



SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS' TRUST

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Programme Notes – QPR, Thursday 26th December 2024 – Dave Dalton writes:

On behalf of all of us at the Swans Trust I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all our members, supporters & their friends & families our very best wishes over the festive period. As is traditional in football at this time of year games are coming at us rapidly & I'm sure Luke Williams is going to have to call upon the majority of his squad to really step up over the next couple of weeks as we look to bounce back from the disappointing performance up in Hull last weekend.

On the flip side it was a boost to learn on Christmas Eve that a new contract has been agreed with Ben Cabango. This comes after many weeks of speculation & it's great to see Ben commit himself to the Club again for the next few years.

Today we welcome QPR to the Swansea.com Stadium for our Boxing Day fixture. It'll be another tough encounter as they are on a really good run of form that's seen them move well away from the bottom three over the past few weeks. That said there always seems a slightly different atmosphere at matches this time of the year where families & friends meet up & coming along to a game or two is often part of that tradition. I really hope that can inspire the team to get back playing on the front foot again & leave us all feeling a little more optimistic as we head towards 2025.

There's certainly been no lack of drama or goals in recent games at the .com stadium. While it was back on Bonfire Night we last picked up 3 points here we've seen a further 16 goals in home encounters since then. So, while it may be exciting to some, I struggle at times to look beyond the importance of those 3 points & the impact that has in & around the stadium not just to our supporters but everyone else who are involved with the Swans. That's probably not healthy for any of us but I suppose it's just one of the reasons why we love – & sometimes hate – football.

Does age have any relevance on how Swans results can have such an impact on some of us? Quite possibly as the last few home games hasn't seemed to dim the enthusiasm of my 13-yr old son who came out with quite a revealing statement as we were leaving the stadium after the frustrating loss to Sunderland the other week. As I was trying hard to come to terms with losing a game we were winning 2-0 he said to me "It's fine Dad. I know we lost but I really enjoyed it. And I also enjoyed all the other home games we've been too recently because they are fun to come to again"

Being honest that was so refreshing to hear as earlier in the season when we were struggling to score there were times he'd be quite happy giving our home games a miss & that isn't what supporting your team is all about. It shouldn't become a chore or coming along purely as a sense of duty.

A similar story happened a few weeks previously when I arranged for my local junior football club to take up the offer of the Club's excellent Grass Roots ticketing program & 11 children came down for the seven-goal encounter against Leeds, many for the first time ever to watch the Swans. Again, I was devastated how we lost that but I got so many messages afterwards to say what an amazing day they'd all had & that they were already looking forward to "next time".

Both of these instances reminded me of when I started coming down to the Vetch as a 12-yr old way back in the 1970s, very often on a Friday evening, & just so looking forward & enjoying absolutely everything about it – win, lose or draw – plus of course the obligatory call back for pie, chips & gravy in Pontarddulais before the long journey home. Am I being melodramatic in that going along to matches in these more sanitised & opinionated times has lost some of that appeal?

So, do we sometimes need to reflect that it's not all about results which so many of us hang our weekends upon. It's more than that for our upcoming generation of supporters. It's about the anticipation, goals being scored & being in an environment where supporters come together & create an atmosphere like nothing else. And that's when you realise why football is such a huge part of our lives from the very first games we go to as youngsters right up to when we become old enough to come along with our own family & their children, especially around this time of year.

My lad is now pestering me to go to another away game in next few weeks too which, in my view, our supporters are among the very best in the Championship for the atmosphere they generate. The fixture list & inconsiderate TV scheduling gives little or no acknowledgement to the difficulties endured by our travelling fans so we felt it only right to offer a £10 discount for our supporters travelling by official coach to the Portsmouth game on New Years Day, more details of which are outlined [HERE](#).

This is just one part of what the Supporters' Trust aims to do behind the scenes to represent the interests of all fans. We are now looking forward to the New Year where we can update supporters on some of our heritage themed projects & the outcome of the most recent Matchday Experience Working Group meeting that are now held every two months to discuss all aspects of match days. Also, please keep a look out for the imminent release of our latest strategy document for our Trust members to provide their feedback on.

Here's to another exciting match v QPR but hopefully one where we can take all 3 points – if only to keep Dad happy!

Dave

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