

# AFC Wimbledon US Dons Newsletter

Issue 7 – January 2006

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## *US Dons – News*

In with the new, out with old!

Another new year is upon us. Hope you all had an enjoyable holiday season, and may we all wish each other a happy and prosperous 2006.

It will be tough to improve upon our 2005! We have grown from just a handful of members to a membership of almost 50 and close to 20 honorary members.

OK .... I am still waiting to receive BIO's from several of you. Let us know about yourself and how you became a supporter of AFCW.

We have a contacts page attached, and anyone who doesn't mind sharing their info, let Dave Hambly (SoCal) or myself know. Also if you have e-mail address updates let us know. I try and send the newsletter to your e-mail as well as have SoCal post it on the website. There are a couple of e-mail addresses that are coming back as invalid.

Wishing you all a Very Happy New Year and hoping for a successful culmination to the 2005/2006 season for the Club.

“Come on you DON'S”

You can reach me:

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David Garlinge  
(Limeydg).

## *AFCW News*

Some recent good news for the club, the Khosla debt continues to diminish. A further payment in December brought the debt below the half million pound mark (440,000.00 to be exact). There also appears to be some progress being made on securing a commercial loan that would be at a lower interest rate than we pay the Khosla's.

Another positive for the club is the effort by WISA to communicate with old (ex) Wimbledon players and develop an old players association, WOPA. There has been a huge response, check out the WISA website and link to the WOPA page to see the names of players who have joined. Players like Roy Law from our original Isthmian league days through to the professional ranks and back again to our inaugural season in the CCL. Each ex-player who is listed has a short BIO attached so you can relate to the history of the club. This year, WOPA will be putting out a team to play in the Masters Cup in London. There is also an Old Players match being planned against an Ajax side, also later on in the year.

On the playing side, the team is currently just outside of a playoff spot place. However, they have games in hand of the teams above them and they have just returned from a 2 – 0 victory at one of the teams above us Worthing. A few more quality results like that and we will certainly be in the mix for a playoff spot. The injury outlook is looking better and DA has most of his squad to draw from. He is still working hard to secure the services of another quality striker.

Player news, we will be without Shane Smeltz for a series of game as he has been selected for the Kiwi squad in the spring.

Don't forget, you can listen to the Home games on the Internet at '[www.wdon.com](http://www.wdon.com)', and while enjoying the game you can hook up to the new chat-room at: '<http://www.afcwgb.co.uk/gb.php>' and chat with some of your fellow Dons. Several of the US Dons are on there as are some of the other distant supporters and the home based supporters who can't make the game in person. Hope to see some of you out there in the coming weeks

## *Guest Column:*

### **FAN'S PLEA: DON'T LET THE MORONS TRIUMPH 'BARNESLEY' DAVE NORRIS**

Was it an omen? A crash 100 yards from home, not involving me thankfully, caused a 15-minute delay. Further holdups meant it took 90 minutes to do the 12-mile journey to Kingsmeadow but at 7 pm I turned into the car park.

Not many people about considering it was only 45 minutes to kick-off time. Normally I would be looking forward to the game but tonight I was approaching the game with a slight feeling of trepidation.

It was my first Dons' game for nearly two months. Not for the normal reasons, work, skint or even too cold but a conscious decision to stay away.

The abuse and vitriol had got too much especially as I had personal problems off the field as well. Going to games was supposed to be an escape, a release if you like from the stresses I was under but it seemed to just be an extension of it.

I didn't turn my back on football because I love it too much to do that, but went to less intense and more crowd- friendly games including a couple of CCL games from whence we had recently come.

Reports of crowd trouble at various away matches including an alleged attack on a child seemed to be justification to me and yet ..... I was missing the friends I'd met and decided to return for the Leyton game.

However a FA Trophy draw at Dartford meant my return was brought forward five days to Tuesday night. I stood on the Tempest End near the John Smith Stand and as the first half progressed I realised the old feelings were still there.

Would we ever score, would they get a fluky goal to snatch the game from us. Richard Butler made sure we went through and then it was time to go home. Not straight away though because as I was walking round I saw Woking Jon, Strawberry, Soundman and Jane L who welcomed me back so warmly I wondered why I'd been so silly to stay away.

