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SWANSEA SA1 3HT
0792 - 476189

SUNDAY 24TH APRIL 1994

depart :

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Morrison - 8.10

Cwmfelin - 8.10

Swansea Library - 8.30

bring refreshments
but strictly no alcohol
return straight after match

Bookings are being taken at The ~~Wembley~~
~~public house~~ (Lower Oxford
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between 7.30 - 9.00pm as well as prior to
and immediately after home matches. For
further info telephone (0792) 799990 or
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front design

TEE SHIRTS

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JACKS INVASION OF WEMBLEY
APRIL 24th 1994



back design



CONGRATULATIONS



To Andrew and Envis on the birth of their daughter Angharad on 2nd March.

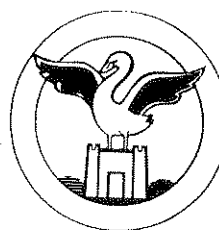
To Adrian (wheel trim) and Lynette on their engagement on 18th March.

To Harold (Dad) and Sharon on their wedding on 19th March. Has anyone else
been to Wycombe on honeymoon?

The JACK



ISSUE SIX
APR 94
50p



Swansea (0)1 Cardiff (0)0
Penney 67 (pen) Att: 3,711
Swansea City Freestone, Jenkins, Clode, Ford, Harris,
Pascoe, Bowen, Penney, Torpey, Cornforth, Hodge. Subs:
Jones, Chapple, McFarlane.
Cardiff City Williams, Brazil, Searle, Aizelwood,
Baddley, Perry, Wigg, Brock, Bird, Griffith, Fereday.
Subs: Kite, Millar, Richardson
Referee V Callow (Sotihull).

Swansea	35	10	7	2	32	16	3	4	12	15	31	50
Brighton	39	8	7	4	28	20	4	7	9	18	33	50
Blackpool	40	11	2	7	36	30	4	2	14	26	34	49
Rotherham	37	8	3	8	30	29	4	6	16	20	27	45
Huddersfield	38	5	7	6	18	24	6	5	9	22	28	45
Pulham	39	6	5	9	18	20	6	3	10	27	35	44
Cardiff	35	8	5	4	29	19	2	6	10	19	36	41
Exeter	37	6	7	6	32	29	2	5	11	11	33	35
Hartlepool	40	7	3	10	25	30	1	6	13	11	35	33
Barnet	39	3	5	11	18	26	1	6	13	17	46	28



**don't you just luv it
when that happens**



Welsh soccer
history made

Wycombe Wdres.....1 Swansea City.....0
(Swansea win 3-2 on aggregate)



WEMBLEY STADIUM

An Independent Swansea City Fanzine

INSIDE : Questionnaire * Getting Social * Shut the door * Eddie May

The JACK

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PLEASE NOTE :

The views expressed in this fanzine are not necessarily those of the Editor, Swansea City Football Club, The Independent Travelling Swans, Friends of Swansea City Football Association or Swansea City Supporters Club. They are those of the individual contributors.

SUBSCRIBE :

Ensure you don't miss a copy. Five issues will cost £3 inclusive of postage. So don't be a Cardiff fan, remember smart folk subscribe.

MATERIAL :

The Jack always needs loads of new material, so if you have any articles, cartoons or comments please send them in. Anyone who has sent in material, thanks, if it is suitable it will appear soon.

LETTERS :

The Jack also wants letters for it's Jack-Mail slot. Got something to say, then get writing.

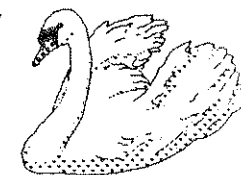
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Issue 4 - 2 copies left at 50p + sae
Issue 5 - 8 copies left at 50p + sae

NEXT ISSUE :

Issue seven will probably be available at the Fulham home game on May 7th.

The JACK OPINION



Welcome to, and thanks for buying issue six of The Jack. As you flick through these pages you will notice a considerable improvement in the quality of the typeface. This is thanks to a new laser printer.

Apologies for the spelling mistakes and errors in the last issue. That's what happens when a fanzine is finalised at two o'clock in the morning before it's sent to the printers! It will not happen again, we hope! Thanks to everyone who wrote in with letters and articles for this issue. The fantastic response is clearly visible in the four page Jack-Mail column. Keep writing though, we always need fresh material, whether it be letters, articles or cartoons.

The end of the season is approaching and with it the end of the first series of The Jack. However you won't be able to get rid of us that quickly. There is still one more issue due out before the last game of 1993 / 94. Issue seven will be available at the Fulham game on May 7th. The Jack is not planning to release an edition for either the Autoglass Final or the Welsh Cup final (if we get there).

As part of the end of season formalities, The Jack is conducting a questionnaire. The four page yellow question sheet is enclosed in the middle pages of this issue. There will also be another 500 copies circulated to Swansea fans who do not buy the fanzine. Therefore the survey is possibly the biggest ever conducted amongst Swansea City fans in recent years. It will give you, the supporter, the chance to register your opinions on a number of specific topics. It is for this reason that it is very important that as many people as possible complete and return the questionnaire.

The answers which you give to the survey will be published in the May edition of The Jack. The findings will also be sent to Doug Sharpe at Swansea City Football Club. The questionnaire will give Sharpe a clear representative picture of the supporters views on a number of important issues. How the club acts upon the questionnaire will be monitored closely by The Jack.

GETTING SOCIAL

David Corcoran believes it is time that the Swans had a social club, even if only on a temporary basis.

With the demise of so many public houses in the vicinity of the Vetch, surely now is the time for the Swans to obtain their own Club house.

Swansea City must be one of the few clubs in the entire football league who haven't got their own social club. A successful social club can generate much needed income for any club, and there are many Rugby and Football clubs who benefit enormously from their social clubs. Just one example. Crewe Alexandra generate so much revenue from their social club, that it covers the clubs entire running costs!

