

AFC Wimbledon US Dons Newsletter

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US Dons – News

The New Year is already upon us, so a belated Happy New Year to all the US Dons members and friends and families. May we all have a happy and prosperous one and may AFCW complete a Cup (FA Trophy) and League double!

Game days continue to see several US Dons participate through the Old Centrals chat room. If you haven't ventured to it, try it, it is interesting to see the support the Don's carry. Several participants from a variety of countries and even continents drop in during the games to converse with other Don's supporters. It is certainly a cosmopolitan site.

As always, we are looking for input from any of you. Any tid-bits to share, history of yourselves or the club that other members would find entertaining. Do you have any old memorabilia, that may interest your fellow Dons supporters, or any other tidbit that might interest your fellow supporters, please send them to me and I will get it published.

E-mail your responses to me at: davgarlinge@aol.com.

Don't forget to check out the club news on the official website. Also Paul Raymond's "Itmustbedons" website is a great source for Wimbledon news. For home games you can dial up "Radio Wdon" and listen to some interesting commentary as well as some interesting and little known statistics. The web-sites are listed at the end of the newsletter.

We have a contacts page attached, and anyone who doesn't mind sharing their information, let Dave Hambly (SoCal) or myself know. I try and send the newsletter to your e-mail as well as have SoCal post it on the website.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and A HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all.

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David Garlinge
(Limeydg).

AFCW News

Following the Dons continues to be a roller coaster ride. We ride a high with a massive FA Trophy victory against a club 2 divisions above us only to return to the league and drop points against clubs wallowing in the lower reaches of the Ryman Premier division. Why oh why can't we carry out cup exploits to our league play. I am sure it is as frustrating to the club and team members as it is to the supporters.

The good news is we have progressed to the final 16 of the FA Trophy with a magnificent 1 – 0 win at Conference team Gravesend and Northfleet. The draw for the next round gave us a home tie against another Conference team, Rushden and Diamonds, scheduled for the 3rd February. AFC Wimbledon, remain the only non-conference team left in the competition. They have been getting some good press for their cup exploits this season.

The league exploits are a different story. A good win at long time leaders Bromley, was followed by defeat at home to Chelmsford, and another two points dropped at lowly Worthing, after leading until the final minute of the game. The team is still in a good position to challenge for the title or at least a playoff position. They currently sit in 10th position in the league but still have games in hand of most of the teams above them. However, they have to begin a serious effort to win a few consecutive games, starting with the return away game at Chelmsford this weekend.

The team has still been inconsistent in front of goal. Injuries continue to hurt in this area, with Richard Butler still on the injured list and Paul Barnes just now returning to the squad from injury. The revolving door on players continues with the loan spell of one striker ending and a new loan striker joining the team. Roscoe D'Sane continues to be the continual bright spot on the front line. Injuries and suspensions in other areas on the pitch also plague us. The bright spot of this is the depth of the squad and the way Dave Anderson has been bringing in some of the reserves and youth players. The experience they gain at the first team level will be invaluable in the run in at the end of the season and will hopefully allow us to finish in a promotion position.

On a sobering note, and warning to our club and our future plans, there was an article last week on high flying Weymouth. Currently in the top six in the Conference, the article noted that Weymouth selling their entire first team squad and making them available for transfer. They were running short on finances and could not afford the payroll. What a shock! Being in contention for promotion to the second division at the halfway point of the season and

making this decision. Let's hope this situation is recognized by the whole of the AFCW family and we recognise the travels we are attempting to regain our recently lost league status will not be an easy task and that we all need to stand by the club we support and help make the right choices as we move forward. With most of us being either shareholders or Don's Trust members we all have a part to play in the clubs success.

Let's keep the faith, cheer them on and support the club in any manner we can.

Just a note, the February newsletter may be a little late. I will be crossing the pond and heading for the game against Rushden and Diamonds. Will return after the middle of February and get the February edition out as soon as I can.

COME ON YOU DON'S

Guest Column:

The following was an article from the BBC web-site prior to the FA Trophy game at Gravesend and Northfleet.

AFC Wimbledon chase unique double

Almost 20 years after Wimbledon won the FA Cup, the club born to keep the Dons spirit alive is after a unique double.

AFC Wimbledon, formed in 2002 after the relocation of the 'London' club to Milton Keynes, lists the unlikely 1988 Wembley triumph on its honours board.

Ryman League premier division side Wimbledon, now compete in the non-league version of the FA Cup.

And on Saturday they will look to reach the last 16 of the FA Trophy with victory at Gravesend and Northfleet.

But for manager Dave Anderson the second-round tie against Conference opposition represents a welcome return to the national stage.

"The one thing about it is that if we do well in the cups publicity is not a problem for us," Anderson told BBC Sport.

"It's essential that it reminds people of the story and what happened to the supporters and the people who own our club.

"You can't beat that drum enough, because that should not be allowed to happen again."

For most supporters of Wimbledon, their club temporarily ceased to exist when an FA commission allowed Wimbledon to move 70 miles north to become MK Dons.

