



SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS' TRUST

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Programme Notes – Middlesbrough, Saturday 16th December 2023 – Paul Thomas writes:

Welcome back to the Swansea.com stadium for today's game against Middlesbrough. Things have certainly been eventful since our last home match against Huddersfield a fortnight ago.

Before we talk about today's game, the Trust would again like to thank Michael Duff for his efforts as Swansea head coach. Things didn't quite go to plan, but nobody doubted Michael's drive and determination. We wish him and his family well for the future.

Credit must also go to Alan Sheehan. He has stepped up during a difficult time and achieved four points in the process. Getting results in this league is difficult at the best of times, let alone amid such uncertainty. A shout out too, to the many fans who travelled to both games. We have some of the best travelling support in the league. Long may it last.

As I write this, the club is reportedly close to agreeing a deal to bring in a new head coach. Rather than fuel speculation, I won't touch on that heavily today. But I will say we know the club are working extremely hard to ensure whoever comes in is the right appointment for Swansea City. That will give whoever gets the hot seat the best chance of success this not just for the remainder of this season but in the longer term too.

Now, onto today's game – and it's another tricky one. Middlesbrough's form has been patchy, but they remain a dangerous opponent. I believe they are a better team than their league position suggests. After all, this is a side that reached the play-offs last year. But we have talent too, and the players will be aiming to impress our new head coach. Therefore, I'm hoping for a good game – and three points for the Swans, of course.

You may have seen the club will establish safe standing areas from next season. We know this is popular among fans and the Trust played a crucial role shaping the club's approach. This is one of many issues we will discuss with the club in the coming months as we bid to improve the matchday experience for all.

Finally, you will also have seen this week that the club released its season ticket prices for next season. Some of our supporters have since taken to social media to voice their disapproval that prices have risen. We understand that. Nobody likes price increases, but the reality is the club have taken the decision to increase prices to help balance the books. Right now, quite simply, they don't and there are significantly more costs the club face year on year than what is being generated in income. And the harsh reality is that the season tickets our loyal supporters purchase every season play a big part in maintaining one of our key revenue streams that helps support our operating costs.

That's not unique to us; nearly every Championship club is in the same boat. We know from our conversations with the club that plans are in place to boost non-matchday revenue so that there is less of a need to increase ticket prices in the future. That may not seem much of a consolation now, but rest assured that plans are afoot to put the club on a sounder financial footing.

As a Trust, our aim is to ensure that you, the fans, have the best possible experience when you set foot in the stadium. If you feel like you can contribute to that, please consider joining. You can do so by visiting us at the Trust 'Pod' (next to the club shop) on a matchday or online [here](#). It only takes a few minutes and we are always pleased to meet and discuss matters with our members and supporters.

We hope you enjoy the game today and look forward to seeing you at our last home game of 2023 when Preston come to visit on Friday 22nd December.

Paul