



Christmas

1987

**SUPPORTERS
CLUB NEWS...**

VALIANTS VIEWPOINT

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Steve Dixon.

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A CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

From my position within the Supporters Club, it has been difficult to avoid the recent criticism that has been levelled at both our organisation and particular members due to articles and disclosures in the November issue of Valiants Viewpoint.

Much of the content of last month's issue has been subject to intense scrutiny, and now would seem to be a good time to defend ourselves against certain of these allegations. Firstly with regard to Mr Peter Burrowes, Press Officer, of Charlton Athletic F.C. This will no doubt be referred to elsewhere in this edition.

Secondly, the situation surrounding the publication of a 'out of date' bonus payments contract, which has resulted in a sudden and surprising change of attitude by the parent club towards the Supporters Club. This bonus contract was salvaged from the debris at the Valley by a Supporters Club member and was not stolen or copied from the club offices. Surely, if a document is so unimportant that it can be left lying amongst the rubbish at the Valley, there can be few implications resulting from it's publication. I understand these documents can be collected by the sack full in the region of the players tunnel.

The fundamental reason for the existence of the Supporters Club is, as the name suggests to support the club. This we have done time and again over the years, and most recently with the purchase of a new mini bus for the use of the reserve and youth team at a cost of £12,000, which was raised in just under a year, an achievement which never received the recognition it deserved.

The third and final matter for clarification refers to the conjecture concerning my own particular contributions to this magazine. I would like to take this opportunity to point out that all articles written by myself carry an acknowledgement.

In conclusion, it may be necessary to re-assert the SUPPORT which the Supporters Club has for the team, and also to remind all concerned that the Supporters Club has never attempted to undermine the Football Club.

Meanwhile, Valiants Viewpoint will, we hope, continue to provide an interesting and credible alternative to both the match programme and the local and national press in an entertaining and informative manner, and we hope that everyone who reads it will help in the form of letters and contributions.

- - - YOUR VERDICT PLEASE M'LUD.

Steve Dixon.

RE MR PETER BURROWES

It has been brought to our attention, that in the November 1987 issue of 'Supporters Club News', statements and comments were made in the editorial column and in an article entitled 'The Thoughts of Chairman Bill' relating to Mr Peter Burrowes the Press Officer and Programme Editor of Charlton Athletic Football Club 1984 Ltd. We now know that certain matters, in those two articles of which Mr Burrowes complains are untrue. We would therefore offer to Mr Burrowes, our unreserved apologies for any distress or inconvenience caused to him by such statements or comments. At Mr Burrowes request we have donated the sum of £150 to the Charlton Athletic Youth Team.

BAD LOSERS !

Misfit Athletic. This was the headlines, on the back page of the Newcastle Chronicle on Saturday November 28th. After risking life and limb to break free of the police escort to the turnstiles, and having a sneak view of United's new stand, I couldn't help but notice the back of this paper being read by a big 'Geordie'. Misfit Athletic, I thought, whats that rubbish about ? I then set off in search of a paper of my own, to examine the contents of the article.

Due to this venture into the unknown, I nearly missed Andy Jones goal. "Rejects from other Division One outfits", what a load of crap I thought to myself as Walshie was receiving treatment in front of the monkey enclosure at the other end. This lot of rejects has cost us close on two million pounds mate.

Newcastle aren't exactly blessed with a team of superstars, infact we made them look rubbish for most of the game. I can only think that they still havent forgiven us for giving them such a good hiding last May. On the front page of the Chronicle that well known 'Geordie', Glenn Roeder, was calling for revenge, he called it a humiliating defeat.

"What marvelous fans these Newcastle supporters are" we keep being told by T.V. and newspapers alike. Well the morons who through all the misiles at Colin Walsh certainly destroyed that myth forever.

PATRICK MUST KNOW SOMETHING WE DONT

That faithful Charlton fan, Patrick Collins, our best bet in the Sunday papers for a decent write-up, seems to be rather better informed than your average supporter. Watch this column for further developments!

ennie's

ALTHOUGH all the slings and arrows of an outrageous year Lonnie Lawrence has maintained a splendid smile and an air of desperate optimism.

But last night the smile was frayed at the edges and the optimism seemed more desperate than ever.

Even by the standards of the Charlton manager's dreadful season the latest disappointing setback had been particularly hard to take.

A goal up, the end three minutes away, and the points beckoning, still Charlton managed to squander their advantage. It was the sort of blow which drives managers to a 'black poetry'.

"one day, I shall look

Charlton 2 Coventry 2 By PATRICK COLLINS

back and see two points cast to the wind.

"I've been here five years on Monday, I've put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into this place. But it's like sand slipping through my fingers."

