

## The Manager's Thoughts (from 1995)

The season for the 2<sup>nd</sup> team was over before it started!

During the summer, I spent two weeks in Majorca surrounded by big t\*\*s so managing the 2<sup>nd</sup> team should have been nothing new!

That evening after the AGM, 'the Buck', if not the greatest 2<sup>nd</sup> team manager, then surely the tallest, advised me at the outset to "get it up the pitch as quickly as possible". We were pissed of course and I thought that he had said "bitch" and so our tactics were buried there and then – but my sex life improved dramatically! Looking back now, it is hard to pinpoint exactly where it all went wrong, but I should have seen the writing on the wall when some drunken b\*\*\*\*ks nominated me at that AGM!

We did alright for a while, getting to the last 16 of the Prudential Cup and walloping our 'turds' 1-0 on their own patch to get to the semis of the Leslie Reynolds Cup. I had promised that I would lead them out of the second division but our league results weren't great and things turned farcical when I was forced to pick Eurovision select teams for the mid-week matches!

I had really suspected that running the seconds wouldn't be easy but when 'Humperdink' is the first name on your team sheet for Northside mid-week matches, you start frantically searching for veins in your arms. The abovementioned gobshite had an uncanny knack of being at the heart of the club's most humiliating debacles over the years and this season was no different. Things were going from bad to worse and my home life was being affected. I would wake up bathed in sweat the night before St. Anne's trips and my wife was looking more and more like the bald Strand Utd. centre-half!

Then the excuses came thick and fast from players trying desperately to cling on to some pride near the end. 'Joxer' informed me that he wasn't available because he had to get 10 blouses out by 2.30pm that Saturday afternoon! That was exactly the situation I had been faced with for some time now!

The final nail in the coffin came when the club secretary informed me that we had been relegated with a massive total of 11 points. [I suppose my pledge at the start of the season to get them out of the second division had been ironically accurate]. Then the inevitable 'if only's' came to mind: if only we had trained; if only 'Humperdink' had played against us; if only certain players had arrived for games sober; if only certain players had arrived for games; if only the opposition hadn't taken games so seriously .... if only we were good! Now I know why Billy and others were smiling at me after that AGM !!!!



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