

Cambridge Fans United



"Uniting Our Community"



# AMBER NEWS

## Special 'Promotion' Issue

May 2021



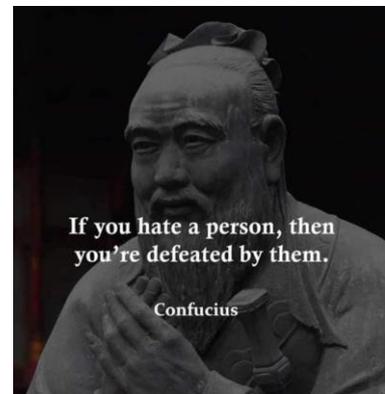
# Opening Review,

“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.”  
H. E. Luccock.

Now the dust is settling on a hugely successful season, it is great to know that after well over a year of shut down, we can look forward to our long delayed AGM. This will take place at the Supporters' Club on June 21<sup>st</sup>, the very first day it becomes legal to have it! It is a very important step for us because as a group which exists to serve the needs and interests of fans, we believe that we have to be fully accountable and ready to answer questions about everything we try to do. This is done best in a face to face meeting and we look forward to it.

We have been very active in the community, liaising with every section of it. We have established strong links with the YMCA, The Allotments Association, Homeless groups, the mosque, disability football teams and a range of groups who, traditionally, have not been seen inside our stadium. Following the disgraceful antics of the Big Six, there is now a powerful groundswell of opinion towards tighter checks on irresponsible club owners, a more equitable distribution of the wealth within football and more meaningful fans' involvement in the running of their clubs. It is heartening to see Godric Smith identified as one of the leading lights in this movement.

One of our hopes is to establish a supervised seating area in the ground for very elderly fans or those suffering from dementia. We want to make sure than anyone wanting to go to a football match feels both safe and welcome. We hope to encourage a more diverse crowd at a time of enormous social change. To achieve this would be of enormous benefit to our community. The transformational power of sport to create unity is immense. We have yet to see what it can do.



Finally, I must confess to some disappointment with fellow fans' organisation CUSP. We had a zoom meeting with them two months ago, during which we suggested that they needed to be more accountable and transparent. We felt that simply retweeting statements already issued by the club wasn't really serving any useful purpose. Any effective fans' association needs to be independent and to have clear policies based on what fans tell them. They agreed to these ideas and to write a statement outlining their purpose and role. We hoped to be able to support it. Sadly, none of this has happened so far. In addition, to simply retweet the club's request for fans to stay at home for the Grimsby game, whilst two of them went to the ground was simply lazy and hypocritical. This was followed by the Chairman gatecrashing the players' post match celebrations, causing them to end prematurely. I hope that we can work with CUSP in the future but they need to take a long hard look at themselves first. We all make mistakes but to represent fans properly you cannot simply put your own selfish needs first.

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## CFU Corner

### Promotion Congrats

CFU would like to congratulate Mark Bonner and the team for a tremendous season, culminating in a well-deserved promotion to League One. They have provided us with hope and pride in a year which has been extremely difficult for everyone. The scenes with the fans after the final whistle of the Grimsby game showed what the badge and our fans



mean to the players. Paul Mullin won the CFU Player of the Year Award for his astonishing goalscoring feats but any number of players, including the youngest 38 year old in the league have made a huge contribution to our success. It is very rare that we see a team where each player works so hard for each other and it is that incredible team ethic which has seen Cambridge United promoted to a league which we last belonged to almost 20 years ago. Now they will be one of the teams that U's fans talk about for the rest of their lives.

There was also a tremendous amount of work done by Gary Waddock, Barry Corr and everyone associated with the backroom team of coaches, analysts, scouts and medical staff who have worked so hard putting together the squad and keeping them fit throughout the season.



We would also like to pay tribute to our amazing fans whose patience and loyalty have never wavered. People bought season tickets knowing that they would probably see very few games. Hundreds have followed United's progress on iFollow and the fans who went to Orient and Harrogate showed a level of devotion not to be found in many clubs. Finally, fans flocked to the Abbey in great numbers only when we were well on the way to victory, heeding Mark Bonner's desire to keep match preparations low key.

The celebrations in the front car park showed what this season's achievements meant to fans and players alike. Cambridge United have made our dreams come true again. It was a fitting tribute to those wonderful lifelong supporters who have passed away in recent times.

### *Player of the Year*

CFU are pleased to announce that Paul Mullin is Player of the Year for the 2020/21 season.

