



NEWCASTLE FALCONS SUPPORTERS CLUB
13TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY 11 JUNE 2009
MINUTES

1. Introduction: Appointment of Chairman of the Meeting

The meeting began at 19.30hrs and Harry Sharp was appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

There were 27 members in attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from:

Dan Darbyshire, Emma Peagam, Jane Hanley, Kevin Nergaard, Graham Pilkington, Nick Tonge, Carol & Andrew Lambert, Jack & Jonquil Stewart, Ken & Mark Lockerbie, Maxine Phillips, Julia Bradley, Gerry Camozzi, Jim & Margaret Ord, Michael Humphrey, Shirley & Chris Pollard, Alison & Barry Robson, Gemma Robson, Janet & Ian Fraser, Tommy Cleveland.

It was noted that all papers for the meeting, including the Minutes of the Twelfth AGM, the Chairman's Report, the Treasurers Report, and details of election candidates had been made available to all Supporters Club Members in advance of the meeting, having been posted on the website and members notified by email of their availability. Copies had also been printed and were available at the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Twelfth AGM held on 12 June 2008

The Minutes from the Twelfth AGM were agreed as accurate by the Members, and signed off.

4. Chairman's Report for 2008/2009

Martin Peagam presented the Chairman's Report for the 2008/09 season, summarising the key points as:

Financial Position: The key aim for the past two years had been to ensure that the financial affairs of the Supporters Club were under control. This had been prompted by the financial situation reported at the end of the 2006/07 season when the accounts showed a loss of £4,152, of which away travel costs accounted for £2,975. At 31 May 2009, the accounts showed a loss of £1,163.62. Although this was worse than at the end of the previous season, when there was a loss of £290.96, the loss was attributable to known factors, including reduced Membership income, the costs of a major website update, and investment in merchandise that would be sold in 2009/10 to recover income. The Committee was satisfied that the financial affairs of the Supporters Club



were under control, as evidenced by away travel, which in 2008/09 had almost achieved a break-even position for the first time in seven years, with the loss per coach reduced from £228.50 two years ago to £6.68 in 2008/09.

Membership: The Chairman noted that the Supporters Club had attracted 207 members in 2008/09, a reduction from 379 the previous season. This was disappointing but the consensus of opinion amongst the Members that this was possibly due to the performance of the team.

Away Travel: The Supporters Club had provided coaches to almost every match as long as they had been deemed viable. At the same time, the losses incurred from coach travel last year had significantly been reduced. This was due to hiring smaller coaches where necessary and seeking competitive quotes for each away trip. The Supporters Club had benefitted from the decision of the Chairman of the Falcons to fund coach costs for two away games (Bristol and Harlequins). Martin thanked Steve and Tony for their efforts.

Social Programme: There had been a number of Talk-Ins, a Christmas Party, a 'Brive on TV' night, a Celebration of Northumbria night, a pool tournament, a North v South quiz and a Tom May testimonial quiz night, which had all been well attended and had raised money for various charities (see below). Martin thanked Emma, Helen, Tony and Margaret for their efforts in organising these events.

Communications: The Committee was trying very hard to keep in touch with everyone. The website had been redesigned and although this had been at a cost, was felt to have been wisely invested for the future of the Supporters Club. The Supporters Club regularly contributed to match-day programmes and produced a 'Flyer'. Margaret had developed the ezine distribution to keep people informed of events and activities. It was particularly pleasing to report that the Review was now being produced again. In 2007/08 the Supporters Club had been unable to produce a Review due to cost and the loss of printing support. This had been addressed and was now being produced "in-house" by Margaret: two Reviews had been published so far, with another was almost ready for distribution in the next couple of weeks.

Supporting the Players: The Supporters Club had continued to present Player of the Month Awards, and despite the loss of sponsorship from Living With The Lions, had presented Annual Awards, and had made a number of special presentations during the year, to Matt Burke, Mick Hogan, and Richard Metcalf.

Charity Activities: The Chairman reported that thanks to the generosity of Supporters Club Members almost £2,500 had been raised for charities.

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking all of the outgoing Committee members for their dedication and hard work over the previous year, and also thanked his family for being so patient with him.



There were no questions on the Chairman's Report, which was accepted by the Members present.