And nobody was offering him an argument. A grey day saw a pitiful crowd of 4,926 watching a grey match at a stadium which every Charlton director is anxious to vacate in order to return home to The Valley.

Yet it seemed that the game with Coventry might hold hope of better days, particularly in the 22nd minute when a beautifully inclusive pass from Mickey Bennett sent Andy Jones through to score.

Reality into the David Spa Peter Shirl, longe and G an efficient p.

Charlton's co with their man in the 73rd min Stuart, who has pitch for just exploited slighte

But, as Len Charlton have no idea of how to b when they have that with miste spirited into the state a her Gynn was b chance.

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MISFIT ATHLETIC!

EVENING CHRONICLE, Saturday, November 22, 1987

CHARLTON must be everyone's favourites for relegation this season.

And that makes them a team Newcastle must beat if they are to halt their depressing — if undeserved — run of home results and pull away from the wrong end of the table.

A glance down the Charlton team-sheet shows a side largely made up of rejects from other Division One outfits — a formula that can be precarious.

It worked for a while for Tony Waddington at Stoke and Lawrie McMenemy at Southampton. But, as a long-term policy it is destined to failure.

United must finish the season above teams like Charlton and three points today are essential. But Charlton can be unpredictable and they managed the great escape last season with the help of an unlikely 3-0 Bank Holiday victory against a Newcastle side that had already dramatically pulled itself clear of the danger zone in the last few weeks of the 1986/87 campaign.

Charlton have failed to build on their end-of-season flourish. Life has been a struggle again this year and they opened the season with four straight defeats. They went to the bottom of the table and have remained there since.

Manager Lennie Lawrence has long appreciated that he needed new players so, when money was available, he signed two international players, Welsh striker Andy Jones from Port Vale and Northern Ireland midfielder man David Campbell from Nottingham Forest.

Jones joined Port Vale from Rhyl in 1985 and last season he was top scorer with 39 goals. His shooting form earned him international calls last season and he won his fifth Wales cap against Czechoslovakia this month.

Campbell made rapid progress after making his Forest debut in 1983. He was in Ireland's World Cup

BY PAUL NUNN

squad a year later and collected his eighth full cap against Turkey this month.

But neither has really set south London alight though Jones has started regaining his goal touch in the last few matches.

With the arrival of two new forwards, Gerth Crooks has been fighting for a place in the side. He became a prolific scorer with Stoke City, moving to Tottenham for £100,000 in 1983. He was a top scorer for Spurs, and he also played on loan to Manchester United. Crooks joined WBA in 1986 and moved on to Charlton last season.

Middle

The midfield has undergone many changes — a symptom of a struggling side.

Robert Lee, Andy Peske, Steve Mackenzie, Ralph Hines, Steve Hines, Howard

"ANGRY 'ARRY"

Frank.Fearless....Fed up!

The Jones Boy (Andy, not Tom) may be razor-sharp around the box but he doesn't often let a blade near his chin. I reckon this is another example of Our Leader's enlightened management. Would you spend £350,000 on a player, let him train with his new team-mates and then spend sleepless nights worrying in case the lad is overcome by an overwhelming urge to end it all? As soon as the lad arrived Lennie obviously gave instructions to confiscate razors, other sharp instruments and sleeping pills. Wise move, my son! Mind you, I phoned The Samaritans the other day and told them I was a Charlton supporter...and they hung up!

Strange people you meet in these parts. I was waiting for a 75 bus the other day (what's new, I hear you ask) and this weirdo in a red, white and blue scarf came up to me and asked what I thought of The Eagles. Great, I replied, I've got all their LP's. Funny bloke.

Still, if nothing else, coming to Selhurst Park has broadened my mind. I'm on Volume VI of Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. It's all about Constantinople with it's "swirling vortex of conspicuous and dynamic barbarians". Those Leeds' fans get around, don't they?

Whilst I was standing here the other night, something struck me. (No, it wasn't a Sainsbury's trolley). Years and years I stood on the East Terrace at The Valley with sunny, cloudless afternoons and crisp, dry evenings with the sweet, sweet scent of the sugar wafting over from Tate and Lyles at North Woolwich.... I miss that beautiful smell. And now what? Rain, fog and even a hurricane. Conclusive proof that Charlton and SE25 are not meant to be. If the Lord had meant Charlton to play at Selhurst Park he'd have given them webbed feet (and made them as ugly as Jim Cannon).



VALIAHTS VIEWPOINT

Rumours, rumours, rumours.... I'm sick of 'em. Will we, won't we go back to The Valley (or end up in Milton Keynes). Mind you, I'm not one to spread stories but I was talking to a bloke in a pub whose mate lives next door to a man whose second cousin swears that he saw Maurice Bonham buying a packet of grass seed in Woolies. Hmoo, makes you wonder, dunnit?