CFU Chairman Andrew Stephen said, "There is no doubt that Paul fully deserves this award for his astonishing goalscoring feat. Promotion has been a real team effort though and whilst Paul has contributed hugely towards the team's achievement, I am sure that his team-mates have contributed hugely towards his."

Nearly 1000 supporters cast their votes in the week leading up to the final day of the season and despite there being any number of worthy winners from the Cambridge United promotion winning squad of 2020/21, Mullin received over 50% of the vote, making him the clear winner.



Paul said, "I would like to thank all the fans who have voted for me and supported me and the team all season long. I can't really put into words what it all means - it has been the greatest season of my career and I am so proud of what we have all achieved."



### Colin Purdew

Colin is a lifelong U's fan, currently based out at Mildenhall and he contacted Coconuts a couple of months ago. Colin and his partner were in the throes of relocating and basically having a bit of a clear out and essentially downsizing the amount of 'stuff' they had to take with them. Colin grew up in Chesterton, not quite in sight of the floodlights but not far away. His Grandparents lived on Newmarket Road (and in turn his Dad) just doors up from the Abbey in what were known as 'Gasworks Houses' given their ownership by the firm several hundred yards more centrally up the main road. He then moved to Sawston a couple of years before Utd got into the League. He then journeyed through various Cambs villages before pitching up in Mildenhall for the first time in the 1990s. A two year 'distraction' down in Surrey followed before returning to Mildenhall where he has been for the past 25 years.



Colin has always been a huge collector of Utd memorabilia and in fact was an original



member of the Cambridge United Collectors' Club (headed by Denis Cooper, son of Arthur, esteemed landlord of the Royal Standard in Romsey) which met regularly in the early 90s.

I did know Colin's name vaguely from his renowned metal pin badge collection which is available to see on the worldwide web and in fact it's fair to say he inspired me to take up my obsession with the so-called "United in Endeavour" badge, the gold and white circular coffer item, featured as a badge of course on the recent much vaunted 50th anniversary shirt (see below).

Colin was very keen to donate certain items to Coconuts and our museum and on the strict understanding that nothing would ultimately fall into private hands. And I gave assurances to him they would not. In early March we met in the salubrious surroundings of the car park at Tesco in Newmarket, right by the car wash, and Colin handed over two plastic crates of gear comprising everything from t-shirts, figurines, season ticket booklets, scarves, Marvin the moose dressed as Sooty(!), a signed football, a half and half (guess which), a raft of pen pics and stickers through to Colin's much lauded collection of pennants going back to 1970 and a CEN Light Blue scrapbook to boot.

When I last spoke to Colin it seems they had settled on a property in Grantham, they had been looking as far north as Sheffield, and he was happy that excursions to the Abbey were still doable from there, whether by car or train, so we haven't lost him yet! Let's hope we can all share Colin's donations on show in "The Story of the U's" in time to come and, who knows, in League One too.



A Fox

Cambridge United is asking its supporters to share their views on the return of crowds to the Abbey Stadium...

Following a year in which fans were largely unable to visit the home of Cambridge United, we would love to hear the thoughts of fans on the expected return of crowds in 2021/22, in addition to other off-the-pitch matters.

The Club welcomes feedback from its supporters as the U's aim to deliver the best possible Matchday and Non-Matchday experiences for U's fans.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf2wf02mb8SCXv0YQIANLTSvOOTXjLb7QCrBXa70ONSWVy5vw/viewform?fbclid=IwAR2vEBsBYSkmG1kWkZ4T2wVrP28K1sMC\\_iLnhwWVcp42eNjWpbTbHdSfmK0](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf2wf02mb8SCXv0YQIANLTSvOOTXjLb7QCrBXa70ONSWVy5vw/viewform?fbclid=IwAR2vEBsBYSkmG1kWkZ4T2wVrP28K1sMC_iLnhwWVcp42eNjWpbTbHdSfmK0)



## Amber Belles

CFU are working with the club to make the Abbey an even more welcoming place for everyone in our local community. You'll have heard about the meeting with leaders at the mosque on Mill Road, and there are plans to help support fans with dementia, and disabilities. Another project which supports our female fans began in April: the online Amber Belles community.

You might wonder why the group is needed at all. In the last 20-30 years, there's been a welcome increase in the number of female fans going to matches across the country. There's solid evidence that a larger female and family element within the crowd improves the matchday atmosphere. Despite this, there is still an undercurrent of sexism aimed at females who love football. Sad, but true.

