



SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS' TRUST

Stadium, Plasmarl, Swansea, SA1 2FA

www.swanstrust.co.uk

✉ info@swanstrust.co.uk

Programme Notes – Bristol City, Saturday 2nd September – Adam Lewis writes:

Welcome back to the Swansea.com Stadium for today's lunchtime kick-off against our neighbours from just across the border, Bristol City. This is the first of two local derbies for us in the space of a fortnight, and all eyes will be on the team after an inconsistent start to the season. But it's too early for alarm bells - Burnley won just one of their first five games last season and it turned out pretty well for them. Michael Duff is still figuring out what his best 11 is, and it'll likely be a few games yet given the number of incoming and outgoing players we have seen this summer. I'm sure most fans will have been pleased to see the end of the Summer Transfer Window, which now allows the team to knuckle down and focus without the constant speculation.

It's been an extremely busy time for Paul Watson, Josh Marsh, and the whole Football Operations team – they deserve credit for the work they have done to reshape the squad. We have brought in some very exciting players including Jerry Yates, Harrison Ashby, Charlie Patino, Josh Key, and Josh Ginnelly, who have all seen first-team action already. It's also been great to see an assured start from Carl Rushworth between the sticks.

We're looking forward to seeing what Nathan Tjoe-A-On and Mykola Kukharevych will do when called upon throughout this long and gruelling season, and we'd also like to welcome Nathan Broome, who joined as a free agent. *(With 24 hours to go at the time of writing, there may still be some further signings).*

Perhaps one of our biggest coups this summer was re-signing our skipper, Matt Grimes, to a new contract. He has been a hugely influential player under three separate managers and it's clear to see that Michael Duff also recognises his importance to the team. We shouldn't overlook how critical a player like Matty is in keeping the boys together during the tough periods of the season, as well as for everything he does on it.

Fond farewells... along with players who departed at the end of the season, it was sad to see Joel Piroe and Steven Benda depart recently – both have had a big impact for the club and personally I was a huge fan of them. However, with just a year to run on their respective contracts, it made sense for the club to cash in rather than lose them on a free transfer next summer, and I'm sure that most supporters will agree that they both represented fair deals. We wish them both well.

Swansea City relies on player sales each year to balance the books, like most clubs across the football pyramid. These deals will ease any Financial Fair Play concerns that the club has and ensure we stay out of the EFL's crosshairs for breaches, which other clubs have been stung by in the past and the punishments can be severe.

Trust in us... The Trust is delighted to see a huge majority of our members already renew for another year, as well as a host of new members joining recently. But we still need more of you to join so we get the strongest and most diverse voice possible – ultimately, we work for you, and are focussed on ensuring your views are represented at all levels of the club. **Just this week, we worked with the club to ease some of the restrictions for the away trip to Cardiff City.** This is a collaborative effort between club and Trust and is just one example of the work we do; we have a pipeline of ideas and initiatives that we hope to launch during the season to give you an even clearer voice. So, a personal plea from me – please consider joining the Trust (online or by visiting us at the Pod on a matchday) and providing regular feedback on all aspects of your experience by emailing us (supporters@swanstrust.co.uk).

Our counterpart Supporters' Trusts have been in the news this week, with Chelsea Supporters' Trust protesting the **club's decision to remove a subsidy for away travel coaches** (*which seems absurd given the money they have spent on players since the Boehly takeover*), and Tottenham Supporters' Trust organising demonstrations against ticket price increases, which will take the most expensive matchday ticket to **£103**. It's another sign that some clubs continue to operate without due consideration for fans and without a mandate for supporter representation on the Board, is allowed to happen unchecked. We stand with them as they battle for a seat at the table. We're lucky not to have that problem as a shareholder and Director of the club, but it still takes work, and that work continues every day.

Another tough game today, but hopefully one where we can get three points on the board.

Enjoy the game. *Adam*

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