I've told my missus what to get me for Christmas: a pair of Angler's Waders. Well, have you tried using the Gents at The Sainsbury's? End?

Talking of my beloved, I'm not in her good books at the moment (as I ever, I hear you ask). All I said was I was going to football with three 'mates' and she said if that's what I get up to down here, then she'd hide my season ticket. Richard Branson's got a lot to answer for!

Do you know how the Sined Cup got it's name? I reckon it's because it does seem odd that anybody would want to turn up to watch!

Finally, a little festive warning if you're in my neck of the woods:

Christmas is coming,
The goose is getting fat,
If you knock on my door singing Xmas carols,
I'll feed you to my cat.


(I've got a dog really but it didn't rhyme.)

Peace and Love,

'Arry

TO PLACE YOUR AD
ON THIS PAGE PHONE
0322 614387

Off the Post



Dear Valiants Viewpoint

As the author of 'Charlton's Long Good Friday' I felt compelled to reply to your editorial which appeared in the last issue of the Supporters Club newsletter. After watching Charlton for some 22 years I feel as qualified as anyone to write about the club. The copy was compiled, typed and the illustrations selected by me in something under three weeks. Considering I work full-time in London and canvass with the club's lottery tickets at least two nights a week, I, at least am satisfied with my efforts on behalf of the club.

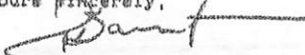
The printing errors contained in the handbook were beyond my control. Because of the tight deadline, the handbook had to be ready for sale at the Manchester United game, no proof reading of the final typeset copy was possible. To date some 100 copies have been sold, resulting in a profit of £1,300 for the club. Certainly, previous handbooks were full of statistical details and adverts, but this publication was devoted to just one season, the clubs return to the First Division. Besides, to enlist the expertise of a professional statistician would possibly have cost around £400.00.

For someone so obsessed with 'getting the facts right' your editorial is packed with mistakes, I can only assume you never watched many games from the East Terrace. True, the facilities could hardly match old Trafford, but there are many grounds in the First Division with exactly the same problems. Or didn't you stand in the pouring rain at Highbury, Fratton Park and Upton Park? Correct me if I'm wrong, but I seem to recall refreshment stalls at both ends of the East Terrace plus a mobile fish and chip van and toilets at the top of the terrace.

I find this constant criticism of the Chairman and the Board of Directors extremely annoying. If it had not been for Mr Fryer and Mr Collins it is doubtful if there would be a Charlton Athletic, at the Valley or Selhurst Park. The club have enjoyed a promotion winning campaign, a Wembley final and this is our second season in Division one.

With the team struggling at the foot of the table they need all the support possible from those with the best interests of the club at heart. Lets' start seeing some in the next newsletter.

Yours sincerely,



P. Barratt.

VALIANTS VIEWPOINT

Dear Valiants Viewpoint

I have been a Charlton supporter all of my life, but over the past 20 years or so I have not been going to the matches. Then whilst visiting relatives in Yorkshire at the time of the Fly-Off's, I saw the highlights on T.V. of the game against Leeds at St Andrews. I can't describe my joy when Charlton won, it almost led to divorce! Since then I have come to realise how much I miss supporting Charlton and have, as a result become a season ticket holder. My wife has been along to quite a few of the matches and enjoyed them. I do believe I have converted her to a Charlton fan.

It has been disappointing that the results have not been good, but by and large the football has been entertaining and the problem seems to be putting the ball into the net. I am sure the players are giving it the best they can, and in Lesnie Lawrence, Charlton have the best manager in the league.

My best wishes to your endeavours both now and in the future.

Yours faithfully
F. Coanore
Woodlands Way
Southwester
West Sussex.

Dear Valiants Viewpoint

I enclose a completed questionnaire and congratulate you on another excellent Supporters Club News. I am also letting you know that I and 9 other supporters in the Hayes and West Wickham areas have formed a Hayes and West Wickham Supporters Group and have held an inaugural meeting. We hope to run the occasional social event and if things progress, I will keep you informed.

Yours sincerely
R. H. Redden
26 Kingsway
West Wickham
Kent.

FACE TO FACE

Face To Face has been held over for this issue due to the injury to Colin Walsh, who was to be the player interviewed. We were unable to arrange another interview at short notice.

The Supporters Club wish Colin all the best and a very speedy recovery from his injury.

CHARLTON QUESTIONNAIRE

THE VERDICT

Included in the last edition of Valiants Viewpoint was a questionnaire designed to provide an insight into the way Charlton supporters feel about a number of subjects, one of which was Selhurst Park.

To begin with, may we thank all the people who bothered to send in a reply, but all in all the response was a bitter disappointment.