This has led to some female fans feeling unable to contribute to online chats – and that just isn't right. The Amber Belles group offers everyone a place to chat about our wonderful club in a safe and welcoming environment.

It's also a space where we can bring up female-related issues at the ground. There might be things that we can talk about openly, but there's also the chance to speak confidentially. Whatever it is, we'll do everything we can to help.

Within a month the group had 100 members and it's continuing to grow. We helped each other through the end-of-season nerves (of which there were many!) and celebrated together. We're now talking about which grounds we're looking forward to visiting, assuming restrictions allow. Fingers crossed...



We'd love to reach out to more female football fans in the Cambridge area, let them know that the Abbey is the place to be and remove any concerns about the matchday experience. Next season, we hope to offer a meet-and-greet for first-timers to the Abbey and perhaps a buddy system too, for female fans who might be nervous about coming.

And you can bet your life we'll have some Amber Belles pub socials too!

It's a calm, supportive, happy group. You'll find us on Facebook: search for "Amber Belles"

Open to all U's fans – regardless of gender – who support our aims.

*I am really pleased to see this and that it isn't a women only group. We are not in competition – we are in it together! Ed*

## The Season Now Departing

This has been the strangest and most memorable of seasons in many different ways. Following the ravages of Covid, the season began late, in September and several players began it less than fully fit and uncertain about what it might bring. They also had to adjust to a whole clutch of new regulations to avoid having to shut down the game again. Fans saw a few games live. Numbers were limited, masks were worn and the spectre of the hidden peril was never far away. We were often apprehensive and, for once, the feeling was nothing to do with the way the game was going.

On top of that, we have been brilliantly and unexpectedly successful. We have been United, tough to beat and consistent in the way you absolutely must be if you want to win anything. Mark Bonner and his coaching staff have imbued the team with the most incredible fighting spirit, a will to win and huge pride in performance. Jose could learn a lot from them. A number of self-appointed big time Charlies had left in the Summer, taking their me first attitudes with them. This has been the season when the word team really has meant something.

Things began encouragingly with a one nil win at Birmingham City. Indeed, we played well against a number of teams from higher divisions. That's always the sign of a team



with real potential and determination. Gillingham were so well beaten that an unusually humble Steve Evans made off with our loanee centre half.

There were quite a number of outstanding performances, including five nil wins at promotion candidates Morecambe and at Scunthorpe, which is usually a tough place to get points. Mansfield is another forbidding place to go but this time we absolutely cantered to a three nil win. Our second half performance was, I think, our best football of the season. Another wonderful highlight was our away win at Orient. A number of fans rented a flat at the ground and their noisy support throughout inspired the team. Classy as always, Mark Bonner went over to them after the game to thank them for their outstanding support.

The most amazing game was the one at Harrogate, a game we should have won even after going three-nil down after twenty minutes. If we played that game another 99 times, we wouldn't see anything like it. It just wasn't our night and the Championship was lost there. Worse, by some distance, was the performance at home to Exeter. Bad luck and pressure combined in that game to undermine us. It happens to the very best teams.

At the time I thought the loss of Harry Darling would be a grievous blow but Messrs Hoolahan, Knoyle and Mullin regularly outclassed our opponents. With a goal scorer like Paul Mullin in the team, you will have a chance against anyone. My thanks to Tranmere who must look back on their transfer dealings with us with utter disbelief. When Wes played well we won anyway. The best player in our division. We badly missed Dimi Mitov but Paul Digby and Joe Ironside, in particular, almost overachieved. They made a real difference when comparatively little was expected of them. When Harrison Dunk was on the field, he was as good as anyone, as he has been for many seasons.

My favourite moment was the sight of the players on the roof of the turnstiles celebrating with the fans who were locked out in a moment of triumph. We have missed seeing them and they've obviously missed us. That is why we are United in Endeavour!

Andrew Stephen



# Forkers Ramblings



## A Season Like No Other

So, the wettest season in history has ended in glory. All the forks have been cleaned and put away, well maybe not cleaned. The grass has been weed-killed off and a new pitch is now in the process of being laid. Time to look back on a campaign of glorious success, and not so glorious rain for us forkers.

