



**NEWSLETTER**

**ISSUE NUMBER 91**

**AUGUST 2017**

**Welcome back to the new season!**

Sorry that we are a little late with our opening newsletter, but just like buses I suspect that there will be another one along shortly, and apologies that the membership renewal forms are only just with you.

We are all looking forward to a successful season for the U's following the brilliant last few months of last season – so close we could almost touch the play offs! Promotion must be the target this time and your support will be so crucial.

We are also buzzing for your company on the CUSA coaches this season and the numbers have been brilliant so far – thank you. It is also important to us that we look to help our members, so we would welcome your feedback and requests on anything CUSA or U's related that you think we can help with.

### **TONY COVILL**

It was very sad news indeed when we heard back in May of the sudden passing of our good friend and most loyal of CUSA members, Tony Covill.

Together with his late wife Anne, Tony was one of the regular couples that trawled the lengths and breadths of the country supporting the U's. Their company on the coaches was always treasured. Tony was a lovely man and he had many friends from Layer Road days and the Weston Homes times now who will miss him greatly. Rest in peace dear Tony.

### **CUSA MEMBERSHIP 2017-2018**

Many thanks to all for you for supporting us last season – there was almost 300 of you which is tremendous!. You have been a great help yet again and we really hope that you will choose to continue that support by renewing for the next season. Thanks to everyone who has already re-joined, and if that's the case, then please don't let the enclosed form go to waste – please feel free to pass it on to a fellow U's fan.

Our membership income goes a long way towards balancing the costs of the CUSA coaches we arrange, whilst also giving us the ability to do things to raise our own profile, like sponsoring the U's 1<sup>st</sup> Team Manager, which effectively we do under all of your names.

Always open to suggestions from our members about ways that we can use it to support them on match days, and we have one or two fan related ideas already, so please get in touch if you have an idea.

## **NEW CUSA "80" BADGE and 2017-2018 YEAR BAR**

**Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Colchester United!**



Our new CUSA badge commemorating the U's 80th birthday is now on sale at £3.50, and for those fans who like to collect the year bars, the latest for your collection is also available at £3. If you would like to have one sent out or reserved for you, please get in touch at [badges@cusa.co.uk](mailto:badges@cusa.co.uk), or use one of the normal contact points.

Our stock of old year bars, and the CUSA badges to hang them from, is pretty good – there are some gaps which for the right price we would like to fill ourselves, but we would also like to help you good people start your own chain or find a link that would make yours complete.

We would also like to hear your year bar stories and see your pictures - suspect that many of you have quite a chain that you are very proud of! I am sure it would make for a fine newsletter story and if you're not a writer as such, then one of the CUSA Committee would love to note your words down for posterity.

### **CUSA AGM 12 JUNE 2017**

Many thanks to the CUSA members who were able to make our 2017 Annual General Meeting.

It was almost a record attendance and as always your support was much appreciated.

Thanks also to Matt Hudson, U's Supporters Liaison Officer amongst his many hats, who was very engaging with our members and very helpful with his answers to a number of questions.

We are delighted to announce that Phil Gladwin, Lesley Upsher, Eddie Wells, Malcolm and Cicelie Smith were all granted CUSA Life Membership at the AGM for their strong and generous support of us and Colchester United.

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The CUSA Committee was re-elected as follows:

Chairman - Jon Burns

Vice Chairman - Malcolm Cole

Treasurer - Jackie Anderson

Secretary - Mike Heaps

Travel Secretary - Jon Burns

Membership Secretary - Malcolm Cole

Committee Members - Robbie Anderson, Graham White, Graham Sargeant, Kevan Fisher, Trevor Bailey, Malcolm Bailey

A copy of the minutes and the last set of audited CUSA accounts are available to members upon request

## **CUSA WEBSITE**

Our website [www.cusa.co.uk](http://www.cusa.co.uk) has a new look and we hope you like it

One new feature is Away Days, which will be your place to house your comments on away games, stadiums and your journeys there and back

There is also a Guestbook page where you might like to talk about anything else CUSA or U's related. You may even want advertise something you are doing or selling – we don't charge! Effectively we want it to be an interactive place for our members to talk to us about anything they like

If you have any questions or suggestions about the website, please get in touch

## **HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD**

(with apologies to Clifford T Ward for the title of this piece)

Back in 1971 I think it was I won a wonderful little RGD 'Flirt' radio in a draw for U's raffle ticket sellers. I was 15 and thrilled with it and used it with an earpiece to follow the Test Match whilst mowing the grass. That little radio has flirted with disaster whilst on ladders painting or when its' fallen from my pocket whilst birdwatching.

I valued it at university in boring lectures – my first ever 'heard result' was a 6-0 loss at Chesterfield – and I especially liked the preset button which allowed instant transfer from Radio 2 sport to Test Match Special on long wave. Its reliability has been remarkable and its appetite for PP9 batteries was miniscule.