We were not expecting to be flooded with replies, but perhaps the response is indicative of the apathy with which people view Charlton Athletic.

The replies we did receive represented a wide range of ages, although it was interesting to note that when asked the question 'how long have you been a Charlton Supporter?' 86% of people ticked the ten years plus box, which illustrates that everyone should have the interests of Charlton at heart.

Only 10% of people polled were not members of the Supporters Club, and exactly half of the replies indicated that their authors travelled regularly to away matches with the S.C.

Only one person who returned the questionnaire admitted to not being a regular visitor to The Valley. The young lady in question had only begun to follow Charlton at the end of the 1985 - 86 season, but despite the fact that she had never seen a football match at The Valley, she would prefer to see the club playing there. Could there be a moral in that somewhere?

All but seven per cent of people polled confessed to being regular visitors to Selhurst Park, and all of the supporters who do travel over there do so for more than half the matches in a season, although numerous people commented that their attendance was under protest.

The question regarding where most people would like to see Charlton play brought a predictable 93% vote for The Valley, although 23% of those suggested another ground in Greenwich if The Valley could not be used.

The Greenwich alternative was first choice for three people, and, believe it or not, one person actually chose Selhurst Park as a second option. Strangely enough, there was no name on this form, but the reason given for the Selhurst choice was one of distance. This was the only form returned to mention Selhurst in answer to this question. Not one reply listed it as the ground where they would most like to see Charlton play. Mind you, I would have been extremely surprised if anyone had favoured it.

The next question, regarding individual actions brought some interesting comments, but a very disappointing 47% admitted to not having done anything to let the board know of their feelings.

Of those who did take action of some sort, many expressed disgust that their letters either received an uninformative reply or no reply at all. Amazing to think really that the people who expect us to turn up regularly will not even respond to our letters.

The next question concerned the performance of the Supporters Club in presenting a case for return. Forty per cent of those polled thought that the S.C. was mounting it's campaign badly, and the same number chose the reasonably well option. A mere 20% considered the Supporters Club to be presenting a good case.

However, when asked the next question 'does the S.C. represent the members views?' a rather contradictory figure of 69% felt that their views were represented.

The next two questions provoked the really interesting comments as everyone suggested how best to alert the parent club to our feelings, and how also to improve the Supporters Club, if dissatisfied.

Just about the most popular idea was a complete boycott of a chosen 'home' fixture and arranging to hold a meeting of some sort at a time to coincide with the match. Mr Dave Walker of Abbey Wood went one further with his suggestion of encouraging as many fans as possible to come to a game and then walk out one minute after the kick - off.

A number of people were of the opinion that the Supporters Club should sever official links with the club, enabling us to mount a more vigorous campaign. Mr Rick Everitt of Welling described the efforts of the S.C. to date as "a dialogue with the deaf."

There was an overwhelming feeling of mistrust in the board evident in many of the replies. Mr Brian Gray of Basingstoke even went so far as to suggest that "it would have been better to go into liquidation and save all the frustration now being experienced."

Another opinion that received a fair amount of support was that of blocking all cash donations to the club, something which I, personally, have been in favour of for a long time.

One or two people also thought that we should be represented on the board of directors, but we have already had such a request turned down after it was first muted at the A.G.M back in October.

However, the most trumpeted course of action remains a complete boycott of a 'home' game. There is certainly food for thought here. Would a boycott work? Could enough people be persuaded to stay away from Selhurst for a day? Would the media coverage necessary to make any action a success be forthcoming? Bearing in mind that some people will go to the game no matter what, what size crowd could be expected at a pre - arranged meeting?

How low would the attendance figure at Selhurst have to be for our efforts to be termed as a success? Hugh Parsons of Edenbridge wrote; "crowds of less than 2000 for a First Division game would force the club to take the views of the supporters seriously."

Therefore, the question is should we be looking at the possibility of a match boycott? (I suggest Oxford on 26 March) If you have not already informed us of your opinion - now is the time.

Last word goes to Mr D.Troy of Bexleyheath who wrote; "the board are quite happy to sit back and rely on the general apathy of Charlton fans in the hope that the issue will go away. It won't" -- And let us make sure that it doesn't.

Valiants Viewpoint

by
Steve Dixon

THE DECLINE AND FALL

Just how far our club has fallen was brought home to me recently whilst watching the football results one Saturday afternoon on Grandstand.

When the First Division league table appeared on the screen, Desmond Lynas referred to Charlton propping up the division 'as always'.

Unfortunately, this type of ridicule is becoming all too frequent for my liking. Recently, we were afforded a mention on Brush Strokes when Jacko, on learning that this brother had caused a great deal of damage during a fit of rage, remarked; 'were Charlton playing at home last night?'