A social club becomes a focal point for all supporters on match days, but can also be used throughout the year, helping to bring in much needed income over the summer months.

I am sure the breweries who own the empty pubs in the Sandfields area would only be too happy to lease one of them to the Swans. After all, at present they are deriving no income

from a closed pub and it would be in their interests to see at least one re-opened. With Chairman Sharpe in the building trade, it would not prove an insurmountable task to convert one of the disused pubs into a social club.

As well as housing a base for thirsty fans on match days, it should have a function room which could be hired to the supporters clubs and also to other outside organisations. A well run social club would have no end of possibilities for making money for the club. Weddings, Christenings, and other gatherings, the list for which a club could be used for is endless.

I realise with the talk of a possible move from the Vetch, Sharpe may be a little reluctant to commit the club to anything over a long term in the Vetch Field area. However, this is why leasing a pub would be such a good idea in the short term. I am sure any brewery would be willing to discuss a short term lease, which could be re-negotiated should the club decided to stay at the Vetch.

An opportunity is there for the club to do something for the fans, and also to make much needed money, which could be used for future team building. Doug Sharpe should grasp the opportunity now, and turn a disused, abandoned pub into a flourishing and much needed social club for the supporters.

Last One Out Of Swansea Close The Door Please

Wembley will be a historic and emotional time. Dai Richards remembers.

Swansea City have reached Wembley for the first time in the clubs history. It will be a day to remember for everyone and that's why I believe over 22,000 of us will be at Wembley on the historic day.

It's taken until 1994 to achieve what up till now has been the impossible dream. Men such as Ivor Jones, Joe Sykes, Billy Hole, Roy Paul, Ivor Allchurch, Mel Charles, Mel Nurse, Mike Johnson, Herbie Williams, Harry, Alan Curtis, Jeremy Charles and Dean Saunders all failed to take the Swans to the twin towers. I've mentioned these names just to bring home to supporters how much this day should be enjoyed, remembered and treasured.



As the team runs out, recall the ghosts of the past; the oh so narrow misses of 1925 and 1964, and the grief those two losses caused to supporters. Wembley

has been that infamous pot of gold to us at Swansea for years. Now the time has come don't be afraid to shed a tear over it, pinch yourself and accept the reality, that Swansea's team is there.

Football has been a tribulation as well as a triumph to us in the years since 1966. Financial crises, historical promotion campaigns, Welsh Cup wins, FA Cup disasters, crowd problems, location debates all have been perennial visitors. Yet, the game remains; eleven visions in white on a green field chasing a white ball, chasing our most sincere hopes and aspirations.

And, what if 15,000 haven't seen Swansea play two consecutive games since 1979, we all feel for and support the same team. How many not with us today would have done everything in their power to have made the journey if able. Listen to the echos on Sunday afternoon, for they will be with us.

For just one moment maybe the soul of Swansea will be 180 miles away in London. If you are the last to leave on Sunday morning -24th April 1994, close the door behind you, lest the bairns and pets follow us.

In memory of
Herbert Trevor Hughes
1914 - 1993
Wish you were here

Last week's Swansea City - Cardiff City derby will doubtless be viewed as a great success by many in authority. There was little, if any, crowd trouble inside or outside the ground. There was no damage to the Vetch or to any shops, buses or trains in Swansea.

Judging by this lack of incident, it is possible that the South Wales Police will recommend that all future Swansea - Cardiff clashes are all-ticket and visiting supporters are barred entry. That would be a very difficult scenario to argue against. The Police are employed to keep public order, and with that regard, they did their job very well on Saturday 2nd April. It would only be natural for the police to push for the policy to be adopted at all football derbies in South Wales.

This so called success is not the answer to the problem. Football at this level is a spectator sport. Take away a large section, or even all, of the supporters, and the event has no meaning. Fans of both sides have the right to watch their team. Football is all about the people that watch the game. If the clubs decide to ban visiting supporters from each respective match, then there is little point in playing the game at all. If these spectators are barred over a number of years, the result could be lost revenue and financial problems which could eventually mean the football clubs closing down.

Many would actually argue that closing the football clubs down is the only real solution anyway. That is not the case. Hooliganism is the problem of society and government, not football. Football is only a device used by trouble makers. Take away the football and another outlet would be found.

The JACK

Opinion Extra

DEAD DERBY

The answer is not to bar fans, but to control fans in an organised and structured, yet civilised, manner. Somehow a strategy for bringing visiting supporters in and out of the Vetch / Ninian, without incident, must be found.

There must be complete co-operation between the two clubs and the Police. Any hope of creating a trouble free environment will be ruined if one party decide on a stupid policy, like locking 3500 tickets in a safe.

Arrangements must be made months, not days, in advance. If it is decided to make a game all ticket, that should not be announced four days before the game is scheduled to be played.

In future all Swansea City - Cardiff City matches should be all-ticket games for both sets of supporters.

Tickets for home supporters would only be allocated with some kind of identification that can prove you support the home team. This might take the form of a membership scheme.

Visiting supporters would be allocated a very limited number of seats together with terrace tickets. Sales would be on a one person - one ticket basis, therefore allowing

people to buy only one ticket.