The last time I went to use it was the day we were relegated in the 2015-2016 season by which time my home had become south central France where amazingly the Home Service, sorry Radio 4, can be heard. Ironically, on that last time it failed and I have been unable to make it work ever since. Naturally, I cannot part with it so now the little radio sits on a shelf, a huge connection no longer with the outside world but with my world and my life.



Jon has asked me to scrawl something for the newsletter, after all it's goodness knows how many years a member of CUSA and definitely at least 55 years a follower of our U's so it seems only fair gratitude. So, some words from a stranger, albeit a blue 'n' white striped one.

Exiled, nay now marooned, in the southern Creuse, Limousin, what is it like to be a U's fan? Well, nothing really changes, I'm an hour 'on' but I always know the fixtures and with occasional (I live in the middle of absolute nowhere) internet access I can follow our games much as I did when a Somerset or Alderney or Ventnor exile. So, that's OK. That 'youtube' thing also provides me with around 2 minutes action from each game and I await it avidly post-match, win or lose or draw.

I cannot pretend to be cut off from the U's in the way I almost am from the world in an area the size of Essex with a population half that of Colchester! Think about it...the Creuse is 55 miles by 65 and has just over 100,000 folk, lots of cows and more trees than Stone Age man could chop down for warmth. At c.2000' my U's flag does more than flutter in these winds and will soon need replacement for all its tears or should I say tears (as in Sears)?

I'll make one sad negative comment - factual, not political. After the 'Brexit' my exile is complete, I'm marooned now as cited earlier. We came here for sensible pragmatic reasons, dumping the mortgage to live quietly and healthily on my pension of 1800 Euros a month, a better life than was feasible on the Isle of Wight. We saved a proportion to enable trips to see maybe 5-6 matches at Cuckoo Farm a season – when I lived on Alderney I did just that combining my trips with birdwatching, early or late season cricket and identifying subjects for my work as an artist. In Somerset I usually saw a third of our games. The Brexit result wiped one fifth of my income so I'll not be calling into the CUSA hut again, probably ever again. A sadness.

So, I need to improve my fix of football and one of the intriguing things about France has been to cross refer their non league structure to ours. I have always been a supporter of non league football and was for some time a season ticket holder at Tiverton Town. I have discovered that although more regional (inevitable in so large a country but also sensible for travel) the levels or steps are broadly similar. My local club EF Aubusson are at step 5 - think Stanway Rovers FC. There the similarity seems to end. The facilities are so different. No bar, no hot dog stand, no admission cost, no quid to sit down in the wonky stand. Admission is free and there are toilets but not much else.

The ground – see photo – is superb with modern floodlights, an excellent and large stand better than what we had at Layer Road, parking, a second floodlit ground for training and 2 mini buses to service the 6 differing teams and age groups. Somehow the state and the community fund all this.



I have been following letters and articles in the paper which say that the French non league system wishes to adopt the principles of the UK system and to allow a bar etc; apparently fact-finding missions are current. I hope Monsieur Macron is a football fan and I intend to follow all this closely.

In the meantime I am left with EF Aubusson for my 'fix'.....but am I? Would you believe they kick off at 8pm on Sunday nights! After a decent Sunday lunch and half a bottle of something I paid 3 Euros for that would be £17 in England I am in no state to turn up.....the frustration is growing!

And what if I seek something of the standard of the U's? Well, as I said this is a big – as in very, very big – country with a smaller population than the UK. Thus there are slightly fewer teams despite football being the major sport (whatever you may assume about cycling) and I have to drive 97 miles to watch division 2 standard (called CFA1 here I believe). I will pay admission and receive a team sheet along with the other 400-600 spectators! So some things are still very different.... and they still kick off at 8pm on a Sunday!

I try to be positive – and as you all know that's a pre-requisite of being a U's fan – so I shall continue to assess the situation, learn more and report back! This new season I aim to get to some of these ridiculous 8pm games and will be on the look out for gendarmes on my way home. Mind you it's only 8 miles to the ground at EF Aubusson and the route I use has no traffic at any time, pine martens excluded.

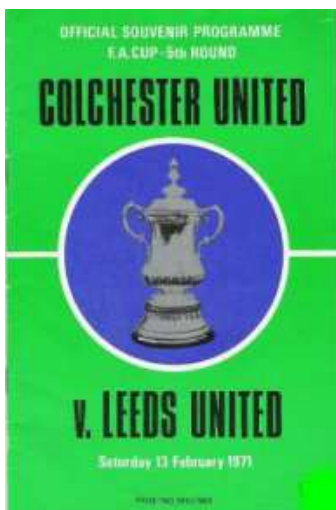
So, I may have lost the U's up to a point – and CUSA can continue to help me with that of course – but I'll still be with you all in spirit. Give a cheer for me at each home game, I shall think of you all and the pre match pints you are all able to have!

I wonder how we'll fare v Chesterfield this season; games with them always bring goals, remember the 3-6?

Up the U's.