The bug was back and so keenly that I went to the reserve game at Met Police the night after. One thing that has encouraged me and reinforced my return is reading the main AFC guestbook and the determination of people on there to rid the club of its bad apples before some serious damage is done.

So to anyone considering staying away because of the idiots. You will be safe at home as we have stewards and police who know what they are doing. I can understand not going away because the organisation is not always the best! Please don't let them win, together we can rid the club of the morons. Be proud to be a Don!!!!

### **AFC, JUST LIKE WATCHING BRAZIL BRAZILIAN DON**

I was first taken to a football match when I was about 4 or 5 years old. We were members of Sport Club Corinthians Paulista, and every Saturday and Sunday my dad would take me down to the club by cable car, eager to get to the pool as quickly as possible, then some playtime on the swings, shower, the mandatory hot-dog with mustard (I can still smell it) and then (if they were home) FOOTBALL! My father was such a good man, I only learned many years later that he only went to home games because club members had free admission to the stands!

Anyway, years on and the cable cars were removed, the swings were not so appealing and I was nagging my Dad to have a second hot-dog. Brazil won the World Cup Final in 1970 and football started to become big business. So like anything else, I grew up, Corinthians grew up and they couldn't play at the 10,000-seat stadium. There were no more free tickets and my Dad stopped going to football.

I continued to go to matches at every opportunity I scrounged out of my uncles. Corinthians is a passion. The biggest draws in the 70s and 80s! Proud to be the best following supporters in Brazil. The best organised supporters groups, the best drums, huge flags and banners, great atmosphere.

I had the privilege to see the golden age of Brazilian football. Of course, our local hero Rivelino was always the star. But I saw Pele, Clodoaldo, Ze Maria, Gerson, Ademir da Guia, Brito, and later Socrates,

Rivaldo (yes, before Palmeiras and Inter Milan) and many others. In the 70s, all I knew of British football was that classic Brazil v England in Mexico, Scotland's swansong in Argentina, Liverpool and (would you believe it) Ipswich Town. The Tractor Boys toured Brazil and cleaned up. They were awesome. Then came the dark years: In 1981 I moved to America. American football, baseball, basketball and nothing else. Soccer was only played in school and mostly by girls. In 1984, while living in Atlanta, my boss's school wrote to me and asked if I could assist in coaching the school's team just because they heard I was Brazilian!

I married in 1986 and moved back to Brazil in 1990. When in 1995 the wife said "enough of this shite hole, I need to go home", we moved from the fairyland of football to the birthplace of football. *Mrs Brazilian Don* is from Chester and her parents still live in the Wirral. They have always been armchair supporters of Liverpool and it was natural that I adopted Liverpool as my team.

In 1998, during one of my parent's visits, I took them to the real Wembley to see Arsenal v. Man U in the Charity Shield. Good atmosphere, Arsenal 3-nil, good result, plastic supporters lose, I am happy, but it is not Liverpool. I couldn't cheer someone else's team!!!

In 2001 a friend invited me to Old Trafford for Man U v. Southampton. I left the house in Epsom at 9am, picked my friend up in Reading. The M6 had the biggest pile-up in years. Result: we arrive at the gates at 3pm, the man with the tickets arrived at 4pm! We watched 40 minutes of football, drove back and got home by 10pm. 13 hours later only 40 freaking minutes of football???? What a waste of time!

Which brings me to the Dons? In October 2004 one of my customers took me to his seats at Stamford Bridge to see Chelsea v. Liverpool. I sat across from the Liverpool supporters. Liverpool lost 1-nil but the Reds were cheering all the way. Never stopped singing the whole game. I then decided I had to go back to my roots and return to regular football games. It would be too difficult to follow Liverpool around the country so I started the search for a local team, worthy of my support. I considered Corinthians Casuals, Brentford, QPR, Palace (sorry, I did not know better) but none had what I was looking for. How can I switch allegiance like that? I couldn't! Which team then?

