



**NEWSLETTER ISSUE NUMBER 96**

**MAY 2019**

**CUSA Annual General Meeting**

**Vice Presidents Lounge, Jobserve Community Stadium, Tuesday 11 June 7.30pm**

**AGENDA**

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS
4. MINUTES OF THE CUSA AGM HELD 12 September 2018
5. MATTERS ARISING
6. CORRESPONDENCE
7. CUSA COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
8. TREASURERS REPORT
9. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR
10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND CUSA COMMITTEE
11. MATTERS OF CUSA POLICY
12. QUESTION TIME
13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

## End of Season Review

The season commenced on a sunny summer afternoon at Notts County, among the pre-season favourites for promotion, where we were unlucky not to win when Tom Eastman hit the bar towards the end. On leaving the stadium I remarked to a steward that both sides looked good for a top 7 finish, to which he replied top 3. More of which later.

Our first half of the season lived up to the promise, with 41 points garnered from 23 games. For me the pick of the performances were the 6-0 thrashing of Crewe, the 1-0 home win over league leaders Lincoln and the 1-0 away win at MK Dons coming just 1 week after our worst performance of the season at Carlisle (0-4).

However, just like the previous season things started to go wrong post-Christmas with just 1 win and 5 points from the next 7 games, including letting a 2 goal lead slip in a defeat against Mansfield. Optimism returned with the arrival of Ben Stevenson on a permanent deal and Eisa and Roberts on loan at the end of the transfer window and no departures. Encouraged by a 4-0 win at Northampton at the beginning of February, this turned out to be a decent month with 8 points out of 12.

Once again March and early April were a major disappointment with 2 wins and 6 defeats. Conversely my stand out moment of the season came during this period, Kane Vincent-Young's 96<sup>th</sup> minute winner at Cambridge in front of over 1100 travelling U's fans. A moment when I at least proved to myself that my 70 year old + body can still leap into the air.

Combining this with the post-Christmas slump we took just 11 points from 15 games, but managed 59 points from the other 31. Easy to see where promotion ambitions were lost.

Remarkably we remained in the hunt for a play off place and a made strong finish with 10 points out of 12. Unfortunately we couldn't see off Yeovil, arguably the easiest of the last 4 games, but the excellent victories and doubles over MK Dons and Lincoln, showed what we are capable of. Such a shame that the fantastic performance at Lincoln did not take us into 7<sup>th</sup> place, thwarted by Newport's scrambled 87<sup>th</sup> minute equaliser at Morecambe.

Overall I agree with John McGreal, a man who I had the pleasure of meeting at the Sponsor's Day and who has a great affinity and affection for our football club, that it was a decent, if ultimately disappointing season. However, the way we finished gives us optimism for next season even if there are changes in personnel.

Finally back to my few words with that Notts County steward. At least we made a reasonable fist of getting that top seven finish, whilst the oldest football league club is now the newest National League club.

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## Sponsor's Day Visit

Having been unable to attend this event for the past 2 seasons, I put myself forward and Alan Daldry and myself travelled in the coach to Tiptree on 15 April, departing around 10.30.

On arrival we were taken round by Matt Hudson, firstly being shown the treatment room. In the room next door we encountered Luke Prosser, who had been injured at Bury a couple of days before. Luke was very happy to answer questions from the 20 or so of us and came over very well. Honest in his view that the season had been disappointing given that then it looked like reaching the play offs was a tall order.

We were then shown the gym, meeting / video room and education room, before heading to the dining area. Here we could see the players on the training pitches from a balcony, although too far away to actually see what was going on. John McGreal, Steve Ball and the players then arrived for lunch. This is when the photographs were taken with the sponsors. Alan and I had ours taken with John McGreal, who came across as easy to talk to, admitting that mistakes had cost us too many games in recent weeks. He spoke to us for about 5 minutes.

I found it interesting to observe the players in the dining room. Given we are mainly dealing with young men in their 20's, there were no phones on view and they cleared away their plates once they had finished eating, indicating a level of discipline. They sat and chatted amongst themselves and at no time did I get the impression that they were "on best behaviour" for visitors.

We then returned to the JSCS around 1.30 pm.