And surely what turned out to be the ultimate indignity occurred on that most popular of soap operas, Eastenders. Dirty Den, on entering the Queen Vic only to find it practically empty, was heard to comment 'it's about as full as a Charlton home game' an obvious reference to some of the pitiful attendances we have been attracting recently.

It is a great shame that the name of Charlton Athletic does not command a little more respect, as it once did. I wonder if those days will ever return.

SWEET F.A

Best news of the last couple of months has got to be England's qualification for the finals of the European Championships in West Germany next summer. And apart from simply reaching the finals, the manner in which we qualified was a great boost for the game.

A successful national side can only be good for the game in England, and for this reason, I believe it is imperative to allow the England manager the time he needs to prepare his players properly.

There are a number of tough friendlies in the months leading up to the finals against teams such as Holland and Scotland, and it is vital that the Football Association and the Football League get together to postpone the League fixtures before these games. The England players were together for a week prior to their victory in Yugoslavia, and look at the difference it made to their performance.

And while on the subject of the F.A, just whose idea was it to even consider the possibility of allowing the F.A.Cup to be taken over by commercial sponsorship.

The F.A.Cup is the greatest club competition in the world and is above such vulgarities, and to even suggest that it could be backed by Fosters lager shows an extraordinary lack of responsibility on the part of the F.A.

Alcohol is a product that is indirectly responsible for much of the more unsavoury aspects of our national game, and should a brewery ever get their hands on the cup, then the F.A would be guilty of not giving a XXXX.

Alternative Football Network

Although to many of you, the words 'alternative football network' will mean very little, regular readers of 'Off the Ball' will know precisely what it is I am talking about.

The alternative football network is the name given to the rapidly expanding business of independent supporters magazines similar to ourselves, which provide a different view to the national football press and are unique in the fact that they are written for the supporter by the supporter.

Many of these magazines now carry details of each other, presumably in an attempt to widen the scope of each particular publication, and as we have been mentioned on a couple of occasions, I feel that we are obliged to do the same.

We shall start with the daddy of them all, the aforementioned Off the Ball. Although by no means the oldest of the independent magazines, it is probably the most widely known, and in my opinion, at least partially responsible for the upsurge in interest in this type of thing.

Off the Ball is not concerned with the affairs of any specific club, and as such is able to give a balanced and well thought out opinion on a wide range of football topics, although almost always coming down on the side of the ordinary fan.

Pay particular attention to the campaign waged against 100% membership schemes, and anyone else in general who attempts to restrict the rights of the ordinary fan; ie - you and I.

OTB is available from P.O.Box 851, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6PD, at a price of 40p plus 20p postage.

When Saturday Comes is not unlike OTB in that it deals with football in general as opposed to any one team. It too contains a rich blend of humour, constructive criticism and praise where due, and it also receives 10 out of 10 from me with regard to appearance, as both layout and printing quality are excellent.

WSC is a good buy at 35p, and can be obtained from 12 Sutton Row (3rd Floor), London, W1V 5FH. Enclose A4 size SAE.

Moving along to the individual club offerings, check out West Bromwich Albion's Fingerpost. It is without doubt the most professionally produced of all the club fanzines I have seen, containing actual advertisements and real photographs!

The one thing I disliked about Fingerpost was the WBA match reports; obviously of little interest to anyone except Albion fans.

However, it is well worth a read at 40p. Write to 19 Ashville Drive, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 32D. Add 20p for postage.

The last magazine to get a mention in this issue is 'Not The View', Celtic fan's answer to the club newspaper, 'The Celtic View'.

A common theme amongst most fanzines is supporters grumbles with their club (take us for example). I would have guessed that Celtic fans have few complaints, but that just shows how wrong you can be, and Rangers fans should steer well clear of this publication. Of all the fanzines I have seen to date, this is my favourite. Note especially the series 'they embarrassed the hoops' in which Celtic's most infamous players are recalled. We may pinch this idea in the near future.

Not The View is available from P.O.Box 306, Glasgow, G21 2EA. 70p inc postage is expensive but I reckon that it's worth it.

In our next issue, we hope to review offerings from Notts Co, Arsenal, Wealdstone and York. All these publications can be obtained from Sportspages in the Charing Cross Road which also stocks Valiants Viewpoint.

GOING HOME

Saturday 14th November 1987 was not a particularly notable day in Charlton history, and most fans will recall it as the day we slipped further adrift at the foot of the table by losing to Watford.

However, for this particular Charlton supporter, that Saturday a few weeks ago was quite memorable, for I went back to The Valley.

I've looked in a few times since the emotional farewell against Stoke City, but I'd never had the time to wander around, and some of the things I saw astonished me.

Let me begin this trip down the proverbial memory lane in the North Stand. We always referred to it as the Covered End, but it is currently in great danger of being re-named 'The Uncovered End'.