For myself the season started with rubbing down and painting the metal rails on the staircases in the main stand to be followed the next week with the same laborious task on the gates behind the Habbin. It was quite a relief to help DMJ with the “Face in the Crowd” cut outs in the south stand. By the time of the Ipswich friendly the Abbey was looking spick and span, if a little old. Unfortunately, Covid restrictions were still in force and there would not be any crowd to appreciate all the hard work done by Ian, Mick and us small band of volunteers. The competitive season started with a EFL Cup win away at Championship Birmingham City which gave everyone hope of a possibility it might turn out to an OK (ish) season after all. The first home match was in the EFL Trophy against Fulham U21’s and part of two trial matches at the Abbey to begin allowing crowds back. It seemed to



work quite well with 826 socially distance U’s fans watching a 2-0 home win. Optimism was growing for the next home match, a League game against Carlisle United, up to 2,000 fans were to be allowed this time and things were beginning to feel like they would be back to normal soon. I was given the task of moving the cut outs to allow for more fans and keeping

them at least one row apart, sometimes the simplest of jobs can be the most difficult. No sooner had we finished we were told we had been working to the wrong seating plan and the seats we thought would be occupied, in fact wouldn't. So, we had to start all over again. You really can't imagine the disappointment I felt when a few hours later the government announced further Covid restrictions would mean no crowds would be allowed at all. It was probably worse for the ticket office staff and Andy Beattie all of whom had put in so much hard work to make these trial matches a success.

Carlisle were one of the pre-season favourites for promotion but the U's cruised to a comfortable 3-0 win. The divot replacement went well as well, we were finished within 45 minutes of the final whistle and I was home long before nightfall. Easy job this! Next home match was against Tranmere Rovers. United were top of the League and after two games had



scored 8 goals and conceded none. So, a 0-0 draw was inevitable. What wasn't so predictable was the rain, or at least the volume of it. Before, during and after the match it never stopped. Forking for 90 minutes in the rain and cold is not fun.

Newport County on 10th October is one match which will stand out in my memory of the season. On the playing side it was a bit of a turning point, although still in the top four, United had failed to score in the last two League matches and had

totally given up in the last match at Exeter. If anyone thought the rain two weeks previously was bad, this was something else. It had been raining for a few hours before the match and continued well into the first half with a brief easing up just before the interval. Then the heavens opened up, right in the middle of the half-time forking. Torrential doesn't even begin to describe it. The players came out for the second half to find the pitch more like a swimming pool than the damp sponge they left 15 minutes earlier. The Newport players and management, who had all been moaning and complaining about everything since Paul Mullins goal in the 38th minute, went completely over the top about the state of the pitch, saying it was dangerous and wanting the match abandoned. It took the referee several minutes to calm them down by saying he would give the ground staff 10 minutes to clear the area in front of the dugouts which he thought was the worst, just as well he didn't look at the Habbin side it was much worse. It took about 15 minutes but we did manage to clear the standing water to the referee's satisfaction, if not the Newport players and managements likening. The more the match went on the more United became in control and the more Newport complained and moaned, sometimes directing obscenities at the referee and United players. A second Mullin goal on 61 minutes should have made for a comfortable victory but five minutes later Newport got one back and United had to hang on for well-deserved victory. I'm defiantly putting those three points down to the ground staff.

The season continued in a similar vein both on the playing side with United staying in the top two for October and November, and for the ground staff with the next 6 (six) matches being

played either during rain or shortly after torrential downpours, and still working up to two hours after the final whistle in the wet and cold, also having to cope with the extra hazards of avoiding flying footballs from substitutes warming up at half time whilst trying not to trip over the Sky Bet advertising boards and the away team still using the pitch up to an hour after the game has ended.

December was by far the worst month on the playing side and by the time Leyton Orient came to the Abbey on Boxing Day United had fallen to 9th in the League and a few doubts were starting to creep in. Despite going behind midway through the first half United pulled it round early in second with goals from Mullin and Hoolahan and managed to finish with a comfortable 2-1 victory. Even on Boxing Day the forkers were still working an hour after the final whistle, at least it wasn't raining.



By mid-January, United were back in the top three and a point away at Colchester and three, very pleasing points at Southend saw them hit top spot and stay there until March. Paul Mullin's 94th minute winner against Walsall will always stick in my mind. Walsall had proven to be stubborn opponents and looked like taking a point until Hoolahan and Boateng combined to set up Mullin on the edge of the box and he fired into the top corner. It seemed to even things out from back in November when it seemed like the referee was playing on until Barrow equalised in the 97th minute.

