

# **CHELFORD VETERANS FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **SEASON 2008/09: MINUTES OF AGM**

**SATURDAY, 30<sup>th</sup> MAY 2009 AT 6:30 AT THE (BRITISH) FLAG,  
42 COARE STEET, MACCLESFIELD**

### **MANAGER'S REPORT (John Concannon) IN FULL**

Last AGM our fate was sealed, we were to be relegated from the Premier Division after a hard fought season in which we competed in every game only to lose in the majority of contests by the odd goal usually having had more than our fair share of play. Small compensation when the opposition congratulated us for giving them a close game – we felt we could and should have done better: chances missed and goals conceded that we ought to have defended. Reliance on the keeper our last line of defense had become all too frequent. We agreed to a man things had to change if we were to bounce back to the top flight – something we all felt capable of achieving. We set targets to achieve this ambition:

- We must increase and strengthen the squad, particularly with the departure of John Mooney and our keeper, Stuart Postlethwaite.
- We must improve our defence.
- We must make a greater commitment to be available for fixtures.
- We must be fitter, able to move up a gear when circumstances require it.
- We must continue to play as a team and encourage one another, especially when things may not be going our way.

#### **So what is the story of the season?**

It starts back in August when we played a single friendly (out of the two we'd agreed at the AGM) against Wilmslow Albion at the Albion Ground, a game we lost albeit with a scratch side – which once again is a recurring feature of many of our players attitude to pre-season friendlies. This time we weren't able to rely on Paul Tomlinson bringing along a few mates. I had 14 down to play – we ended up with 9. Other than to abandon pre-season friendlies altogether I'm sure what can be done. I hope we can go some way to addressing this lack of commitment later in this AGM.

Our first fixture of the season was suppose to be against Warrington Grange on 7th September but this had to be re-arranged because of bad weather. We kicked off our season against Grappenhall on 21st September winning 3-1. There then followed 2 defeats and a draw: 4-2 against local rivals Mobberley; 2-2 against the Scousers from Mossley Hill; and 5-2 against Warrington Grange. By themselves you wouldn't say the results were alarming but when combined with plunging morale, arguments on the pitch and diminishing player numbers I felt compelled to call an EGM on 22nd October, the aim being to head off what I saw at the time was a downward spiral of the Club, both on and off the pitch. The meeting resolved the following:

- Recognised we were in a predicament.
- Agreed what the causes were

- Redefined club objectives towards overcoming the predicament Renewed impetus and vigour to attract new quality players
- Removal of players from the list who were clearly undermining Club ethos and morale and act quickly in the event of any reoccurrence
- Make players aware once more about individual responsibility particularly to do with match arrangements and how this is communicated.
- The manager's role, as distinct from a coach was redefined
- The role and performance of assistants was also redefined

Following the meeting there was a marked improvement in all these areas and for that I'm extremely grateful – you all played a part.

We weren't to win again until 26th October against Plumley, that day we won 6-3 which included a hat-trick from Peter Harbach – Peter who left us in December for a new life in Geneva, Switzerland. There then followed 3 further defeats, this time at the hands of Stepping Hill (6-4), Warrington Grange (4-1) and in the Cup against the premier division side West Dids & Chorlton (2-0). On 11th January we returned to winning ways against Bexton winning at home 2-0. Our only other win of the season and perhaps the most emphatic was against Grappenhall on 1st March when we ran out 4-2 winners with the bare 11 players. I think this win more than any of the others secured our survival in the Division, especially as it was our only away win of the season and against a higher place team. Well done to those players who turned out.

The next 3 games produced 2 narrow defeats against Mobberley (fast becoming our jinx team) and Mossley Hill, a 5-2 defeat at the hands of Stepping Hill. The scoreline of that game doesn't reflect what was a sublime team performance which on another day might have rewarded us a draw against the Division runner-up's. Once again we had to field the bare 11 players and even then had to call on an injured Ian Hulme when John Ford had to leave early for a family photo shoot – I've heard some excuses!

I'm delighted to report our final game of the season against Bexton away didn't follow the pattern of previous seasons with players interest and commitment tailing off and our not being able to field a team. 15 turned up to a mid-week game in the evening sunshine on probably the best pitch we'd played on all season. We drew 1 a piece against a good footballing side so maintaining our respective positions in the Table.

Once again our League position fails to reflect many of our performances throughout the season when on most occasions we were better than the opposition we faced, but when it mattered we failed to capitalise on chances and our defence made too many errors that were punished. We came a respectable 6th with 14 points, just 2 points ahead of Mobberley and 7 points ahead of bottom place Plumley – which means we've maintained our place in the First Division for next season. A hearty well done to all of you! A goal difference of minus 7 is the best we've achieved for many a long season (*last season we were minus 41 and the same the season before, so a big overall improvement*). No mean achievement when you consider our loss of some key players ahead of the season and during it, John Mooney and Paul Tomlinson before the start and Sean Allan and Peter Harbach about half way through. It's not been possible to replace the quality and stature of these players and would be a dent in any side, even those in the Premier Division. Because of this I'm proud of what we've achieved this season – sometimes you need to look beyond the league statistics to recognise what's been accomplished.

## **So what are the highlights of the season?**

For me personally, still being able to play some part in this great Club, not only as a manager but also a player.

In spite of the adversity we faced early on in the season, we recovered to make a real challenge for promotion with some excellent performances.

Leaving aside the style and quality of football, we've continued to exhibit great teamwork, great team spirit and sheer guts and determination – the trademarks of our Club. The players I personally feel epitomise this are John Ford, John Gresty and Rob Kerr – it's a privilege to play alongside such players.