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## Flexible Rail Tickets

Malcolm Cole and I attended the latest FSF/SD (Football Supporters Federation / Supporters Direct) meeting for EFL clubs, in London, on 19 March. One of the subjects under discussion was flexible rail travel.

FSF/SD and the EFL are speaking to the Rail companies, with parliamentary involvement. Discussions are around cost, postponed matches, games moved due to TV scheduling and travel where games finish late. Unfortunately the bad behaviour of some supporters remains an issue and the plan is to tackle the problem through education and stewarding of trains. A pilot is expected to commence in January 2020, in one geographical location.

*Mike Heaps CUSA Secretary*

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## U's End of Season Dinner

The end of season dinner took place at the stadium on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April. CUSA sponsor two awards; our home and also away player of the year. The away player is based upon votes cast on the coach travelling home after each match with the home, each CUSA member can vote for their player of the year. A big thank you to everyone that voted.

We sponsor a table at the event and we were joined by Tom Lapslie and Brandon Comley. Both Tom and Brandon were excellent company talking about the season (the highs and lows) with both looking forward to the big game against Lincoln on the Saturday, confident that we would win. (What a great game that was and to get so close to the play offs was frustrating but we can now look forward to winning League 2 next season!).

The after dinner speaker was Steve Hodge. He played for a number of English clubs over an 18 year career including two stints as Nottingham Forest,. He is remembered by a number of football fans for his part in the fateful World Cup game against Argentina when he sliced a high, looping ball into the middle of his own area, it fell just in front of the penalty spot, and was met by Maradona (hand!). Say no more! After the game Steve exchanged shirts with Maradona which is now on display at the National Football Museum in Manchester.

The Chris Hazlehurst CUSA Away Player of the Season was Tom Lapslie, and The Tony and Ann Covill CUSA Player of the Season was Ryan Jackson. Both were delighted to receive our awards. Hopefully both players will be helping us achieve promotion to League 1 next season.

It was a very enjoyable evening where we were able to recognise and applaud the achievements of the players over the past season.

*Malcolm Bailey CUSA Committee Member*



## Running the London Marathon – well done and congratulations to CUSA Committee Member Sam Wolton

The London marathon is one of the major marathons around the world and this race attracts over 145,000 entries with only 40,000 gaining a place through a ballot or a charity place. I managed to get a place through the ballot.

My training started on Christmas Day 2018 with the park run at Colchester Castle Park. As a seasoned runner of 20 years I knew that I had a good base to start from, so in January I started building up my mileage so by the end of February I was up to 18 miles.

March came and I had two or three races, the Sterling Stinger, a 13 mile off road run on the South Downs and the Colchester half marathon. I completed both races within two hours and by the time I got to the beginning of April I was up to 20 miles and feeling fairly confident that I was going to get a good time for the marathon. The week of the marathon arrived and like all the other entries I had to go to the Excel Centre and visit the Expo, or as it is now called, the London Marathon Running Show, to collect my running number, kitbag and timing chip still feeling confident I was going to get that sub 4 hour time

I planned my weekend and on the Saturday it was a trip to Jobserve Community Stadium to watch Colchester United play MK Dons, which we won. Sunday morning the day of the Marathon, 28<sup>th</sup> of April, beep beep beep, the 5 am alarm call woke me as I had to prepare myself to go to Dunmow to catch a coach put on by a local running club to go down to the start of the marathon in Blackheath.

We arrived in Blackheath just after 8 am so with just over two hours before the race started, I mingled with all of the other runners watching the big screen listening to the music. There seemed to be a nervous energy as we waited and after saying good luck to my fellow runners from my club Halstead Road Runners, I lined up for the start. There was a count down from 10 then bang, the race was on.

It took me just over three minutes to cross the start line and I was on my way for 26.2 miles. As I was aiming for sub 4 hours I knew that I had to run about nine minutes per mile but with the crowds and other runners I was running faster than I needed to. My first mile was eight minutes so I needed to slow down, but I didn't, so I carried on running at a pace which felt comfortable, as I was fairly confident I was going to maintain this pace as long as I could.

At 5 km I was still on for good time, 10km I was still feeling good, 15km still good and at half way my time was 1 hour 51 minutes I thought to myself I'm still on for a sub 4 hour time. The miles started getting harder as I was starting to slow but I dug in deep. I knew my training helped me and I had a small target of getting to 15 miles in two hours. I was only 10 minutes off that so still felt that was on for a sub 4 time but in the next 5 miles I started to feel more tired.