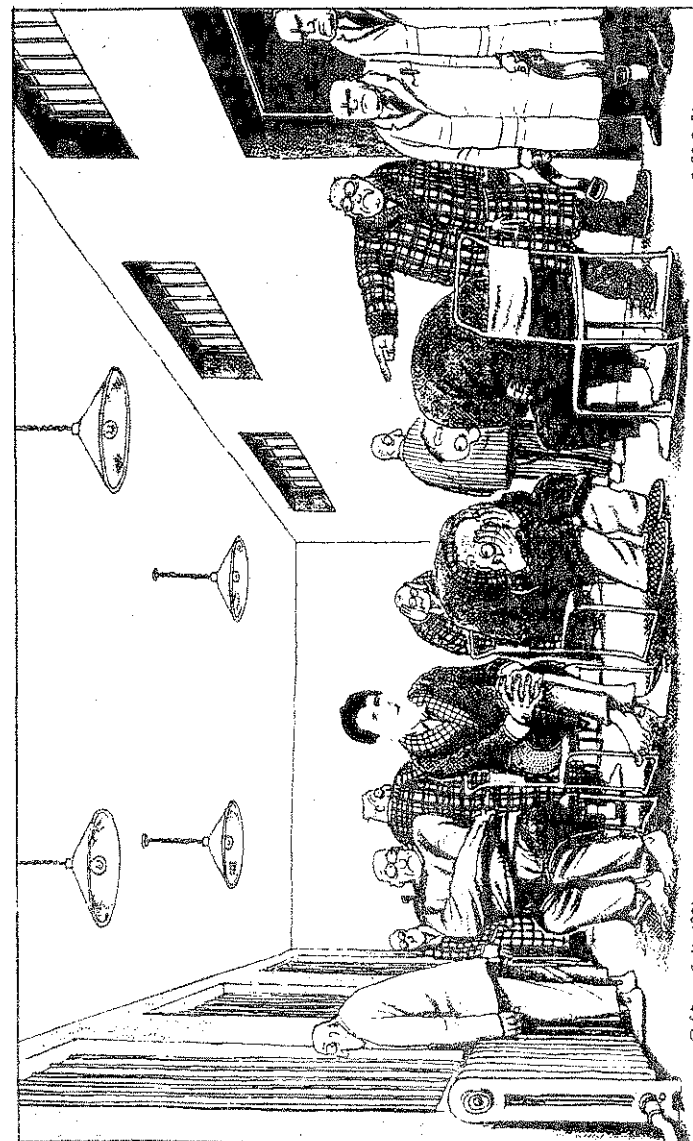
All visiting supporters would only be able to buy a match ticket if, at the same time, they buy a ticket for an organised coach trip to the match. At the time of booking, only the transportation ticket would be issued to the fans. The match tickets would be held by the clubs until the day of the game and then distributed to the organised coaches. These match tickets would then only be issued to the fans as the coaches arrived in Swansea or Cardiff. Fans would then be escorted from the coaches direct to the match venue.

The police and clubs would know precisely how many fans are travelling. No alternative transport would be permitted and police would refuse entry to fans attempting to by-pass this system. Barriers would be put in place to stop people without tickets accessing agreed areas.

After the game is finished, the visiting fans would be escorted directly back onto the coaches and moved immediately out of the city, in the same way that they arrived.

Admittedly, under this strategy, the visiting fans are treated like sheep. Surely it is better to be treated like sheep, rather than not see the game at all.

"the person who organised ticket sales for wembley?... that's the guy you want over there."



WEMBLEE

Every Jack knows that Swansea City will make their historic first visit to Wembley on Sunday 24th April 1994. A dream come true for everyone associated with the club past and present. It will be a great day for Frank Burrows and his team, but more importantly it will be a fantastic day for the clubs fans who have had very little to cheer in the last ten years.

Whatever happens for the rest of this season and in any other season, lets make it a day to remember. Lets make Sunday 24th April 1994 the day when the Jacks stormed Wembley with noise and colour. The flags and the singing were impressive at Wycombe, but come Wembley, and you ain't seen nothing yet!

With that in mind, an appeal to all Jacks. First, wear as much Swansea City gear as possible, preferably the white home jersey, so that we can create a sea of white (or Zebra!) behind one goal. Second, find all those scarves, flags and banners which have been up in the attic gathering dust since 1982. Third, bring as many loo-rolls, balloons and pieces of confetti as you can lay your hands on. Finally, and most importantly, bring your voices.

One thought on the singing. Obviously we are going to make it loud, but special consideration must be given to 'God Save The Queen'. If they only play that anthem then might I suggest that all Jacks sit down and sing nothing. If they play the Welsh National Anthem as well then stand and sing your hearts out. If however the Football Association, in all it's wisdom, decide not to play 'Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau', then the Jacks should stand and sing it anyway, just like the Welsh Rugby team did at Lansdowne Park this year.

If anyone has yet to get a ticket for the big day (?), allow me to give one small piece of advice. Make sure you get a ticket in the top tier at Wembley. It doesn't matter whether you are planning to go behind the goals or opposite the centre line, do not sit in the lower section of seats. The view from there is crap. Because the seats are so low compared to the pitch, it is difficult to see the other side of the ground. The angle of seats also means you get a great view of the back of the head of the person sat in front! Anyway, whatever you do, get there early and just soak it up.

Wembley. Wembley. We're the famous Swansea City and we're going to Wembley.

Richard Adams

RADIO TIMES

With the much celebrated demise of James Lewis and the relegation of Tony N to backroom boy, the faithful souls at the Vetch looked forward to good times on the old overhead crystal set at the Vetch. By May 1992 the old booming system had gone along with such over used tracks as Will Downing's 'A Love Supreme', Match of the Day, Soul II Soul and prior to the teams' arrival the incredibly crap 'A Team' theme.

So by August 1992 Swansea City supporters looked forward to new sounds floating over the Vetch airwaves. Boy were we to be disappointed; for the entire length of last year we had to put up with a Eunuch sounding halfwit whose catchphrase is 'Shout for the Swans, c'mon North Bank'. This year the idiot adds 'Boing, Boing, Swansea City' to his repartee.

It really makes you grimace, what exactly can away supporters think of us, Swansea folk! The situation is truly hopeless.

The music has also got steadily worse too. So far this season, we've had Match of the Day, the odd Radio Two type music, Mr Blobby and Ace of Base. Mr Eunuch's only redeeming stint came at the Port Vales Autoglass game, where he brought back memories of 1979/90 Division Two Tosh's Black and White Two Tone Army, with an airing of the Beat's 'Cant get used to losing you'.