By now we were going through a dry spell with several consecutive matches without any rain and the pitch was looking pretty good, which testament to the long hours Ian and Mick had put in. It really was unrecognisable from November and December.

Stevenage at home was probably the most frustrating match I have ever watched. Maybe it was nerves, maybe the players thought it was a foregone conclusion, I don't know. But they just were not up to it. A total lacklustre performance against a very well organised and predictable Alex Revel managed Stevenage was just not good enough. In the 63rd minute the inevitable happened and Norris gave Stevenage the win that neither team deserved. To see the joy on the Stevenage faces at the final whistle you would think they had won promotion. So, the Champagne stayed on ice for another week.

Bizarre, extraordinary, and amazing are just three words that barely come close to describing the match at Harrogate. Shock, horror and annoyance were the three emotions I felt as each of the Harrogate goals went in. Joy and happiness took over as United came from 3-0 down to 4-4 and promotion was back on. Surely, we couldn't throw it away again. But we did. To score 4 goals away and still lose is disgraceful. It took me several days to get over it. Champagne taken out of the fridge and no assumptions made about the final match at home to already relegated Grimsby Town.

When did we ever know Cambridge United to do anything the easy way? Looking back on the Grimsby match I wonder why we were so worried. It really was a comfortable 3-0 win and despite Grimsby having a lot of possession they never really looked like scoring. They seemed



the throw the towel in after Liam O'Neil's opening goal and by the time Wes Hoolahan had made it 2-0 their body language was really suggesting that they were just going through the motions. Certainly, instructions from their bench had ceased and one got the feeling the rest of the match was being used as some sort of trail match. That's taking nothing away from United who

were taking nothing for granted and when Paul Mullin scored a third the celebrations really began.

For us forkers the celebrations consisted of taking down the goal posts and storing them in the South Stand. Not too difficult for the goal at that end but more of a challenge with the Corona End (NRE to the youngsters) goal. I never realised how heavy they can be and how difficult it is for five old men to carry them from one end to the other without tripping over the nets and breaking stride while stepping over the fence at the front of the South Stand and avoiding the odd stray celebrating player, most of whom had by now climbed onto the turnstile roof at the front of the ground to celebrate with the fans who had congregated in the car park. By about 6.15 we had been dismissed from our duties and were invited into the Dublin Bar for a swift celebratory drink, providing we maintained social distance Covid regulations. It was a great source of amusement when every time a player appeared to grab a case of beer and run back to the changing rooms. By 6.30ish most of the match day staff were wanting to go home, they all had arranged their own celebrations with family and friends, Covid permitting. Only trouble was a few groups of fans had made their way to the Cut Throat Lane entrance and were preventing the gates being opened for fear that some might get in. After a few words from Mark Bonner and some players the crowds did disperse and it was possible to let one car out at a time.



So, while the fans await news of the players retained and released lists, the good news is that all of us forkers have been offered new contracts for next season with the same terms as last season. That is payment to remain the same, zero. A guarantee that we will work in all weathers rain, sleet, snow, fog, heatwaves etc. Ian and Mick will do their best soak us with the irrigators without discrimination. I was going to hold off agreeing in the hope that we

might be offered a half-time cup of tea, but I have been branded a troublemaker and all my colleagues have now agreed so I suppose I will too.

So, here's to next season when we will be League 1 Forkers!

Nigel Browne

### *Brøndby IF: Danske Mestres 2021.*

2020/21 has been a great year for Cambridge United, with promotion to League 1 for the first time since the 1998/9 season.

But this is not about Cambridge United, but another team I support, they play in yellow and blue.

Brøndby of Denmark have been in the doldrums for quite a while, they were last Danish Champions in 2005, but this year it changed and they won the Supaliga by a point from FC Midtjylland (a merger of teams from Ikast and Herning in Jutland) with FCK in third. A financial windfall awaits with entry to the Champions League qualifiers next season.



How I became a Brøndby fan:

In the early 90's I was part of a team installing equipment in Denmark (in pig slaughter-houses if you really want to know!). The team would be there for 2 weeks then have a weekend back home. This meant I didn't get best value from my CUFC season ticket, but I was often in Denmark on a Sunday when the Danish teams play, so wherever I was sited I tried to get to a game. I had heard of Brøndby (which is an area in the south of Copenhagen) and knew they played in yellow, and the first site we went to was not too far from Copenhagen so I became a Brøndby fan.