Large chunks of the roof were dislodged in the recent storms and the sunlight shines through the gaping holes onto the debris that lies below. The walls of the North Stand are absolutely covered in graffiti, but, that apart, the stand remains in reasonably good condition, especially considering the fact that it has been virtually untouched for over two years.

After strolling round behind where the clock once stood, I stopped for a moment to survey the area that sparked off all the fuss in the first place.

Once, it was a car park, now it is a desolate slab of grey concrete littered with broken glass and lumps of wood. A number of the refreshment huts surrounding the car park now lie in ruins, testimony to an arson attempt.

Turning to face the Main Stand, I stopped to take a picture of the scarred rear wall, which some idiot had set alight.

On entering the stand, I made my way first of all to the directors box, reduced practically to charcoal, presumably by the same vandal who tried to burn down the stand in the first place.

Quite a few famous names have sat in The Valley dug-outs in the sixty - six years up to 1985, but anyone sitting there now would see his ankles disappear into the collecting weeds and scattered rubbish.

I was unable to venture up the tunnel as the door has been firmly barricaded, therefore what lies inside the battered shell of the West Stand remains a mystery. The executive boxes at the rear of the stand sit barren and empty with the shattered glass just waiting to crumble onto the seats below.

Of the three stands, this is without doubt the one that has fared the worst from the two years neglect. Many of the seats are literally falling away from their steps and there are enormous holes in the floorboards revealing accumulating litter.

Next stop was the south end of the ground, the Jimmy Seed Stand. This stand is the newest building at the ground, having been opened as recently as 1981, and to be truthful, little has changed since the day it was opened.

The one noticeable change in appearance that is hard to avoid is the accumulation of twenty - six months of pigeon droppings which cling to the seats and steps of the stand.

However, unlike the Main Stand and the Covered End, the Jimmy Seed Stand simply requires a thorough scrub down to be ready for use again.

Unfortunately, the same can not be said for the East Terrace, which can just about be located beneath the weeds if you try hard enough.

Particularly on the lower half of the terrace, the weeds have taken over, but the upper reaches of the vast bank are relatively free of plant life.

From the top of the East Terrace, the view is as spectacular as ever, offering an unparalleled panorama across Greenwich and South East London towards the City.

The East Terrace can also boast, if that is the correct word, perhaps the most astonishing sight anywhere in the ground. Sitting astride the path that separates the upper and lower halves of the terrace at a point roughly adjacent to what used to be the halfway line sits a bush that can only be properly described as a small tree. I would guess that it stands approximately ten feet high and is of a similar width. It will take more than a determined fan with a trowel to shift this, let me tell you.

By picking a way through the undergrowth to the fence at the bottom of the terrace, one is confronted with surely the most heartbreaking sight of all. The pitch, which we looked upon with such pride and was played on by some of the greatest names in football, is enough to bring tears to the eye.

The waist high weeds away in the wind like ears of corn, and in some places they are so thick that access to certain areas of the pitch is almost impossible.

Even the running track around the touchline is infested with weeds and rubbish. Indeed, were you to remove the terraces and stands you could be standing on a remote highland somewhere north of Aberdeen. It was hard to stave off the overwhelming feeling of anger and bitterness that engulfed me as I stood on the turf that I truly considered hallowed only to see it overgrown with weeds as far as the eye could see.

Numerous advertising hoardings lie in tatters around the pitch and there is even an old shopping trolley resting in front of the Covered End (a Sainsbury's trolley no doubt !).

I was somewhat puzzled by the length of the grass in certain places. When viewed from above, it becomes apparent that the grass running along the East Terrace touchline is nowhere near as long as the rest. I am unwilling to suggest that the grass has been cut, but without a better explanation, that would appear to be the case.

The Valley today is in a sorry state, but it is by no means irreparable, which I fear cannot be said about the damage that has been done to our once - mighty club by our two years in exile.

Don't get me wrong, I am not suggesting that football could be played there next week but season is not out of the question if the situation is quickly resolved. We must simply wait in the hope that there is an undercurrent of truth in some of the recent speculation, and perhaps then this proud stadium will witness the much - awaited return of the club to which it belongs.

S.D

THE CHRISTMAS Special SPOTLIGHT ON THE PRIVATE LIFE of Steve Dixon (who ?)

Full Name ; Steve 'scoop' Dixon

Birthplace : Unsure as of dubious parentage

Birthdate : That would be telling

What is your favourite article of clothing ? My Crystal Palace tee shirt - I never go anywhere without it.

Who is your most famous friend outside football ? Ron Noades

What subject did you dislike most at school ? P.E - because we used to go to Crystal Palace to play squash.