Since then things have got decidedly worse and the depraved and despicable DJ (degenerate Jack) has played Elton John. How dare he, we had three years of Watford causing us grief; I don't wish to be reminded of then by their depraved ex-chairman.

In the words of that grand old band 'The Police' fronted by Sting, I'm sending out an SOS. Flood Radio Vetch with requests, decent songs from a bygone era or even more recent songs. The more music he plays, the less airtime 'degenerate Jack' has. Send those requests in now folks!

Dai Richards

IS THAT ALL WE TAKE AWAY

Keith Haynes of GITS
despairs at the lack of
away supporters at
Reading last month.

I shouldn't be surprised should I? Tuesday 22nd March 1994 - Wycombe Wanderers verses Swansea City, and our travelling support tops 2500. Saturday 26th March 1994 - Reading verses Swansea City, and I estimate no more than 325 Jacks behind the goal in glorious sunshine.

Okay, financially, it is hard to find £30 a time to follow the Swans away from home (every game is away for me), but I cannot believe that out of some 2500 Swansea fans present at Wycombe, 2175 couldn't afford a trip to Reading.

What were you doing the day the Swans played Reading? (Watching Leeds United actually - Ed!!) -you couldn't have been watching Man Utd on the tele, in fact you couldn't have been watching Man Utd at all. Were you actually going to Wembley to watch them the following day, and couldn't afford two trips and chose the Coca Cola Cup Final instead. Then pity you. It proves a point that the nutters who follow Swansea City at irregular intervals are not supporters of the club, but drunken manifestations that in time will almost certainly cost Dougie £30,000.

It's pleasing to see buses and coaches from all over Wales follow the team to the big games such as West Brom last year and Wycombe this year, but where are they when it really matters. Rumour had it that a lot of supporters stayed away from Reading in fear of being arrested for last years troubles or just to avoid a repeat of last year. This shouldn't bother the real Swansea City supporter as he or she is only there to enjoy themselves and watch the Swans play. Any involvement with the local constabulary should only be limited to asking directions to the ground or a good pub.

Wembley looms and we have a 30,000 ticket allocation which the club is confident it can sell(?). If this is the case, why cannot one third of these individuals turn up at the Vetch and make the difference between one point and three. All of us on the English side of the Seven Bridge who travel regularly to Swans games will again have to pull out all the stops to obtain tickets for this glorious occasion. I only hope that some idiot who regularly wears a Man Utd or Villa top instead of a proud Swans top doesn't deny I or any of my travelling companions the chance of a good Wembley ticket, for his yearly Swansea City outing - and if he does that I do not have the pleasure of meeting him!!

GITS

Gloucester Independent Travelling Swans

Travel to games with other Jacks from the South Midlands,
Gloucester or Avon areas. Telephone for details:

Keith, Gloucester (0452) 864850
Jonathon, Tewkesbury (0684) 297599
David, Cirencester (0285) 640752

With a bus arranged for Wembley.

If you are the type to read aloud, then for your sake and mine, whisper this, because I must confess to a grudging respect for Eddie May, manager of our most bitter rivals – Scum City.

The respect, and I suppose admiration I have for the man, goes back to the days when Eddie May was a domineering Centre half for the Swans in the pre Toshack era. He had been signed by that Swans legend Harry Griffiths, and was a solid uncompromising defender.

My respect for the man has nothing to do with his performances on the pitch. No, that respect goes back to the day when a mate and myself travelled to see the Swans at Watford. The match and result has faded into the mists of my memory, but I do recall the incident after the game, for which I shall always be grateful to Eddie May.

With the match finished, we made our way to where the one and only Swansea supporters coach was to pick us up. There were about eight or nine of us making our way through the lanes, alleys and allotments which surround Vicarage Road, when a gang of Watford fans decided they might like to give us a kicking. Having being a devout coward all my life I didn't relish the prospect of a ruck, and neither did my colleagues who realised there were more of them than us. So we broke into a fast walk, which soon developed into a run, only to find when we rounded the next corner to where our coach should have been, that it wasn't. However the team bus was parked, and when we stopped anxiously at the door, who should get out to see what the commotion was about, but good old Eddie May.

There is, and certainly was then, a fair size on the man, and at the time he looked like a colossus filling the doorway of the coach. When we explained our predicament, like a good 'un, Eddie May got off the bus, and calling out in that strange cockney like accent, he advanced towards the Watford fans, who had come to a halt about twenty yards from us. Now whether it was the size of this giant approaching them, or whether they thought we had decided to make a fight of it, I do not know, but what I do know is that Elton Johns' Rent Boys turned and legged it as fast as they could.

With his good deed for the day done, Eddie May just laughed and got back on the team bus. Ever

David Corcoran has... erm... something to say about...

EDDIE MAY

since then, I have had this gratitude and admiration for the man. So when the next time, the chant goes up – "We hate Eddie May, I said, we hate Eddie May", you will understand why I can't take part in it!



*eddie may,
then again, eddie may not,
take the bluebirds down?*

*answers on a £25,000 receipt
please mr rick wrong.*

Shorts.....Shorts.....Shorts.....Shorts.....Shorts....

CARROTS

According to the excellent and long established Bradford City fanzine, The City Gent, when Bradford visited the Vetch in September, their fans came armed with special gifts for Torpey. When they arrived on the West Terrace, their fans remembered with great affection how Torpey had entertained them at Valley Parade, and left presents. They shoved carrots into the fencing at the front of the terrace, much to the bewilderment of our clueless stewards!

HEMMLING LAGER

A quick poser for any alcoholic Jacks. Does Hemmling Lager actually exist anymore? You know the stuff, that well known beer that has been advertising itself on the top of the Centre Stand for the last goodness how many years. Have you bought a pint of this amber nectar in recent weeks? Tell us about it.