I knew that the first 13 miles was too fast and I was now starting to pay for it. Around 18 miles a lady from a running club that I know ran past me so I caught her up. I had a small chat with her about the next race that we were probably going to do but that's another story.

At 20 miles in just over three hours there was a small chance that I would get my sub 4 hour time. I accepted this as I knew the last 6 miles are the hardest in a marathon I was getting slower and slower by then I was walking/running, known as "Jeffing", but I'm still moving. Miles 21 to 23 the crowd were getting larger and more noisier which was helping the runners.



About mile 24 my club chairman spotted me and told me to get a move on so I started running, well, jogging, and I managed to finish in what I thought was not a good time for me, but finished in a time of 4 hours and 18 minutes.

My official race chip time was to be 4 hours and 23 minutes.

The picture is just after Cutty Sark at 10km

## Thank you

Membership of CUSA topped 400 last season which was fantastic thank you. We really appreciate your support each and every season, and certainly enjoy your company travelling the length and breadth of the country whilst following the U's

This time last year we had the difficult task of finding a new coach company to work with and we have been delighted with the relationship and service that our members have since received from Roman Coaches and their drivers. With grateful thanks to the support and deal that they offered us, we have both been able to help subsidise several trips, including discounts for junior members

We very much look forward to working with them again next season

CUSA membership is renewable on the 1st of August and we will be in touch nearer the time with renewal forms, which will also be available on the CUSA website in due course

Hopefully we will see many of you at the U's Open Day, where not only will members be able to renew, we will also have a new CUSA badge available for sale

Thank you once again for your support and I hope you have a wonderful break before the U's action starts afresh

*Jon Burns, CUSA Chairman*

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## Programmes

We have recently added to our stock of Colchester home and away programmes thanks to donations from members.

We have items back to 1960 and a couple from the late 50's, plus a number of other teams programmes dating back to the 60's not involving Colchester.

Some of these are on display at home games in the Supporters Bar.

If you have any enquiries regards programmes, please come and talk to us, or email [programmes@cusa.co.uk](mailto:programmes@cusa.co.uk) as we may be able to help fill those gaps in your collection

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## Tribute to Col U by Gavin Doe

Colchester United Football Club were formed in 1937  
Since then, hundreds of players have been in the starting 11

The Jobserve Community Stadium is where they play  
How I love to see them on a match day

The team's home club colours are white and blue  
Oh yes, I will always remain faithful and true

The record attendance at the Community Stadium is 10,064  
Great atmosphere that day, though not the 0-5 score

The club's nicknames are the U's and Col U  
Loved by thousands of fans, not just a few

Col U fans are loyal and filled with much passion  
This they always show in true Colchester fashion

**Mind United Trek the Peak District: Support your chosen charity on our Trek challenge to UK**

The EFL are calling for any volunteers who would like to take part in a sponsored hike for Mind 13/14 July

Represent your football team

Support Mind's vital services

Unique event created for EFL supporters, fans and ambassadors

12 hour overnight endurance event

Join Mind and the EFL for the ultimate weekend to raise funds and awareness for mental health. You'll be challenging yourself to the maximum with this 12 hour, night-time hiking challenge. Set within the demanding terrain of the Peak District National Park, this is a test of fitness, endurance and team spirit – but dealing with a mental health problem is no walk in the park either. All details can be found at the link below:

<https://www.charitychallenge.com/expedition/2965/Mind-United-Trek-the-Peak-District#tabs>

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**Sunday 14 July will be the U's Open Day**

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**Hope to see you there!**

**CUSA Contact Points**

[www.cusa.co.uk](http://www.cusa.co.uk)

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Email : [enquiries@cusa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cusa.co.uk)

CUSA Away Travel : phone (7 - 9pm and please leave messages) or text  
Jon 07752 531600 or Jackie 07873 294146

Email : [away\\_travel@cusa.co.uk](mailto:away_travel@cusa.co.uk)

CUSA Membership : Malcolm 07901 612063 or [membership@cusa.co.uk](mailto:membership@cusa.co.uk)

Twitter : [@CUSAsupporters](https://twitter.com/CUSAsupporters)

Facebook : Colchester United Supporters Association