Who would you most like to meet ? The person who takes Charlton back to The Valley.

What, if anything, frightens you ? Missing the last train from Norwood Junction.

Which television programme do you always switch off and why ? Match of the Day because Jimmy Hill's on it.

Which day of the week do you dislike most ? Saturday's (!)

What do you want for your birthday ? A ground

Did you get any O Levels ? Failed English Language seven times.

What is the biggest risk you have ever taken ? Writing this article.

Have you ever been mistaken for anyone else ? The Elephant Man.

Do you have any recurring dreams ? Charlton returning to The Valley.

S.D

Christmas Special

CHRISTMAS QUIZ 1987

Via two coach tickets to the away game of your choice. Answer all the questions and return them to the address below by the 23rd January. The first all correct card opened on the 26th January will win the prize.

- 1/ Name the scorer of Charlton Athletic's first ever league goal away from home ?
- 2/ Name Charlton's first ever league victory, outside London.
- 3/ Charlton have scored 5 goals against one club, on three different grounds. Name the opponents and the grounds ?
- 4/ What is the highest aggregate, of goals scored in a first division match involving Charlton ?
- 5/ Which player other than Andy Jones, was signed from Port Vale ?
- 6/ Name the four clubs, Charlton have scored 6 goals against in a first division match ?
- 7/ Name Charlton Athletic's most capped player.
- 8/ During the 1-11 defeat at Villa Park on the 16th Nov 59, Willie Duff had to leave the field due to injury when the score was 1-6. Which two players had a spell in goal after this ?
- 9/ During the 1957/58 season, Charlton scored 107 league goals. In which other season did Charlton score 100 or more league goals ?
- 10/ Name Charlton Athletic's best ever victory against league opposition in the F.A.C.

Answers should be posted to 93 Vaylands, Swanley, Kent, BR8 6TH.
Please enclose a daytime phone number.

Questions compiled by Paul Ellis, a member of the Association of Football Statisticians.



CLASSIC OWN GOALS

NUMBER ONE

Welcome to a brand new page in Valiant's Viewpoint which we hope will become a regular feature, although that depends entirely on the reaction we get from our readers.

We have nicked this idea from the independent magazine 'When Saturday Comes' and they have been inundated with correspondence.

To kick - off the series, I would like to recall a match at The Valley (where else) at the beginning of the 83 - 84 season.

The campaign had started well for Charlton with two wins and a draw, but one thing particularly relevant to this tale that should be taken into consideration is the fact that in those three games we had not conceded a goal.

Visitors to The Valley on a mild September day were Sheffield Wednesday. The Owls were eventually to fill one of the promotion places, but for the first thirty minutes of this game they were under pressure.

Just after the half hour the deadlock was broken. Charlton Steve Downman was making only his second home appearance and had yet to endear himself to the home fans. Needless to say, he did little to further his cause thanks to his prominent role in the first goal we conceded that season.

In a moment of madness that still haunts many a Haddicks follower, our new centre - half turned on the edge of the centre circle to face his own goal, and spotting Nicky Johns on the edge of his area, Downman sent the ball sailing in a graceful arc over the baffled goalkeeper and into the net, without a Wednesday player in fifteen yards.

Despite this setback, Charlton recovered to gain a point in a 1 - 1 draw thanks to a Derek Hales penalty, but that game will live forever in my memory for one of the finest own goals I've ever seen.

I am sure that many of you can recall spectacular own goals such as this, so why not put pen to paper and send them to the address on the inside front cover.

S.D

WHITE HANKY LANE

Following Terry Venables recent white handkerchief treatment at Barcelona, he was obviously grasping at straws in his after match interview, which was shown on T.V. at half time during the Coventry , Arsenal game. Tel Boy could only comment on a scrappy match and Tony Parks lack of teeth, and that he didn't think the Spurs deserved to lose. He had completely forgotten to mention the numerous chances Charlton had during the game. Trevor Brooking was even heard to say that "when you are down, you don't get any luck". Don't we know it!

Any way 'Tel Boy' the last team Charlton beat sacked their manager the following week. "Come on you Spurs".

QUIZ REPORT

The quiz team have made a very encouraging start to the season, winning three of their first four matches. The first game of the season was played at the Hemmingford Arms, and resulted in our only defeat to date, 43 - 53 by London Plymouth Argyle. Our next opponents were London Celtic who were soundly beaten 51 - 28. At the Valley Club, Romford were next to receive the treatment, 42 - 21. Romford actually include a few Charlton fans in their side. At Griffin Park, Charlton beat Brentford 35 - 28 to record our best ever start to a quiz season.

