

## **BIAS re-launched with a bang!**

BIAS has been re-launched and is attracting members and significant media interest. We have had a very encouraging first few weeks so far as getting opinion in the Press is concerned and made ourselves known to the key journalists around Brentford. With your input, BIAS can voice an independent opinion via local and national newspapers so be heard!

Already BIAS has been quoted in respect of the possibility of a new stadium in The Brentford, Chiswick & Isleworth Times and in The Hounslow Chronicle regarding Ron Noades' recent comments referring to some fans as "morons" and "idiots". We aim to keep the voice of Brentford fans in the media spotlight.

To be taken seriously, BIAS needs to have regular contact with the senior management at the Club. The first step was taken by John and Edmund in January when they had the first of what we hope will be many productive meetings with **Gary Hargraves, Managing Director of Brentford**, who welcomed BIAS as a group and stated he will always be open to our opinions. It's good to know we have friends in high places!

## **Who's who in BIAS?**

Four Brentford supporters have taken over the running of BIAS with the aim of establishing it as an active Association.

**Chairman John McGlashan** is a Products Training Manager for a telecommunications company. **Edmund Paton Walsh**, a market research professional is responsible for Secretarial and membership duties. Management consultant **David Merritt** is a qualified accountant and naturally takes the position of Finance Officer. **Russell Owen** is a computer support manager and produces this Newsletter.

No one will make a profit or career out of BIAS. As you know, the bank account into which you pay your monthly subscription is held with Midland Bank. All expenditure is approved in advance by at least 2 committee members, and all cheques bear two signatures. It is particularly important to the credibility of BIAS that we assure you that your subscription will go towards the objectives of BIAS.

## **How you can help**

In addition to life-long Bees fans, to re-launch BIAS, wives, girlfriends and children of the committee were "persuaded" to lend a helping hand. But with the campaigns we expect to address in the coming months, we'll take all the help you can give. Your regular support of BIAS and opinion is always welcome. But how about standing outside Griffin Park with a questionnaire taking the opinions of other Bees fans? We aim to represent as many people as possible so opinion is not limited to members only. Or you could sponsor a BIAS activity.

This Newsletter costs us all money to produce, but is an essential element in keeping members up to date with current events. Will you sponsor an issue in return for some free advertising? Qualified people will be needed to understand the implications of the new Club structure - can you help? If we're not doing what you want, tell us and help us. BIAS is in its infancy and will doubtless suffer some growing pains, so lend us a hand.

## **What does BIAS stand for?**

You tell us! Everyone has an opinion and is entitled to have theirs heard. At this early stage, we have already spoken with a number of members to poll opinion of recent events.

An example of this is the feedback regarding Ron Noades' comments about "morons" and "idiots" barracking players. Since we were distributing the membership leaflets 3 days after Ron's comments; we were well placed to take your views. It was from this that we were able to make a valid comment in the press the following week. But this is not only what BIAS should be for.

There are major issues facing Brentford FC in the coming months and they are likely to shape the future of the Club well into the next century. These again are the issues we believe you want to take up with the Club.

## **Griffin Park**

Home to Brentford since 1904, but by today's standards, Griffin Park is more than showing the signs of wear and tear. Better facilities and basic creature comforts have been called for over many years, yet none of the changes to Griffin Park have been made after asking what we the supporters want. Ron Noades says there is no future in Brentford without a new stadium and he may well be right. Hounslow Council has carried out a feasibility study during the last 5 or 6 months but we the fans have yet to have a say. The study was expected to cost £60,000. That's a lot of money to spend on something that will never score a goal or keep the rain off of your head. BIAS doesn't yet know what you the supporters want, but we aim to find out! Expect a questionnaire on the subject very soon. One thing is certain, if Brentford fans do want a modern new stadium (which will mean a move from Griffin Park) then we will all have to play an active part in making it happen.

## **The structure of Brentford FC**

Almost hidden in the Club's match-day magazine for the Hull City game was an announcement that Brentford FC had been restructured, "Brentford Football and Sports Club PLC becomes Griffin Park Stadium Ltd., whilst the Football Club will now trade as Brentford FC Ltd.". What does this really mean?

This may well be to allow the expected £1.5million loss for this season to be off-set against tax in the Altonwood group, but it is a fact that Brentford FC no longer owns Griffin Park. Consider the current plight of Brighton, Wimbledon and now Crystal Palace. And now think about what could happen to Brentford FC should Ron Noades sell the Club.

There may be no difference between Brentford and the homeless just mentioned. Furthermore, as one BIAS member pointed out, Noades said "everything I spend is a loan from me to the Club". We need to know the true intentions of Ron Noades, not the emotional post-match reaction after a poor result and some crowd abuse.

## **BIAS monthly prize draw**

As evidence that BIAS has been well received by Gary Hargraves, the monthly prize draw will take place on the pitch during the half-time interval of Brentford home games. We are delighted to announce the first BIAS prize winner is John Edwards from Buckinghamshire. The winning ticket was drawn during the half-time break of the home game versus Peterborough. Congratulations John, enjoy spending your voucher.

### **Prize draw rules**

Please note the rules of the draw are:

All members whose subscriptions have been received for the month will be eligible for the prize draw, except committee members. If, for any reason, subscriptions are received late, the member will not be entered for the draw. However if the subscription is subsequently received they will be given an additional entry to the following month's draw. The draw will be made at an appropriate home game by either a current or former Bees player, or whoever the committee feels is appropriate. The winner will be announced at the game (where possible) and notified that they have won. The winner's name will also be published in the following month's Newsletter.

During the close season, the committee will make alternative arrangements for the draw. The committee's decision on all matters relating to the draw is final.

## **It's good to talk!**

Some of you don't actually know us yet you've been good enough to join BIAS. We want to meet you, to speak with you, to understand what you want, and for you to understand how together we can support Brentford FC. This Newsletter is one means of communication, but it is no substitute for a two-way conversation. So, we will be coming round the pubs before home games to meet people. A questionnaire has already been mentioned and we'll be sending one of those out soon. We will call you at home to get to know you and arrange to meet.

Look for us in the Griffin before the Halifax game, the Bricklayers before the Swansea match, the Princess Royal before the Plymouth game, the Royal Oak before Leyton Orient and the New Inn before the game against Exeter City. We'll be wearing our BIAS membership cards and so shouldn't be too difficult to find.

And finally, BIAS and this Newsletter are for you, the true Brentford supporter, so if you want to express a view or have any news for a future edition, please feel free to contact Russell Owen on 0385-768852 or at the BIAS postal address.