

BIAS AND THE "NEW STADIUM"

For a number of months, BIAS has tried to open an effective and informative two-way communication channel with Hounslow Council. BIAS members and officers alike have called, written and e-mailed the Council, with little or no response. Last week, BIAS in a Press Release said:

'Recent press reports have suggested a number of obstacles have appeared in the way of Hounslow's stated aim of building a modern multi-purpose stadium in the borough by May 2002.

However, despite attempts by BIAS to communicate with councillors, fans are still in the dark. Dave Merritt, a spokesman for BIAS, said,

"It is essential that fans are involved in this process. Brentford Football Club is a valuable part of this community and the council should act now to calm fears that it will be forced to move away to places like Oxford or Reading." '

This was answered as follows:

'Statement re BIAS Press Release on Possible Stadium

Nothing has changed. The Council is still awaiting the outcome of the Feasibility Study that will report on possible sites for a stadium and the financial viability of building and running it on those sites. It will also report on the issues relating to green belt restrictions and transport access that affect one possible site, the land close to the junction of the M4 and A312. As has always been stated, such a stadium would be a multi purpose facility and not solely for the use of Brentford FC.

Councillor Connelly, the new Leader of the Council, made it clear at the last Council Meeting (confirmed afterwards in a press briefing) that there are many detailed and complicated issues to consider and it is essential that the Council takes its responsibilities extremely seriously. Wherever possible, it must ensure that its approach as a planning authority remains independent and objective.

Councillors will, therefore, want to wait for the outcome of the feasibility study, look at all the issues very carefully indeed and consult with the local communities affected before deciding how to proceed.

We are not, therefore, in a position to give any categorical statements or assurances one way or the other at this stage.'

Now, in addition to offers of help to Gary Hargraves by BIAS, we have requested a meeting with Ron Noades with a view to the positive advancement of this project. We know that recent press reports have raised serious doubts over the council's commitment to a new stadium and these have been echoed by a number of you. At this time we feel more is to be gained by continued diplomatic communication than outright protest and these efforts have now been stepped up. We will pursue this path until it is completely exhausted but should that time arise, you will be the first to know.

BIAS AGM and Open Forum

We hereby give formal notice that the first BIAS Annual General Meeting will take place at 11:00hrs on 25th September, 1999 in the Cinema Lecture Hall of The Watermans Arts Centre, Brentford. We will start at 11:00hrs and following the presentation of the Annual Report and election of BIAS Officers, the AGM should close and we will immediately follow with an open forum for members to air their views on any subject they wish. Since this date coincides with a home game, the meeting will be closed at 13:00hrs, and re-convened at a later date if appropriate. You will all have received a copy of the Association rules when you joined BIAS, but in summary please be aware of the following: Any BIAS member is eligible to stand for election as an Officer, the positions being Chairman, Secretary, Finance Officer and Newsletter Editor. Nominations must be

received in writing by the Secretary no less than 7 days before the AGM, with the name of the Candidate, Proposer and Seconder. To offer any candidate the best opportunity of election, each person will be allowed to submit and present their credentials to members prior to voting. Any other business items will be added to the Agenda so long as they are received in writing by the Secretary no less than 14 days prior to AGM. Please feel free to begin sending in nominations or AOB items now!

BIAS - The supporters association for Brentford

In the Oldham matchday magazine the following announcement was expected to be made:

"Membership of Brentford FC no longer includes membership of the Brentford Supporters Association (BSA). This also means that season ticket holders and Lifeline members are not automatically members of the BSA either.

The committee of the BSA are proposing to no longer operate a membership scheme at all. This means that BIAS is now the only association of supporters for fans to join. The away travel scheme and blind commentary will continue to function as before."

Win a free away-day to support the Bees

To kick off the new season, we are looking to carry on building our membership and who better to help us with that than you - our members? As we are sure you will all agree, the more members BIAS has, the stronger it is. So why not ask a friend to join? Does the person who sits or stands next to you belong to BIAS? If not then why not ask them to join? In the five months since we re-launched, we have successfully established BIAS, produced five newsletters, held five prize draws - with £200 worth of prizes to date - and built a very positive relationship with the club. Just think what we could do if every member persuaded one other person to join. So please find a friend to join and you will be entered for a prize draw to win an away-day trip for two to watch Brentford. The prize is two match tickets plus supporters coach fares to the game (subject to a maximum of £40 and ticket availability). You can choose whichever away league game you want. The draw will be held at the same time as the October monthly draw (maybe you could be a winner twice on the same day?!) and you will have as many entries to the draw as people you sign up. So if you persuade five people to join BIAS you will be entered five times into the draw! To enter, please ask your friend to use the form enclosed with this newsletter and write your name and membership number at the top of the form. If you need more forms, feel free to make copies. The deadline for entry to the draw is 2nd October (i.e. the membership application form (s) must have arrived at BIAS by that date).

BIAS Monthly Draw

July's winner of the BIAS monthly prize is Malcolm Harrod, whose name was drawn by Chairman John McGlashan at the BBQ after the Portsmouth friendly. Congratulations Malcolm, the voucher is on its way to you.

Predict The League prizes

The deadline for entry to the Predict-The-League competition has now passed and we can reveal that the monthly prize will be £12.50, with the end of season winner netting £50. Good luck to those entered - particularly anyone who said Brentford would win a successive Championship!!

Park Life anyone?

As you may be aware, Brentford featured in two Radio 5 documentaries titled "Park Life". The first was broadcast on New Year's day, the second after the end of the season. Of course not all Bees fans heard these broadcasts but many are still eager to hear what was said. If any Bees fan has a recording of either programme and are willing to lend their tape to a fellow supporter, please contact BIAS and we will put you in touch with the deprived!!

BIAS BBQ

As publicised, BIAS held its first summer BBQ after the Portsmouth friendly at the Pottery Arms. Our thanks to all who attended and landlord Michael Hewett for putting on the event.

5-a-side league

The last edition of The Bee asked for someone to co-ordinate a BIAS 5-a-side league. To date there has been no volunteers. If this is still the case by 31st August, this issue will be dropped. However, if you can donate some time to this, please contact us.

BIAS now has a fax!!

BIAS can now receive faxes, the number being 0870-088-6654. This service has been set-up via the Internet site <http://www.faxme.co.uk> at no cost to BIAS, but please note the charge to the sender is national call rate. Simply send a fax in the usual way and the ISP will forward the content to our e-mail account. Anyone with Internet access can create a fax account in this way.

Unless otherwise notified the normal pre-match optimism and post-match inquests by BIAS committee members takes place in The Pottery Arms, so turn up if you want a chat about any Brentford related issue.