

# AFC Wimbledon US Dons Newsletter

Issue 2 – July 2005

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## *US Dons – The next step*

Here we are, six months in existence and already, 34 continental U.S. members and 14 honorary members. Our first newsletter published. I have had several responses to the newsletter, and we also posted it on the web-site. We will be looking to all of you to share in the make up of this undertaking. Send in your comments, editorials or any tidbits of news. As you take trips to the homeland and visit some games, share your thoughts with the rest of us. Let us know if you want to receive the newsletter via e-mail or pick it up from the web? Tell us how/what you would like to see us improve the newsletter. As the season gets into full swing we will try and get some input from folks back home to add, and maybe even get some of the team and management to support a column.

We have another club member's BIO, later in this issue, Steve Smith. Don't be shy and send me your BIO. We will try and carry one each issue, so we can get to know each other a little better. So keep them coming in and send them to me, as listed below.

In later issues we will be sharing a guest column with a fellow organisation, WDSA (Wimbledon Down-under Supporters Association). You have probably guessed they are based in Australia. Earlier this year they just sent out their 150<sup>th</sup> newsletter. Their first newsletter was issued in October 1985, so they are also nearing their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We have a lot of catching up to do. They were obviously associated with the original Wimbledon, but like us, they too associated with the New Wimbledon. Robert Smith will be sharing some of his thoughts and insights in a later column.

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David Garlinge  
(Limeydg).

## *AFC Wimbledon – Close Season News*

The revolving door is spinning. New player's being signed, others moving on.

Good to see Shane Smeltz has signed up for another year. Looks like we have strengthened our goalkeeping stock and added a new central defender, who teamed up with Matt Everard (who we hope returns from injury as strong as when he left), should provide healthy cover at the back. Before the season starts, I am sure we will see more changes. I think we all hate to see some of our favourites leave, but give Dave Anderson credit he is bringing in some strong calibre players which should help us in a higher and stronger division. I think it is a credit to the team and the manager that we can attract players who are coming down a step to our league.

Pre-Season friendlies are set, the big one being for the Supporter's Direct Cup, against FCUM, the new fan-based fledgling Manchester United team.

What a surprise to see what has happened there. We wish them well, but hope we come out victorious with the cup for the second time in three years.

It should be a big crowd and will hopefully help reduce the Ground Fund.

Also hot off the press, we have been blessed with two home cup games to start off this seasons cup campaign. I won't bore you with the details, go on out to the Official Web-site and look under fixtures. Home victories have a huge impact on the club finances and the ability to reduce the debt, plus give us the opportunity of even greater glory in the following rounds.

Good to see the Ladies teams expanding too. Two new teams added.

The Youth leagues too have a lot to live up to after a very successful first season.

It is these programs that will continue to solidify our grass roots base and hopefully grow our attendance's to even greater heights.

## *Fundraising Activities*

The club continues to bring the ground debt to the Khosla's. At this moment in time that debt is standing at 540,000 pounds. It is amazing how quickly it has fallen from the original 2+ million. We can continue to help this effort in our own small way.

Our group already has had some strong fundraising efforts, with two sponsored Don's diets and a couple of very successful e-bay auctions. Feedback has been good regarding the sponsorship of a player's kit for next year. Dave Hambly has added a link on our web-site to donate to this worthy cause. It also promotes the US Dons in the each and every program.

Check the web-site for when to donate, we are in negotiation with the club to finalise the player's kit we sponsor and the cost.

## *Don's Diet II*

Don's Diet II completed last month. There were 17 participants and once again a lot of pounds lost and money gained for the ground fund. Congratulations to all the dieters and a BIG thanks to all of the sponsors. Dave will update us in a later issue as to how this effort fared.

## *Other Fundraising Opportunities*

### Memorabilia:

Update on the recent program auction on E-Bay by Dave Hambly. The two older programs (vintage 1930's) returned an astounding \$600.00 (one going for \$315.00, while the second went for \$285.00). Congratulations Dave (SoCal). The funds are going to the AFCW ground fund.