Paul Stubberfield is proving to be the star of the show with a very impressive 23 points out of a possible 36 available in the individual questions.

| DATE | OPPONENTS | F- -A | VENUE |
|----------|-------------------|---------|--------------|
| 12/10/87 | London Plymouth | 43- -53 | Away |
| 5/11/87 | London Celtic | 51- -28 | Away |
| 9/11/87 | Romford | 42- -21 | Valley Club |
| 26/11/87 | Brentford | 35- -28 | Griffin Park |
| 11/01/88 | London Meadowbank | - - - | Valley Club |
| 25/01/88 | London Plymouth | - - - | Valley Club |
| 22/02/88 | London Celtic | - - - | Valley Club |
| 7/03/88 | Romford | - - - | Away |
| 21/03/88 | Brentford | - - - | Valley Club |
| 21/04/88 | London Meadowbank | - - - | Away |

Matches at the Valley Club get underway at about 8.15pm and supporters are most welcome to come along.

PROGRAMMES WANTED

COLLECTOR BUYS;

PER-1945 Charlton Athletic programmes required. Also Handbooks and other Charlton memorabilia.

TELEPHONE 01-302-9143 (Evenings only) ask for Mike.

THE WELSH CONNECTION

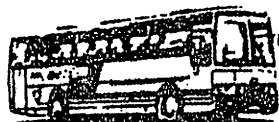
Gareth Davies of Holyhead is compiling a Welsh International's Who's Who, which he hopes will be published by the Association of Football Statisticians. Gareth is looking for some information on the following Welsh Internationals who played for Charlton. The type of information required is, Type of player, present employment, whereabouts now and if applicable, date passed away.

CYRIL DAVIES 1970's, TREVOR EDWARDS 1957, G. GREEN 1938/39
J. PUGSLEY 1930's, H.G. TURNER 1937-40.

Information to G.M. Davies
27 ST SERIOUS CLOSE
HOLYHEAD
GWYNRDD
VALES LL65 1RD



TRAVEL NEWS



| DATE 1989 | VENUE | FARE | TIMES | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | | | BX | BB | VEAPOX | AH |
| Fri 1st Jan | Man Utd | 29.00 | 08.00 | 07.45 | 08.15 | 08.30 |
| Sat 9th Jan | West Ham | 29.00 | 12.30 | ----- | 12.45 | 13.00 |
| Sat 16th Jan | Nottingham F. | 27.00 | 10.00 | 09.30 | 10.15 | 10.30 |
| Sat 6th Feb | Q.P.E. | 23.00 | 12.15 | ----- | 12.30 | 12.45 |
| Sat 27th Feb | Arsenal | 23.00 | 12.30 | ----- | 12.45 | 13.00 |
| Sat 8th Mar | Darby County | 26.00 | 09.30 | 09.00 | 09.45 | 10.00 |
| Sat 19th Mar | Southampton | 25.00 | 11.30 | 11.30 | 11.15 | 11.00 |
| Sat 2nd Apr | Sorwich City | 26.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 09.45 | 09.30 |
| Sat 9th Apr | Coventry City | 26.00 | 10.00 | 09.30 | 10.15 | 10.30 |
| Sat 30th Apr | Everton | 28.50 | 07.30 | 07.15 | 07.45 | 08.00 |
| Sat 7th May | Chelsea | 23.00 | 12.30 | ----- | 12.45 | 13.00 |


- KEY BX . . . Boxleyheath in Albion Road behind Marks & Sparks
 BB . . . Bromley South Station
 VE . . . Eltham Well Hall at the roundabout
 FOX . . . Fox Under The Hill public House in Shooters Hill
 AH . . . Anchor & Rope at junction with Woolwich Road in Charlton

PLEASE NOTE all fares and timings are subject to alteration.

ALL FARES SHOWN ABOVE ARE FOR MEMBERS ONLY membership and I.D. cards must be produced when booking either coach or train.

NO ALCOHOL IS ALLOWED ON EITHER COACH OR TRAIN TRAVEL.

Due to lack of people booking, the Catford pick up has been dropped. We apologise to the few people who did use Catford but it was not proving a very good idea going to both Bromley and Catford on a Saturday morning as coaches were being delayed in the traffic. Since the start of the season Bromley pick up has been very well supported and we will continue with this.

BY TRAIN TO MANCHESTER UNITED, 1st JANUARY 1989  British Rail

Train departs Euston, 10.19am arrives Verrick Road 13.55pm

departs Verrick Road, 17.35pm arrives Euston 19.32pm

Fare £13 members £14 non members. This is a B.R. sponsor train.

BY TRAIN TO NOTTINGHAM FOREST, 16th JANUARY 1989

Train departs St Pancras 11.40am arriving at Nottingham at 13.45pm. The return journey departs Nottingham at 17.27pm arriving back in London at 19.32pm. The fare is £10 for members and £11 for non members.