Alastair Riley  
Artist  
[www.alastair-riley.com](http://www.alastair-riley.com)

### **THAT FAMOUS FA CUP GAME AGAINST LEEDS UNITED**



In our possession we have a DVD which includes the highlights of the Leeds 1971 FA Cup game (42 minutes of glorious black and white) and also the Watney Cup Final against WBA (24 minutes of colour footage). Copies can be produced quite easily and are available for sale to our members, so if you would like one please do get in touch with us.

## **CUSA PLAYER OF THE SEASON AWARDS**

It was a great night at the U's End of Season Dinner. Charley Edge, Rekeil Pyke and Tommy O'Sullivan were very good company on our table

Thank you to all of our members who voted for our awards this season, and thanks to Graham Sargeant for counting them all!

Many congratulations to George Elokobi, the CUSA Player of Season for 2016-2017 and to Tom Eastman, the CUSA Away Player of the Season for 2016-2017



Two worthy winners, with the likes of Chris Porter, Craig Slater and Brennan Dickenson very close behind in the voting.

Very sad to lose George to Leyton Orient - yet another victim / recipient of our trophy, with so many winners of the years departing the club soon after.

At least we won't have far to go to ask (politely) for our trophy back next year!



## **CUSA AWAY TRAVEL**

We are pleased to announce the following details for the first few away games of the season. Some details may be subject to slight change, so please contact us or visit the website for exact information. We always advertise the next 3 or 4 away trips on the CUSA website.

The CUSA loyalty scheme well looked after by Kevan Fisher is being continued this season with discounts for the very regular travelers. Some 14 guys and gals made over 18 trips with us last season, with another 17 doing more than a dozen – thanks to all these members, plus everyone else who is happy with the service we provide.

**CAMBRIDGE UNITED**

SATURDAY 2 SEPTEMBER  
COACH DEPARTS WHCS AT 11.30AM  
ADULT MEMBERS £16  
CONCESSION MEMBERS £14

**CHELTENHAM TOWN**

SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER  
COACH DEPARTS WHCS AT 9.30AM  
ADULT MEMBERS £21  
CONCESSION MEMBERS £19

**GRIMSBY TOWN**

TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER  
COACH DEPARTS WHCS AT 1.00PM  
ADULT MEMBERS £25  
CONCESSION MEMBER £23

**YEOVIL TOWN**

SATURDAY 30 SEPTEMBER  
COACH DEPARTS THE WHCS AT 8.30AM  
ADULT MEMBERS £27  
CONCESSION MEMBERS £25

**THE FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS FEDERATION**

Sky Sports Football Yearbook 2017-2018

What used to be the old Rothmans Football Yearbook several moons ago, due to our membership of FSF, we are able to secure a discounted price on this fabulous annual guide to everything football.

Over 1,000 pages for £14 paperback (RRP £25) or £23.50 hardback (RRP £40).

If you would like a copy please get in touch with Jon Burns and he'll place the order.

**SAFE STANDING**

CUSA Secretary Mike Heaps has really taken up and enhanced our relationship with the FSF and is due to attend another one of their London meetings shortly. Their current campaigns include Twenty's Plenty, Watching Football is not a Crime and Safe Standing.

Mike has also been making our views heard about the Checktrade Trophy!

There has also been a lot of recent noise about Safe Standing areas being created within football stadiums, with opinion surveys and suggestions being made. You will probably have seen that Shrewsbury Town is applying to install the "rail seats" and has also launched a crowd funding scheme to finance the project.

CUSA would be very interested in hearing your views on whether this would be a good thing for Colchester United to consider, and where you think the cost should come from. Please drop us a line and also have a look at [www.fsf.org.uk](http://www.fsf.org.uk) for more information.

**OPEN DAY SUCCESS and PROGRAMMES**

The downpour very kindly resisted until the final minutes of yet another fantastic U's Open Day. Great to see so many fans there again and thanks to all of you who came along to see Malcolm, Mike and the two Grahams on the CUSA stall. We raised a good bit of money on the day, with much of it from old programme sales.

We now have a massive collection of U's programmes and others from around the country, all listed on the CUSA website. Please have a look to see if there is a game, opposition or date in history that you are looking for, and get in touch. We can probably help!

Big thanks to all of you who donated programmes to us recently – Keith Blaxall and Hospital Radio to name just a few. It's appreciated.

### **CUSA CONTACT POINTS**

|                                                            |                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Post</b>                                                | Mike Heaps, Secretary,<br>18 Blackwater Avenue, Colchester CO4 3UY                                                                                       |
| <b>Email</b>                                               | enquiries@cusa.co.uk                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>CUSA Away Travel</b>                                    | Phone (7 - 9pm and please leave messages) or text<br>either Jon on 07752 531600<br>or Jackie on 07873 294146<br>or<br>Email us at away_travel@cusa.co.uk |
| <b>CUSA Membership</b>                                     | Phone Malcolm on 07901 612603<br>or email membership@cusa.co.uk                                                                                          |
| <b>Twitter : @ CUSAsupporters</b>                          |                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Facebook : Colchester United Supporters Association</b> |                                                                                                                                                          |