FENCE SWIMMING

So the Bluebirds have got their Ayatollah, but we've now got Fence Swimming. Yes it's officially been voted as the maddest way to celebrate a football goal anywhere in the world. And yes it's been developed and perfected by a few mental cases down the front of our very own North

Bank! The idea is that when we score a goal, you leap up on the North Bank fence in the normal manner. Instead of trying to invade the pitch you just tense those stomach muscles and swim on the top of the fence! Eventually with chronic stomach cramp you drop off the pace, and hope the f*@k that Bowen isn't in the mood for a hat-trick.



TOP NEVILLE

There was a fair amount of criticism of Neville Southall after he was seen wearing a Cardiff City goalkeepers jersey in the recent Welsh International against Norway. The referee would not accept the standard Wales goalkeepers jersey, because the colour (black) clashed with his own shirt. Obviously it is pretty hopeless to have expected the Welsh FA to provide a change of kit in case such a situation

arose. The only choice of goalkeeper's top at Ninian Park, just before kick off, was a Cardiff City jersey. Neville was forced, against his wishes, to wear it. So why didn't anyone have the common sense to simply suggest to Neville that he turn the offending jersey in-side-out. The colour would still be green (believe it or not!) and the many non Cardiff fans watching in the crowd and on the television would not have been offended at seeing the 'South Wales Echo' logo and Bluebirds badge in a Wales match.

LOVE

Long after it's demise, 'Love, Peace and Swansea City' has found fame. The now defunct fanzine name got a brief mention in 'The Independent' newspaper. The paper had an article in it's February 14th edition about organisations which use 'love' as part of their theme. 'Love, Peace and Swansea City' got a brief mention. In fact the article stated "...a splendidly named organisation in South Wales called Love, Peace and Swansea City." This fame started a heated debate amongst the editorial team as to which name is best for this fanzine, 'The Jack' or 'Love, Peace...' What do you think? Would you like to see a return to the old name, or do you prefer the current title?



BORING, BORING ARSENAL

Having been to Plymouth ... oh! ... too many bloody times in recent years, I decided to take a break from Home Park in 1994 and seek my Saturday afternoon pleasures away from the Swans. A severe crime I must admit, but one that did not go unpunished.

Saturday 26th February and London was the destination. A weekend in the Capital lay ahead. Having persuaded my partner (slacking off from Swansea City) in crime that the game to see was not Kingstonsian verses Wokingham in the Diadora League, we set about scanning the fixture lists, looking for a choice of Premier League games to wet the appetite. With hindsight, this is where things started to go wrong. There was no choice. With West Ham opening their new stand in front of a sell out against Manchester United, it left Arsenal verses Blackburn as the only game to see.

Now you must understand at this stage, before I really incriminate myself, and before the person who is looking over your shoulder reading this article shouts, 'Arsenal, he went to see Arsenal rather than see the Swans', this was not a decision taken lightly. I know, I know; so there is more excitement in a goldfish bowl than there is at Highbury, but this was the only accessible Premier game in London that particular weekend. Added to which we thought, 'well at least Blackburn will play some good stuff and Shearer is a class act to watch.'

The Saturday started off well enough, with a wander around Covent Garden, Soho and Oxford Street. Food and ale was consumed before the tube ride north to Arsenal. We arrived outside Highbury at 2.30pm and spotted a helpful looking fanzine seller. Question: 'Where is the best place for neutrals to go please mate?'. Answer: 'You won't get in here without a ticket mate, it's all sold out'. Our reply: 'Well it didn't say that in the newspapers this morning did it'.

Anyway, to cut a boring half hour short, got in, thanks to someone who had bought four tickets when they only needed two. Yes you can always rely on these 'oh, lets order loads of tickets on the credit card just in case my mates want to come' folk to get you in. The tickets were for the Clock End of the ground. We found our seats. Right down low near the corner flag. Typical. Couldn't see sod all!

Anyway, to cut a further boring two hours short, Arsenal won one - nil. I don't think it mattered that we couldn't see, the crowd didn't exactly give the impression of a great game. Throughout the entire game the Arsenal fans sang two songs, and both of those were prompted by the large scoreboards at either end of the ground. The songs - really exciting you might think? Well maybe not! Song number one in the Arsenal repertoire - 'Come on you Reds'. Song number two in the Arsenal repertoire - 'Arsenal, Arsenal, Arsenal'. Well at least when overall a ground is quiet you can usually listen to the witty responses of the section of the crowd that is around you. Yes, witty and funny one liners like - 'Shearer, you're a wanker', or even better - 'Batty, you're a wanker'. Hilarious. So amusing it had the Arsenal fans in stitches, honest!

The game ended. The fans clapped the players, the players clapped the fans, and everyone got up to go home. As I walked back I heard the Swans result and for once I wasn't too bothered about a defeat. Being surrounded by boredom can be totally infectious. With the Swans in my mind I thought about the silent arena I had just left and compared it to our North Bank. I just smiled to myself and thought; boring, boring Arsenal. I had my punishment for missing the Swans. Never again.

DIRE, ABSOLUTELY DIRE

The Wales verses Norway friendly had announced itself so perfectly. Back in November 1993 everyone expected this game to be a celebration of World Cup qualification, against an attractive looking side who had ruined England's hopes of USA. Come Wednesday March 9th however, that perfect announcement had slipped into the distant memory.

Tuesday 8th March. Swans storm Brighton three goals to nil. Half time around the back of a quiet North Bank. Recruits for a trip to Ninian the following night were slow, verging on the non existent. Excuses ranged from 'can't be bothered' to 'it's in scumland'. Fair enough, but that wasn't an issue when Wales entertained Romania - in Cardiff.

Anyway, off I went, unperturbed by the prospect of a pitiful turn out of even the hard-core Jacks that follow Wales over land and sea. Perhaps they were right after all. The game, no not just the game, the whole evening, was dire, absolutely dire.

Firstly there was the intellectual dimwit in the Cardiff City programme shop, who asked me after I had stood there for five minutes whether I was waiting to be served. No mate, I was just admiring the wallpaper! His amazing observation was followed by rantings about how rough it was in Swansea and how the people there were scum. I just stood and glared.