Their full name is Brøndbyernes Idrætsforening, which means Brøndby Sports Club, but more usually shortened to Brøndby IF.

The only European game I have been to come when Brøndby played Dynamo Kiev in a European Cup qualifier, November 1991. Unfortunately, Brøndby lost 0-1 after having drawn the away leg 1-1. At that time their stadium was not very big so temporary scaffolding stands were erected at each end to increase the attendance. Since then, the stadium has been rebuilt to a 29,000 capacity to be second biggest behind the 38,000 Danish National Stadium, called Parken, which is also the home of FCK.

## *Old Forkers Memories*

### **Nine Promotions in 56 Years**

#### My Memories of the First Three

In the 56 years since I started supporting the U's I have witnessed nine promotions. This is a snapshot of my memories of those promotion seasons.

1970- Without doubt the most important promotion United have won and the only one gained non-playing as well as playing achievement. Back in the day when Football League status was gained by election by the existing member clubs. United had just finished champions of the Southern League for the second consecutive season and were quite rightly being branded as the best team outside the Football League. This, together with a League standard ground, stable finances due to the biggest lottery in the country, a good size fan base and a very active campaign of conversing for votes led to United gaining Football League status and national recognition.



For me, a fourteen year old school boy, it was all down to my personal heroes of the time. The duel strike force of Bill Cassidy and Tony Butcher were often referred to as Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid. For me they were more like Captain Kirk and Spock from Star Trek the popular Saturday evening viewing on BB1. Taking the U's to the "Final Frontier".

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1973- Bill Livers finest moment as a manager, taking United into the third tier of English football. A packed Abbey Stadium watches a winner takes all final match of the season against Mansfield Town. Both clubs need a win to be certain of promotion. Twice Mansfield take the lead and twice United pin them back with goals from Ronnie Walton and a Bobby Ross penalty. An end to end encounter is settled by Walton's second twenty minutes from the end. Cue a massive pitch invasion by celebrating U's fans and some disgruntled Stags. The referee is Jack Taylor the following year's World Cup Final referee.



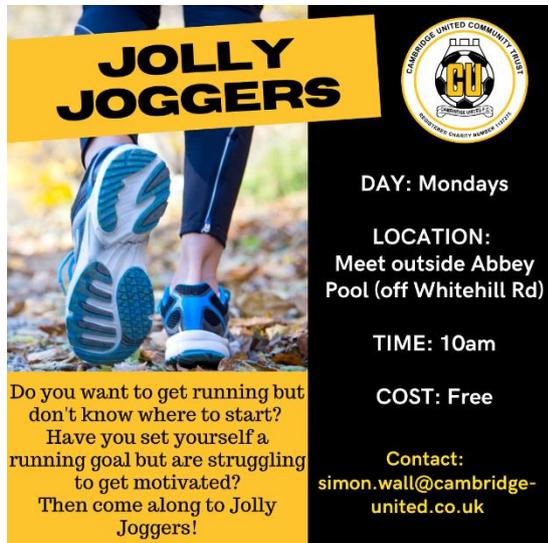
Cambridge Evening News Light Blue edition makes the occasion with the classic headline "Ding Dong, its Promotion Day". No segregation in the ground in those days, I had to walk around the ground twice,

mingling with lots of Mansfield fans before I found my mates. Much less strict capacity regulations then as well 11,524 squeezed into the Abbey before the Main Stand extension!

## CAMBRIDGE UNITED COMMUNITY TRUST NEWS – MAY 2021

### JOLLY JOGGERS & COMMUNITY BOOTCAMP

Cambridge United Community Trust don't just offer football as a way of getting fit, socialising and improving mental health, they also organise a weekly running group and community bootcamp. Details are below.



**JOLLY JOGGERS**



**DAY:** Mondays

**LOCATION:**  
Meet outside Abbey Pool (off Whitehill Rd)

**TIME:** 10am

**COST:** Free

**Contact:**  
[simon.wall@cambridge-united.co.uk](mailto:simon.wall@cambridge-united.co.uk)

Do you want to get running but don't know where to start?  
Have you set yourself a running goal but are struggling to get motivated?  
Then come along to Jolly Joggers!