If any of you have any old Wimbledon memorabilia you want to find a home for and would be willing to donate to the cause, please contact Dave or myself.

### 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 you, go out to the above link and join the fight against cancer.

## ***Member BIO:***

### ***Steve Smith (Location: Fairfield, CA.)***

Steve Smith:

Born in Carshalton, raised in Wimbledon. Lived in South Road (no longer exists), Denmark Road, and Norman Road (parallel to part of Haydon's Road), before moving to Morden, Strood, Sittingbourne, Croydon, Biggin Hill, Mitcham, and then back to the new town houses at the Merton Road end of Haydon's Road.

. . . and none of that had any reason to do with why I supported Wimbledon! My uncle was a Tooting and Mitcham fan, and at five years old, I was allowed to go to the games with him. I remember going to Sandy Lane often, and traveling to places like St. Albans City and Corinthian Casuals, but my heart was with my home-town boys at Wimbledon.

Eventually, I was old enough to be allowed to go to Plough Lane with my school friends. I've been a Dons fan ever since, and always will be.

For two or three years I was a home and away supporter every week. I remember some grounds more than others. The likes of King's Lynn, Cheltenham, Bath City, Dartford, Guildford, Stevenage, Corby Town, Burton Albion and Nuneaton, to name a few. How could I ever forget that awful game at Grantham in the FA Cup – what a dump!

Like other 'old timers' I have been a Wimbledon supporter all my life. From Isthmian League, full circle back to the Ryman (Isthmian) League.

My one sad note is, that I have yet to see Wimbledon win a major cup final (live). I'm not sure why I did not see the win against Sutton, but I do know that I had just arrived in the USA when we *decided* to make it to the FA Cup Final. I just could not justify to my wonderful American wife, why I had to return to England to watch a football match. There is no doubt that she would not have complained, and I probably should have gone . . . but that's all history now. We were starting a new life together, and I wanted her to know how committed I was (not that I should be committed for spending \$600 or more to fly back to England for one match). She traveled down to Los Angeles with me, and we watched the game at Bestie's (George Best's bar in L.A.). Awesome game, loved every minute of it. I have photos from the bar, somewhere. Celebrated the only way I knew how – our son was conceived that afternoon.

So, here I am in Fairfield, California, still keeping in touch with my roots. I would really love to see the AFC make it into the Football League, much like the 'old' Wimbledon. History will repeat itself, I'm sure.

Currently, I am employed in sales for the yellow pages, but grew up weaned

on computers. I will shortly be *officially* launching my own business creating websites.

Living where I do, I have become an Oakland A's fan, more than anything else. Besides the A's, I follow the San Francisco Giants, Raiders and 49ers. Within reason, I would be willing to contribute to the AFC funds for sponsoring players' socks, shorts, shirts, jockstraps, after-game drinks, etc.

How do you plan to collect the funds?

Here is most of my contact information. I would prefer not to list my street address, but would be pleased to receive e-mails.

Steve Smith

Fairfield, CA 94534

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phone: (707) 864-0663

## *Comments from the 1<sup>st</sup> Newsletter*

Here are some member comments from our first newsletter:

Hi David,  
Thanks for the newsletter. Good idea and a great plan. Let's see if we can get everyone on-board.  
here's my bio attached.  
Regards,  
**Steve Smith**

Dave, the picture btw was from my second wedding party two years ago. I think we should shoot for something a little bigger re the sponsorship. As for ideas for the newsletter maybe you could run a guest article spot. SoCalDon is obviously not suffering from writers block and I always like seeing my name in lights and I'm sure there's more. Memories of Southern League Away days, Huddersfield, Leeds and lots lots more. Malcom Webster leaving his shorts on the post when trying to go up for a corner versus Fulham a long long time ago.  
We'll be back.  
**John French**

I'll save some of the others for a future newsletter.  
Keep the comments and ideas coming.  
Also keep us updated with your e-mail addresses.

## *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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