Second there were those spectators who turned up to the game with Cardiff City tops and scarves. Since when did Wales play in blue. Now, I accept that I might, unwittingly, be colour blind, but I do know the difference between a Bluebird and a Dragon. Those Cardiff fans that were confronted about their attire didn't even have an answer. Silly sods.

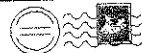
Third, there was the section of the Bob Bank that started singing 'You're worse than Swansea City' at the Norwegians, when they were one-nil up! Well as a Jack I take that as quite a complement, after all Norway are one of the best teams in Europe.

Finally there was the performance. Only Toshack will know what was going on inside his own head that night. Picking Jason Perry, leaving out Deano and playing with a one man midfield! Very sensible, not. Whether Perry is a Bluebird or not doesn't make any difference, he is quite simply not good enough for international football. Perry was so out of his depth, it was laughable.

As all 10,000 (exactly?!) trooped home no one could have envisaged the excitement that would see the end of Toshack's reign; but then most were concentrating on getting out of that congested rubbish tip that Cardiff City Council like to call a Leisure Amenities Car Park. Dire, absolutely dire.

JACK-MAIL

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away travel prices

Did you notice the price which FOSCFA were going to charge for the trip to Wycombe Wanderers in the Autoglass Southern Area Final on March 22nd?

They originally advertised their trip in the programme as £10 for members and £12 for non-members.

As soon as The Independent Travelling Swans advertised their trip in The Evening Post for £8, FOSCFA reduced their price to £9 for members and £10 for non-members.

This proves that if T.I.T.S. did not exist, then FOSCFA would be charging what ever they wanted to, because there would be no competition.

Even if you do not travel with FOSCFA you should be thankful for the existence of TITS for saving you money.

Long may TITS remain as a thorn in the side of FOSCFA.

Also did you know that Wycombe fans were charged £14 to travel to the Vetch for the first leg.

Colin James, Uplands

cardiff in the jack

I eat, shit and breath Cardiff City Football Club. I also read The Jack (I subscribe). My reason for writing is to suggest to you to have a page for Bluebirds fans, called The Wind-Up Page, so we can wind you Jacks up. I believe that your fanzine is well read amongst Bluebirds fans and it will give us a chance to tell your readers that we are much bigger than you. We have a decent ground, you have a cowshed. We completely out support you. We've got the Junior Bluebirds (10,000 members), Cardiff City Supporters Club and Ada-Glass Valley Base Supporters Club. All three bigger than any organised Jack supporters club, and the best thing of all is you Jacks know it.

PS: I agree with your comment about BBC Wales being all for the Bluebirds, but I'm not complaining.

Bluebirds Fan

graveyard north bank

Dwindling numbers at the Vetch, a boring concept you may think, but it's one which hits everybody involved in the club. Recently, both in the Evening Post and The Swan, Frankie's had a moan, 'There's only 3,300, we're gonna have to sell, it's all the fans fault'. Tripe Burrows, you're a mouthpiece for Sharpe. It's your fault, the team isn't functioning at home and with a 4-5-1 line-up you're not exactly going to entice armchair fans to watch your ineffective, low key brand of association football.

I'm not going to go on in this short letter about reasons why the fans aren't at the Vetch, just the effects of their absence. If anyone out there has old video clips of the Swans, just put on the Kidderminster or Wrexham Welsh Cup finals, the Panathnikos game, Cardiff FA Cup or West Brom in the play-offs; once you've seen these gems you'll recognise what the problem is at the Vetch today. Noise. There is less atmosphere on the North Bank this season than on the Moon. So far this season Wrexham, Merthyr, Exeter and even Barnet have made more vocal noise than the North Bank. The place is like a graveyard. Seeing that most of the boys are banned or in jail; thousands prefer shopping on a Saturday; kids have to pay a fortune to enter, there is a lack of a nucleus from which an atmosphere can be generated. Added to that, the lack of flags, too rolls, confetti and horns (ok, there was one at the Barnet game), means the Vetch is becoming quiet, drab and boring, just like Ninian between 1988 and 1991.

Even an absence of new decent songs is obvious. What are we going to sing when Cardiff or Bristol Rovers come to the Vetch? Will there even be enough of us to make it audible above the massed ranks of visiting geeks and freaks? We'll have to wait and see.

I hope I've geed a few people up. Bigger the "Get behind the Swans" call of FOSCFA, have pride in the city, the teams and yourselves, and shout about it! It doesn't have to be rude or vindictive, just original and deafening. Remember Barnet (!) outsing us second-half, so don't be outdone by the Scum in April.

The noisy ones down the front

swansea jack - union jack

I am writing to your fanzine because I agree 100% with what the Glasgow Rangers fan said in your March

JACK-MAIL

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issue. There is a lot of anti-English thinking people in Wales and indeed at the Vetch Field. But what these people don't seem to comprehend is at the end of the day the English, Welsh, Scottish and the people of Ulster are all British. Whether they like it or not. I as someone who was born in Wales and brought up by Welsh parents am proud to call myself British.

Secondly, may I answer the question Alun David (the Cardiff fan) sent in concerning Swansea fans and Union Jacks. I personally don't see what all the fuss is about, carrying the Union flag shows we are proud to be British. I have taken a Union Jack to Swans games home and away, and will in the future continue to do so.

Finally, Alun David goes on to say about the trouble at Ninian Park last December. The only reason there was trouble was because of the idiotic Cardiff officials who decided to put us (Swansea fans) into the same seating area as the so called Cardiff fans. I am not for one moment saying Swansea fans are totally innocent, because they are not, but most of the blame must lay at the feet of Cardiff City.

Paul Jones, British Loyalist

rule britannia

Regarding your 'Follow, Follow' article in the March edition of The Jack. In your column you asked for comments from readers to stimulate a debate.