5. Treasurer's Report for 2008/2009

Unfortunately, the Treasurer, Kevin Nergaard was unable to be present for the meeting, so in his absence Martin Peagam presented the Treasurers Report for the year ending 31 May 2009.

The key points highlighted by Martin were:

1. The accounts showed that the Supporters Club had made a loss of £1,163.62 compared to a loss of £290.96 the previous year.
2. The coaches only lost £6.86 per coach in 2008/09 as opposed to £88.67 in 2007/08 (and £228.50 in 2006/07).
3. Membership income had reduced by £1,373 compared to the previous year.
4. Charity donations totalled £2,446.27.
5. Sponsorship income of £500 for the Player of the Month awards had been withdrawn, but a new sponsor was being sought.
6. There had been an investment of £638.50 in the website and of £225 for the purchase of merchandise for re-sale in the coming season.

The Chairman and Committee Members responded to questions from the meeting:

- In response to a question as to why there had been a loss on the Christmas party, Margaret explained that unfortunately people book for the event, the Club require the invoice to be paid in full before the event and then those who have said they will come, do not, leaving the Supporters Club to foot the bill. It was suggested that everyone pay a non-refundable deposit for any social, and it was agreed that this would be considered for the next season.
- In response to a question about player-sponsorship, the meeting was informed that the out-going Committee had already agreed to sponsor only one person next season, Rob Miller.

There being no further questions, the Treasurer's Report was accepted by the Members present.

6. Membership Fees

The meeting was advised that Membership numbers (and income) had reduced compared to the previous year. Whilst the team's performance was possibly the key



factor in this situation, it was conceded that membership-recruitment hadn't been the priority for the Committee over the past season, a matter that would be addressed for the coming season.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Committee was proposing that Membership Fees remain unchanged for 2009/10.

The Chairman informed the meeting that it was intended that the new Committee would review Membership Fees, and the structure of membership, early in the next year, so as to be in a position by January 2010 to put forward proposals for any changes to apply in 2010/11. He also advised the meeting that Supporters Club Members would be invited to contribute to this debate.

The meeting accepted the proposal that the Membership Fees for 2009/10 remain as in 2008/09.

7. Election of Committee Members 2009/2010

The Chairman of the Meeting informed those present that there were eight members wishing to stand for election to the seven Committee positions.

The Chairman of the Meeting also informed those present that a number of Supporters Club Members had opted to exercise proxy votes, either via himself as Chairman of the meeting or through other Members present at the meeting.

The members standing were:

Margaret Smithurst
Emma Peagam
Martin Peagam
Kevin Nergaard
Helen Roberts
Michael (Tony) Shaw
Stef Walter
Steve Richardson

Votes were cast and counted by appointed tellers (Stephen Tolfrey & Les Milne).

While the votes were being counted, Martin held a quiz amongst the members covering the past season. The winner of a bottle of wine was Stef Walter who got 42 out of 45 questions (plus a tie-breaker) right!



The elected committee for the season 2009/2010 was announced by the Chairman of the Meeting, Harry Sharp as:

Margaret Smithurst
Emma Peagam
Martin Peagam
Kevin Nergaard
Helen Roberts
Steve Richardson
Stef Walter

8. Any Other Business

1. Concern was expressed at the absence of the Treasurer. Whilst it was accepted that this was unavoidable, and that all relevant papers had been made available in advance of the meeting, it was agreed that every effort should be made by all Committee Members to attend the AGM. The Treasurer could be contacted for any queries relating to the Treasurers Report.
2. It was suggested that every member who wished to stand for Committee should be present at the AGM. In response it was stated that it was not always possible for everyone to get to the meeting due to other commitments (which were not of a voluntary nature). This eventuality had been addressed this year by photographic pen portraits being made available in advance of and at the AGM.
3. The Chairman of the Meeting, Harry Sharp, informed those present that the Supporters Club had donated £550 to assist with the Players changing room to be revamped and refurbished, a project that he had co-ordinated. The work was complete and those present were invited to inspect, after the AGM, what had been achieved.
4. Concern was expressed by those present at the image presented by the Clubhouse, which was more of a social club than of a rugby club. It was suggested that the Committee make representations on this matter to the Club as the Supporters Club had no influence over this.

There was no other business and therefore, the outgoing committee were thanked for their hard work over the last season and Harry Sharp was thanked for acting as Chairman for the meeting.

The meeting closed at 21.00hrs.