**COMMUNITY BOOTCAMPS WITH MITTFIT!**



**DAY:** Wednesdays

**Location:** Coldhams Common

**Time:** 6:30 - 7:30 pm

**Cost:** FREE

**Contact:**  
[joe@mitt-fit.co.uk](mailto:joe@mitt-fit.co.uk)

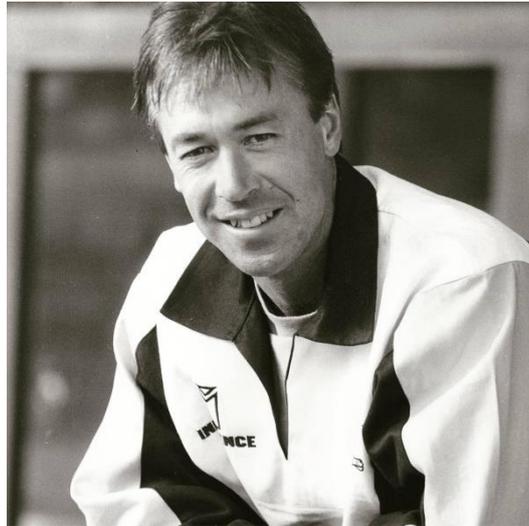
In partnership with...



### GREAT CUCT KNITTING BEE

Forever United participants have been picking up their knitting needles to create amazing blankets that will be donated to Wintercomfort. If you have spare wool, or would like to get involved, please email [simon.wall@cambridge-united.co.uk](mailto:simon.wall@cambridge-united.co.uk).





## Sharing is Caring

For a long time, CFU has thought that as a football club we should continue to form links in the wider community with organisations. Through the power of sport, we have a powerful tool that enables Cambridge United to ensure it is a football club that is at the heart of its community.

CFU has recently formed a new and important link with the YMCA youth hostel in Cambridge. The YMCA organisation is a local charity whose services provide opportunities and support for all young people, whether they are facing difficult and challenging issues or simply looking for a new direction. They provide an extensive range of programmes and interventions. This includes Housing, Childcare, Health & Fitness, Youth Projects, Youth Justice Services, Mental Health Counselling, Employability Programmes, Volunteering and much more.

From taking the time to visit service users at the hostel, Ben Phillips Vice chair of CFU worked with the organisation at forming a link with the football club and to help the users of the hostel. Working with contacts at Cambridge City Council, CFU have set up a charity football tournament for YMCA service users, hostels and homeless shelters, allowing them to play competitive football against each other in a tournament.

The Hostel already runs weekly football sessions for several of its residents and participating in sport gives those struggling something else to focus on and has proven greatly beneficial for their mental health. One of the things that the hostel lacks is facilities for putting on the session and players did not have simple equipment like boots and shin pads to play safely.



Ben came up with an idea of providing much needed equipment to the hostel through donations of old unwanted equipment from CFU members and people at the football club. CFU and 100 years of Coconuts quickly gathered up a collection of old football boots to ensure that the hostel participants could continue to play football. They have now delivered enough boots to ensure that everyone who plays in the session owns their own pair of football boots.

Dan Goddard, care worker said; “Our residents are excited for the football tournament that we have planned for homeless hostels in Cambridge. The tournament will bring those in need in the community of Cambridge together and highlight the issues they face. It will allow people to share and talk about their issues and enjoy themselves for one day. With the kind generosity of the boot donations our residents are now able to feel part of something and play football easier in their weekly sessions, leading up to the tournament. The simple thing of just owning a pair of football boots and having someone like the football club reach out to a community organisation and show they care, is a big deal and shows that football clubs like Cambridge United are top of the league with having a big heart for people and helping others”.

Through CFU’s new link with Dan at the YMCA it is hoped that they can work together on providing further events and support for the homeless hostels of all ages around Cambridge.

If anybody would like to donate any unwanted football boots, shin pads or kit for the homeless hostels around Cambridge then please email us on [cfuinbox@btinternet.com](mailto:cfuinbox@btinternet.com)

United in Endeavour

Serving our fans and community

*Sport is a vital part of developing self-esteem. CFU are proud to be associated with this initiative. Ed*