Firstly I would take issue with you over your liberal use of the word 'we'. 'We hate England'. Exactly who are 'we' you claim to be spokesman for? You also display an alarming naivety in your interpretation of the aims of contemporary Welsh Nationalists. You speak of self rule; not being dictated by a neighbour. Yet what is the goal of Plaid Cymru? They are intent on seeing the break up of the United Kingdom and submerging Wales into a federal Europe! What price national sovereignty then?

Your apparent hostility to the United Kingdom is quite frankly baffling. Coming from Swansea I am fiercely proud to be Welsh. By the same token, for me it is an entirely natural, logical progression to say coming from Wales I am fiercely proud to be British. I was up at Ninian Park in December and saw the Union Flag you mentioned. It is perfectly natural for Swansea fans to fly the Union Flag alongside the Dragon, indeed fly it

with pride. I cannot for the life of me see the problem. There is no conflict of loyalty in displaying both emblems. When you see Swansea's civic flag flying along side the Dragon at City Hall does it strike you as odd? No, of course it doesn't. Swansea is a vital component of Wales, also however it has its own regional characteristics. It is exactly the same with regards to Wales within the United Kingdom.

Within football we now have the healthy situation of a renaissance of patriotism. At Stamford Bridge, Chelsea fans fly the Union Flag alongside the Cross of St. George; at Ibrox, Rangers fans fly the Union Flag alongside the Cross of St. Andrew; at Windsor Park, Linfield fans fly the Union Flag alongside the Red Hand; now finally at the Vetch we are starting to see Swansea fans flying the Union Flag alongside the Red Dragon. A long overdue development as far as I am concerned.

Of course we should be proud of our Welshness, Englishness etc., but at the same time pay homage to the symbol that unites us. Together we are invincible, just ask the Germans!

G Williams, In Union

corners / tannoy

Two questions I'd like to pose to other Swans supporters.

First, why oh why do we insist on taking a short corner every time and then without fail proceed to work the ball all the way back to the halfway line, only then to hit a long ball?! What the hell is the point in this. Surely if that's all the net result is, why isn't the corner ball hit long from the beginning. Once, we did play it long and scored against Barnet.

Secondly, why are we blessed with the most annoying, hopeless tannoy announcer in football. You know the one. "That goal was scored by Colin Pascoe, boing! boing!" or "In goal, number one, Roger, Roger, Roger". All spoken in a very high pitched affectionate, nine year old schoolboy sort of voice. Still, I suppose he's so hopeless you have to laugh. Anyone know his name by the way? I imagine it's something like Nigel Spanner. Oh, yeah, can someone also tell him that he doesn't have to play that record twenty-five times per game.

Marky G, Llanelli

JACK-MAIL

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radio cardiff

Sitting doing my college work I feel I have to put pen to paper. It's Tuesday 15th March, and the evening of Swans verses Cambridge.

Exiled up in Leeds I try to get to the games I can, but obviously the games at home are pretty out of the question, especially midweek.

With Radio Wales covering more of the Welsh club football I look forward to tuning in and possibly listening to the games. With crackling and major interference 882 is picked up only to find that the away game between Bournemouth and Cardiff takes priority over a home game for the Swans.

Every ten minutes or so in between, Steve 'almost as Bluebird as Shepherd' James screaming himself with every Cardiff attack, we are informed of the Swans score.

Never mind how much they try, the fact will not change. Swansea are the premier Welsh side at the present time.

Would Radio Wales please either start some fair coverage of the Welsh clubs, or re-name the station to Radio Cardiff.

Deano, pissed off in Leeds

new welsh goalies top

I sat down watching S4C and waited to see if John Toshack's new regime would work. And to see the unveiling of the new Welsh kit.

As the Welsh team lined up and the camera panned down the line of players, the new kit seemed to be growing on me every time I saw it, that was until I saw Neville 'Greasy' Southall wearing the 'new' goalkeepers top.

As the camera passed Neville and on to Barry Hone, I couldn't help thinking that I had seen that shirt somewhere before. Then as the camera picked up

Neville again, there it was, a South Wales Echo logo and a Cardiff City badge to boot, staring at me.

Neville was wearing a Cardiff City goalkeepers jersey. The shock of it all stunned me so much I wasn't even bothered when Norway took the lead, I just couldn't get over the fact that he was wearing that shirt while playing for Wales.

I had to ask myself the question, why was he wearing that top, surely they hadn't forgotten to pack a goalkeepers jersey, or had they forgotten to ask Umbro to design a new goalkeeping top, or the old goalkeepers top wasn't allowed to be worn with the new kit. All a possibility. Also a possibility could be that he wore it as a gesture to the Cardiff fans as they were playing at their ground. If this is so, are we to see Neville wearing the Wrexham top when Wales play Sweden at the Racecourse, and will we see him wearing a Swans top when the next Welsh game is played at the Vetch. Once again only time will tell.

Andrew Squires, Brynmill

ground is key

I am writing regarding the possible move to a new ground such as the Morfa Stadium. I personally would prefer to stay at our own Vetch Field, because, after thirty years of going to watch the team there, it's like a second home to me and many others. But realistically to stay there, and to bring it up to any reasonable state to compete with other league teams would cost a small fortune. Any person who has to keep a house would tell you of the enormous amount of money it costs just to keep it safe and sound. And to bring our Vetch Field up to any decent first division ground standard would cost a fortune.

But football apart, the most important thing to bear in mind, is that the Swans are sitting on a financial goldmine, with the position of the Vetch Field desperately sort after by greedy business people of the area. And, for this reason alone, they will be ultimately forced to move, like it or not. If the ground belonged to us then we could put up a fight, but as we all know we lost that fight a long time ago. So with no financial security, we are at the mercy of the money men, who care nothing of any love of the Swans or the Vetch.

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Also lately, a lot of people have referred to the Swans as a small club, especially people who should know better! If you think small and act small, then you will stay small. The likes of the Swans could never compete with the so-called 'big six' of the country, like Manchester United, Spurs, Liverpool etc., but could compete alongside them in the same way that clubs like Norwich, Ipswich, Wimbledon, Coventry etc. have done for many years and with success.