In its wake, AFC Wimbledon was formed to maintain a cultural and historical link with the team that climbed from non-league football to the top flight before losing its way through changes of ownership and a ground share at Crystal Palace.

Success on the field saw the 'new' club secure two promotions in its first three years to earn a place in the Trophy for the first time last season.

Then they survived just one round, but this time around Anderson's side has already won four ties to set up Saturday's trip to Kent, which they will make with at least 1,000 of their fans.

"The thing about our supporters is that they are FA Cup people. They are just getting started with the FA Trophy. "I have been in non-league football for 20 years so I am talking them round and saying what a big competition it is," Anderson said.

The 44-year-old has been in charge since 2004 after joining the club from Hendon.

A Belfast-born former junior goalkeeper with Wolves and Sheffield United he played his senior football with Glentoran until injury curtailed his career.

It's a great job. It asks questions no other non-league club would do outside the Conference

Dave Anderson

Wanting a fresh start he followed friend Norman Whiteside to Manchester, where he started to take his coaching badges, before another former Northern Ireland international took him south.

Anderson met his future wife at the wedding of QPR skipper Alan McDonald and stayed in London to work at a number of non-league clubs in the area, often alongside mentor Bob Dowie before Dowie's move into the professional game with brother Iain.

Anderson's switch to Kingsmeadow also brought him promotion with the Dons playing in front of crowds of around 2,500 and looking to continue their climb up the non-league pyramid.

"It's a great job. It asks questions no other non-league club would do outside the Conference. I wanted to see if I could deal with it," he said.

Promotion in his first season and a play-off place last year suggests he can. The Dons are challenging again and promotion to Conference South is the top target.

But Anderson is not dismissing the prospect of further progress in the Trophy after upsetting Aldershot Town in the previous round.

"We will be desperate to win the game. I have never really read into this 'what you care about and what you don't care about'. Every game we play in I care about," he said.

Anderson's squad, which includes the first player to play league football for both Wimbledon and AFC in midfielder Jermaine Darlington, is made up of part-time players, while he combines management with delivering wine as a self-employed delivery driver.

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Fundraising Activities

With the Barclay's loan now being in effect, regular monthly payments are being paid, unlike the irregular payments we made to pay the Khosla loan.

It is time for us to stand up and do our part in helping to reduce this debt.

With the holiday season beginning, it may be time to re-invent the US Don's diet, or at least prepare for it in the New Year. The two that have run previously were well received and contributed greatly to the fundraising effort. What do you say to another one?

There have been a couple of E-Bay auctions of Don's memorabilia, courtesy of SoCalDon. Does anyone have some interesting memorabilia that could induce some big spenders to help the cause?

Last year we sponsored a kit, this year we didn't. Let's get our heads together and set about sponsoring a kit for next year. With 50+ members, it would be less than \$10 per head to do.

These are just a few ideas, does anyone have any other ideas of how we can show support of our club?

Send in your suggestions and let's show the club they have our support.

Anyone with ideas to help us show support for our club is encouraged to send their ideas to us. E-mail them to Dave Hambly or myself.

AFCW and Cancer Research:

OK ... I'm still plugging the cancer research – It does not impact you while you are on the computer and it does not cause you or your computer harm. Give it a try! If it doesn't work for you, then remove the driver.

AFC Wimbledon has always had an affiliation with supporting Cancer research (it has been one of the recipients of the Walk(s) for Wimbledon sponsorships). There is a program that has been in operation for some time, whereby, you can link your home computers to a Grid supporting cures for cancer. The program runs in the background of your PC and will not inhibit your use of the computer, but will run programs when your computer is idle and utilise any free CPU time. A couple of us have set up an AFC Wimbledon team on the grid and are donating our free CPU time to the cause. If you would like to join, I have attached a link to the team below. Click to this site, download the driver and join the team. Each participant and team gain points. It is a good way to advertise and promote the club. Later on we may be able to gain some sponsorships, based on points earned, that could be shared amongst the club and cancer research.

'<http://www.grid.org/services/teams/team.htm?id=C89CDDA3-BE3D-4D7B-8601-87BB77C8329A>'

There are at least 16 football clubs with 'teams' associated with this research, the largest being Liverpool. We are working on a table that will rank the football club teams, by points, by members, etc. Obviously the more team members you have the more points you can accumulate. We can make this a fun thing that can derive great benefits for everyone. So come on all of you, go out to the above link and join the fight against cancer.

Contacts

Here we will list contact information for those of you who want to share. Who knows, in our travels we may be in a fellow supporters area and get together for a beer and chat. Sign up is optional.

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Websites of interest

Official Website - contains schedule, results and game reports:

www.afcwimbldeon.co.uk

WISA: www.wisa.org.uk

Tony Kempster's site: www.tonykempster.btinternet.co.uk

Paul Raymond - ItmustbeDons: www.itmustbedons.com

Ryman League: www.isthmian.co.uk

DonsOnline: www.donsonline.co.uk

Radio WDON: www.wdon.com

NEW chat-room (Old Centrals): <http://www.afcwgb.co.uk/gb.php>