The post-game analysis in the pub continues to be a highlight – although I'm never quite sure some of us have been playing in the same game! Perhaps we haven't been!

## **So what about next season:**

- We must finish higher up the Division. We have to score more goals.
- We must increase and strengthen the squad, including a new Keeper.
- We must improve our defence, especially mobility.
- We must continue to make a greater commitment to be available for fixtures.
- We must be fitter, able to move up a gear when circumstances require it.
- We must continue to play as a team and encourage one another, especially when things may not be going our way.

## **Finally:**

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone for all their support and encouragement throughout the season, especially the Club Officials without which the Club couldn't function. I'm especially indebted to John Ford for all his efforts ensuring we have all the equipment on match-days as well as organising the putting up and taking down of nets and corner flags. John stepped in with very little persuasion when Martin Routley felt he had more responsibility than he could handle on match days bearing in mind he's also the Treasurer.

Thank you everyone here this evening for supporting the AGM.

## **CAPTAIN REPORT AND ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT (Ian Hulme)**

Ian gave a summary of the prominent games of the season and the part played by key players. He reflected very much the Manager's sentiments and too mentioned the EGM in October which he saw as a watershed in the season – the turn-around in player attitude had been marked. He emphasised the need to maintain the Club ethos which he saw as friendly and welcoming. Ian mentioned his age and as the most senior player said he would continue playing for as long as he could make a useful contribution and enjoyed playing.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT (Martin Routley)**

In the absence of Martin, John Concannon gave the Treasurer's report by tabling the balance and account sheets prepared by Martin, attached. He mentioned how the balance sheet did not include the reserve of over £600, built up over the previous 2 seasons. He mentioned that although the 08/

09 season had generated what appeared to be a £154 surplus, the balance sheet made no reference to the costs that would have to be incurred before the start of next season – which are:

Pitch Fees, £180

League Fees, £110

FA Affiliation and Public Liability Insurance, £70

Personal Injury Insurance, £75

Replacement equipment **including** balls, bucket and sponge, water bottles and steps, about £120

Total £555: Therefore a shortfall of £401

The meeting felt strongly that the Club had to pay its way season to season and not to simply use up the reserves until they too are depleted. Towards achieving this it was proposed and accepted that player registration fee should be increased from the present £10 to £20 and the match fee should be £5 for every player that takes part in a game. Some of those present argued that the match fee should be paid regardless of whether a player makes it onto the pitch but it was decided this should remain voluntary.

KIT MAN (Rob Kirkham)

See printed report tabled by Rob Kirkham, attached.

Ian Heppell will try to recover the missing shirt from one of the Bollington defectors, otherwise Rob will ask Paul Tomlinson if it can be replaced.

EQUIPMENT MAN REPORT (John Ford)

John reported that at least 4 balls were lost over the course of the season and that the water bottles too had gone missing at one of our last games. It was agreed that 4 new practice balls should be purchased and 2 match balls. The match balls should from now on be bagged separately and not used in warm-ups. It was also agreed the following other items should be purchased:

Bucket and sponge

Water bottles

Steps

ELECTION OF OFFICIALS

Election of officials was as follows:

John Concannon to continue as Manager

Ian Hulme to continue as Assistant Manager

Martin Routley to continue as Treasurer

Rob Kirkham to continue as Kit Man

John Ford to be the new Pitch Man

John Ford to continue as Equipment Man

Andy Barber to be the new Publicity Man

Players were asked to give their elected officials their cooperation and support. Without these officials the Club simply could not function.

## HOME PITCH

Continue at Mary Dendy. The Council criteria for prioritising pitch applications now includes locality of teams, so we should get our old pitch back from Bollington. As a back-stop we agreed we'd again accept the third pitch if necessary.

## NEW PLAYERS

Already new players are being introduced by John Concannon, Ian Heppell and Rob Kerr amongst others.

Current list of active players attached, now down to 16.

## PRE-SEASON FRIENDLIES

Agreed to have 2 pre-season friendlies – the first against Ian Heppell's son's team on the 16th August.

## MATCH SUBS

See Treasurer's Report.

## INSURANCE OF PLAYERS

To remain at basic cover with individuals taking responsibility for any extra cover they might require.

Basic cover schedule attached.

## SPONSORSHIP

New match balls to be contributed by Joe Hanrahan and Ian Heppell.

Many thanks to Ian and Joe.

Rob Kirkham and Joe Hanrahan to approach Eddie Stobart's for sponsorship – to include a request for equipment.

## PRE-SEASON TOUR 2009

John Concannon to try to get something off the ground in July.

## POST SEASON TOUR 2010

Unanimous vote...Back to Cork!

SUMMER OUTDOOR 6 A SIDE LEAGUE AT KNUTSFORD LEISURE CENTRE (commencing Wednesday, 10th June, 7 - 9 pm)

Joe Hanrahan agreed to take over the managing and organising of this, much to the relief of John Concannon. JC to provide JH with all the information he has, including players interest.

## TRAINING

No organised training. To remain individual responsibility.

PLAYER OF THE SEASON – AS LAST SEASON THERE WERE 2 CONTENDERS THAT STOOD OUT (AND SURPRISINGLY ONCE AGAIN I WASN'T ONE OF THEM), BUT EVENTUALLY WE ENDED UP WITH A WINNER, BUT ONLY BY 2 VOTES...: **Stand up John Ford and take a bow (applause)**. I should add that John has also achieved runner-up in the Division MoM awards with 5 awards, only 1 award behind the winner. WELL DONE, JOHN!