The financial problems of the early eighties, when the club nearly folded are well documented, and no one but the foolish would ever want to go through that experience again. But (and hindsight is a great help!) is it any coincidence that the debt accumulated by the club of £2.5 million is the same amount that the then new East Stand cost. In other words the effect of trying to build a team to compete alongside the best in the land and have a stadium to match proved to much for the club.

Finally be in no doubt over the fact that the Premier league in terms of money and prestige is the only place to be, and we as a club must aim to be part of it in the near future. Because like it or not a lot of professional clubs in this country will face extinction in the next few years. All because the so called big clubs as I have already mentioned, want to remain an elitist group, where only they keep the financial rewards and to hell with the rest. This must be the aim of all loyal Jacks.

Diggs, North Banker

attendances

Thanks for issue five which was, as usual, an enjoyable read and an amusing one, full of thought provoking items and funny snippets.

Keith Haynes' 'How to get there' letter emphasises just how pathetic the clubs administration department really is; still this sort of thing appearing in the joke they call a match day magazine is not really surprising. Incidentally, Sidmouth is a quaint seaside town with a quiet 'olde world' atmosphere about it. It's also where the Donkey sanctuary is situated - are the club trying to tell us something here!!!

The 'atmosphere' letter was an interesting one. We must be the only club in the league where home attendances

have fallen as the club have climbed the table (I write this just after another home success against Exeter). I mean, 2500 is a very poor gate by any league standards, most clubs in the third division bettered that, and that is sad. At the moment we're the top Welsh club and the poorest supported. The most farcical thing about this is should (sorry when!) we get to Wembley, I bet there will be many more than 2500 Jacks there!

The poor away support thing has been talked about for the past few years and up to a point is true, although there are many other sides in the division who bring a bare handful of people to away games. Success is another thing. If the team is on a high, then people will follow them, be it home or away, look at Reading's support away this season, compared to last. The Swans are not an exception to the rule. We've had good away followings just lately in the Autoglass, (at Orient and the Wycombe game has created mega interest). Our rivals at Cardiff have suffered the same symptoms this season. Sure their crowds have been on average more than double ours, but they haven't been at all consistent. When they had their poor spell early in the year their gates suffered as well (apart from FA Cup interest). For example they only took a couple of hundred up to Wrexham when the police there were prepared for a couple of thousand! Still the main thing is that we've begun to be successful on the pitch and that's what matters. We can enjoy it even if the Welsh media don't - and that's another story!

A couple of points to end with.

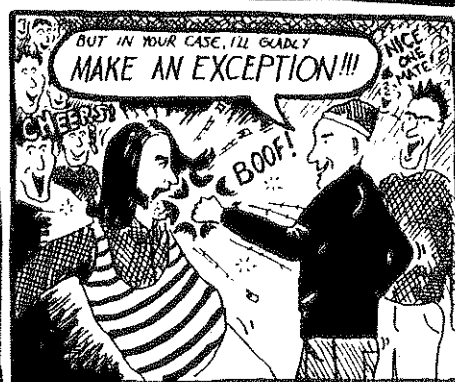
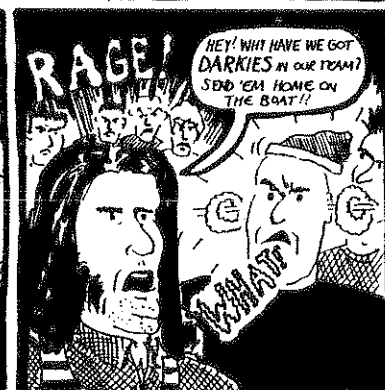
Now that The Jack is out monthly, how about a 'How To Get There' feature for the independent traveller as regards away games, including if possible, places to park, pubs nearby or on route and a guide to the ground (Wrexham's Sheeping Giant have a good section on the latter).

With all the moans being voiced about various aspects of our club and also some of the good ideas being voiced about how the club can be more successful in matters off the field, along with the end of season vote on best player etc, can we get a hat-full of suggestions together and present it to the club? I'm sure Mr Sharpe and company would listen. Give the guy a chance, he's not as bad as the Welsh FA Committee! As they said in the past, 'Be Proud To Be A Swan'.

Dave Naylor, Another GIT

70's man

Fully recovered after a bizarre gardening accident put him in a deep coma for 20 years, 70's Man returns to the home end... but things have changed...



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CHELMSFORD SWAN

Rob Luton, editor of the Chelmsford City fanzine, 'To Be Frank', recalls the time when he supported the super Swans.

As a young ten year old I was escorted to the Vetch Field way back in 1967 (showing my age here!). But just as I was getting into following the Swans, my father's job with Fords meant moving back to Essex after living in Caswell Bay for a couple of years (the Swansea team used to train on the beach there). I moved back to Essex in 1969 to a village just outside Chelmsford. After suffering with Swansea Town withdrawal symptoms, I ventured down to see what non-league Chelmsford City had to offer. At the time Chelmsford were one of the strongest clubs in non-league football.

Coincidentally in 1971 Chelmsford City signed a couple of Swansea players, namely, Vic Gomersall and Dai Lawrence (does anybody remember them!). In the 1971/72 season Gomersall was appointed club captain and Chelmsford became Southern League Champions. Our old rivals Hereford were runners up, but polled more votes than us and were elected to the Football League. Other players that were in the Swansea side at that time were: the legendary Ivor Allchurch, Mel Nurse and Brian Evans. I've still got their autographs!



Dai Lawrence (right) playing for Chelmsford versus Wimbledon in 1971

REG AWARD



Reg Peke receives matchday ball from John Cornforth at Hartlepool.

Swans 0 Hartlepool 1

Tuesday 31st Feb 1894

(This is only slightly amusing if you are an observant reader of The Swan.)