# Hot off the Habbin

## [programme articles]

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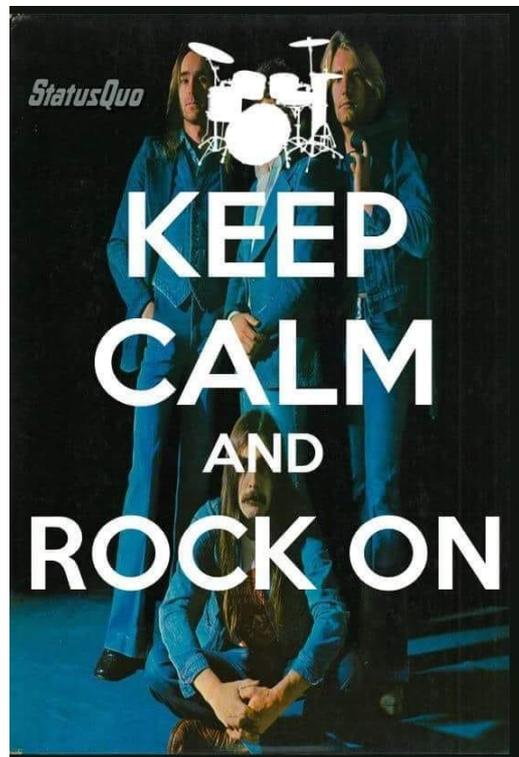
*Grimsby*

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“There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure.”  
Paul Coelho

It hardly seems possible that this should be the last game of the season, if indeed it is. Three results are still possible for us. We will either be Champions, merely promoted or in the playoffs. Before a ball was kicked in anger this season, we would all have been very happy to accept any of these outcomes. Yet, following defeats in our last two games, a depressing howl of outrage has been heard all over social media as if some kind of uncaring betrayal has taken place. Fans are always passionate and we all long for those successes which make a lifetime of devotion worthwhile and which enrich our memories. However, in football, as in life, you get what you get.

Had we won the last two games, as most people expected, we would already be champions. Bolton and Cheltenham have also wobbled and we all know just how unpredictable end of season games can be. “Unpredictable” hardly does justice to the extraordinary game at Harrogate which, upon calmer reflection, we should have won. We had so many missed chances, their fourth goal was offside and Paul Mullin should have had another penalty right at the end. I am trying to be objective but the



weather, the pitch and, yes, the referee seemed to conspire against us. At first it seemed like an horrific repeat of the cup game at Guisley but this was a different kind of debacle. There are no bad apples in the current squad. We made mistakes and were severely punished. They rode their luck to some extent. To be successful you need to be talented, consistent and lucky. At the end of the season the table doesn't lie. If we are promoted it will be because we deserve it.

Finally, a word for our opponents, who will be feeling desperately disappointed and would love to be in our position. They too will be considering all the 'what ifs' and 'if

onlys' and they will come to us like a wounded tiger. As we went to Rushden all those years ago. They are a proud club with great fans. It has been their turn for a bad season and I hope that they bounce back very soon. The response of fans to the "Greed comes first" policy of the Big Six shows that the loyalty they feel to their clubs, as opposed to their owners, is beyond price. I hope that all Cambridge fans are celebrating by Saturday evening but, if we believe in fair competition, we have to accept that anguish is sometimes part of the deal.

COYU's



## and finally....

"My dear friend, clear your mind of can't."  
Samuel Johnson

The speculation season is already underway! Some of the social media pundits are



already moaning that we haven't already signed half a new team for next season. Others reckon that Harry Kane, Shiloh Tracey and Jack Roles are already on their way from Tottenham. Paul Barry has promised a bigger player's budget next season but Kane may be beyond us. My preference would be for a young centre half from Spurs. This could be followed by resigning Hoolahan, Mullin and Knoyle. Things really would be looking good for next season then. I feel a twinge of sympathy for Callum Burton who stepped in for Dimi for so long but one keeper and a young understudy is what clubs like us can afford. No doubt we will need a few players with experience of playing at a higher level but finding them, particularly those with the right character, is always difficult.

We all hope that next season will be more normal, with fans at all games, real programmes and an ever closer relationship between fans and the club. CFU hope to continue with the work

already begun and to work more closely with the Community Trust. We can do much of the work that the club doesn't have time to do. We have more time to explore problems which are brought to us and to help to find solutions which are brought to us. We support the club in every way we can but we are a fiercely independent organisation.



No supporters' group worthy of the name can be a simple rubber stamp for club policy. We aren't and this is entirely as it should be.

The next Amber News will appear with the next season, perhaps our next promotion season?! Any contributions, comments or

observations should reach me by August 7<sup>th</sup>.

Have a great summer. It's been a wonderful season.

COYU's

Andrew



**Make a difference and join CFU.  
Your opinions and contributions are always  
gratefully received: [acstephen@hotmail.com](mailto:acstephen@hotmail.com)**

[Deadline for next newsletter- August 7th]

## **United in Endeavour**

