the work you do. This could involve a stall outside the ground, or you could work with your club to promote the DSA on a stadium big screen or submit a feature for the matchday programme.

Support the campaign online:

Get a DSA member to write a blog for your website about the 'matchday in the life' of a disabled fan, the 'game changers' who have improved the matchday experience for them, or even the plans your DSA has to improve access and inclusion at your club. We would be happy to promote this for you on our website and social media.

We encourage you to support Weeks of Action via your twitter and facebook channels before and during the campaign using the hashtag #GameChangers – find us at @lpftweets on twitter and on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/lpftweets>

You can read more and download a Weeks of Action participation pack [here](#).



LPF (continued)

Membership

LPF is pleased to offer a range of memberships. DSAs can become either a full or associate LPF member. The cost of full membership is £25 per annum and comes with full voting rights at the Annual LPF AGM. Associate membership is free.

Membership runs from 1st January until 31st December and members from last year are encouraged to renew their subscriptions now.

You can read more and download a membership form [here](#).

Swansea City DSA

Happy New Year to all. Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i bawb.

The Swans DSA are pleased to welcome Paul Clement as the new Head Coach of Swansea City AFC.

As a DSA we are very fortunate to have a good working relationship with David Enstone and his staff at the ticket office, as well as Lucy Norman, Swans' Customer Service and Equality manager, and are pleased that they attend meeting with us, as well as supporting all our events.

The DSA recently met with Chris Pearlman, Chief Operating Officer at the club, who offered to help and support us in any way he can.

We want to ensure that we try and make everybody's matchday experience an enjoyable one, and if supporters need a little extra help in achieving this, we will endeavour to try and help. We provide the link between the supporters and the club.

Our first event for 2017 is a social event, which will be held on Tuesday 21st February at the Liberty. This will take the format of a Q and A session, where we hope to have Lee Trundle, our DSA ambassador, and a few players in attendance.

During our social group planning meeting, we bumped into Swans Captain, Leon Britton, who was happy to stay and chat with us, and have his picture taken. It's great when players show their support for the DSA.

From Left to Right
Richard Haselgrove,
Cath Dyer, Leon Britton,
Leslie Williams & Cath
Williams





If a gunman tried to shoot President Trump, would his bodyguard shout "Donald Duck"?

Exeter City DSA

Exeter City Disabled Supporters Association raised £840 through our 2016 Christmas Draw.

The draw night took place on 14th December up at the Park and was attended by City players Lee Holmes & Jordan Moore-Taylor. ECDSA were also delighted to welcome their newly appointed partners from South West Nissan Exeter, Simon Willcocks & Russell Lemon together with their other partner Stuart Doderer from 'GreenMyBusiness' all of whom helped to draw the lucky winning tickets for the prizes they had so kindly donated. There were 20 prizes up for grabs.

ECDSA are pleased to announce that £840 was raised that will be used to help improve facilities at St James Park for those with disabilities and with this sum, this takes the total raised by ECDSA (10 years in April) to a massive £20,000.

Thank you Exeter Nissan, GreenMyBusiness, Midas, Subway of Sidwell Street, Mr D Herniman, Grays of Worcester, Hartley's Certified Accountants, Mr D Collinge, Exeter City, Exeter City Supporters Trust, One Game One Community and ECDSA committee members for their donations together with everyone who sold and purchased draw tickets. ECDSA chairman Nick Saunders said 'the Christmas draws are a major fundraiser for us, but without the support of local business and individuals we could not achieve as much as we do in helping to make the match day experience at Exeter City so much better for all those with disabilities. My thanks goes to everyone'.

(Pictured L/R: Martin Robertson, Simon Willcocks: Sales Manager, Nick Saunders and Russell Lemon: Nissan Exeter)



I once cried because I had no shoes to play soccer, but one day, I met a man who had no feet.
– Zinedine Zidane

(Newport County's goalkeeper Joe Day with Colin Faulkner NCAFC DSA Interim Chairman)

Newport County DSA

Newport County DSA has had a busy festive period dealing with a few issues of abusive behaviour towards disabled supporters and we have had to report a few visiting fans for aiming abusive words that are derogatory to people with special needs in a general context. We have suggested that LPF lead a campaign against such language and behaviour at matches as we do not feel this usage is seen in the same light as homophobic and racial language. LPF have agreed to look at a campaign so we can all get behind for this. (This info is also on page 3).

In addition to our ongoing "Buy a Brick" campaign we are looking to increase our Committee numbers as at present we only have two active members; again LPF are assisting with this and we have had a response on social media and we hope to meet with a few people in the coming weeks to allow us to increase our projects and work.

Recently the DSA Ambassador and County keeper Joe Day made his 100th appearance for the club and at our home fixture vs Colchester United we presented Joe with a memento of him becoming a Centurion for the club.

Finally we are looking to work with our local councils to discuss a programme to increase our attendances by concentrating on a specific demographic of people affected by disability that in our view are widely forgotten. We hope to have further news on this for the next newsletter and we also hope to have a plan in place which we would then like to share the idea with you all.