Well, it was late October last year when I was driving back from Wandsworth, via the back streets to avoid traffic, when I found myself waiting at the traffic lights on Plough Lane, in front of the gates. I kept reading "Womble Till I Die" time and again. I remembered the plight of the Wimbledon supporters in 2002 when the club was taken away from them but did not know that Plough Lane was the site of the former Wimbledon ground. I started looking up WFC's AFCW's history and came to the easiest conclusion in my life! IT HAD TO BE AFC.

My first game was going to be the Bromley home match but work pushed it back to the away game at Bashley. Funny enough, that was the last of the 78-game unbeaten streak! So I wasn't there for the previous 77. I have been to nearly every match since, bar the odd dog show with Mrs Brazilian Don with her champ line of King Charles Spaniels. You'll find me these days on the West Bank, near the Brazilian Wombles banner. — **Wagner Gimenes.**

**Thanks to Robert Smith (WDSA) and Barnsley Dave and Brazilian Don.  
Please Keep these articles coming.**

## **Fundraising Activities**

Currently not much going on here.

With the holiday season over maybe it's time to begin another Don's Diet? I am sure some of us could do with losing some of those extra pounds gained! This has been a successful event in the past.

If you look on the "ItmustbeDons" website, Paul Raymond, webmaster, lists an Amazon.com web click-thru. For any purchases initiated from the "ItmistbeDons" web-site, Amazon funds a donation (commission). This is paid quarterly and Paul passes on the donation to the AFCW Stadium Fund. For the year Paul indicated this enterprise netted over 850.00 for the Fund. SoCal, maybe we could set up a similar setup on our website? What do you think.

We need some:

## **New Ideas**

Send us your ideas for other fundraising activities we could embark upon. One thought is to have some US Dons team shirts made up, which we could proudly wear on our trips back to the homeland. Any takers on this?

## AFCW and Cancer Research:

***OK ... I'm still plugging the cancer research – It does not impact you while you are on the computer and it does not cause you or your computer harm. Give it a try! If it doesn't work for you, then remove the driver.***

AFC Wimbledon has always had an affiliation with supporting Cancer research (it has been one of the recipients of the Walk(s) for Wimbledon sponsorships). There is a program that has been in operation for some time, whereby, you can link your home computers to a Grid supporting cures for cancer. The program runs in the background of your PC and will not inhibit your use of the computer, but will run programs when your computer is idle and utilise any free CPU time. A couple of us have set up an AFC Wimbledon team on the grid and are donating our free CPU time to the cause. If you would like to join, I have attached a link to the team below. Click to this site, download the driver and join the team. Each participant and team gain points. It is a good way to advertise and promote the club. Later on we may be able to gain some sponsorships, based on points earned, that could be shared amongst the club and cancer research.

'<http://www.grid.org/services/teams/team.htm?id=C89CDDA3-BE3D-4D7B-8601-87BB77C8329A>'

There are at least 16 football clubs with 'teams' associated with this research, the largest being Liverpool. We are working on a table that will rank the football club teams, by points, by members, etc. Obviously the more team members you have the more points you can accumulate. We can make this a fun thing that can derive great benefits for everyone. So come on all of you, go out to the above link and join the fight against cancer.

**If any of you have had trouble getting on to this site, they have had a few problems during a system upgrade. Things are back to normal now, so please take a look and feel free to join up for this worthy cause.**

## *Contacts*

Here we will list contact information for those of you who want to share. Who knows, in our travels we may be in a fellow supporters area and get together for a beer and chat. Sign up is optional.

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## *Websites of interest*

Official Website - contains schedule, results and game reports:

[www.afcwimbldeon.co.uk](http://www.afcwimbldeon.co.uk)

WISA: [www.wisa.org.uk](http://www.wisa.org.uk)

Tony Kempster's site: [www.tonykempster.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.tonykempster.btinternet.co.uk)

Paul Raymond - ItmustbeDons: [www.itmustbedons.com](http://www.itmustbedons.com)

Ryman League: [www.isthmian.co.uk](http://www.isthmian.co.uk)

DonsOnline: [www.donsonline.co.uk](http://www.donsonline.co.uk)

Radio WDON: [www.wdon.com](http://www.wdon.com)

NEW chat-room: <http://www.afcwgb.co.uk/gb.php>