

**Minutes of MUDSA's AGM 2008**  
**Held in the Ability Suite on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

**Present:**

Baumber, Peter	Falla, Ian	Jackson, Edna	McLeod, Allen
Bosnan, Ronan	Fletcher, Edna	Jepson, Gerrard	McNeely, Robert
Burgoyne, Brian	Gawthorpe, Simon	Joule, Ken	Porter, Ian
Campbell, Alan	Greenhalgh, Stephen	Kamal, Feroza	Simister, Emma
Chase, Dallas	Greenway, Keith	Kelly, John	Wadworth, Wendy
Dooner, Sue	Grethe, Chris	Lang, Phil	Waiting, Sean
Edwards, Alison	Hall, Julie	Lee, Mick	Williams, Gwyn
Elmore, Rosie	Hayes, William	Littler, David	Wood, Gladys
Evans, Joseph	Hegarty, Paul	Lyons, Jonanthan	Wright, Alec
	Hunt, Dave	Malaney, Kevin	

**Apologies:**

Austin, Alex	Crompton, Steve	Hartley, Andrew	Redbourn, Joe
Batchelor, Stuart	Culleton, Michael	Haselgrove, Richard	Saggo, Narinder
Birch, Chris	Cullumn, John	Hickey, Christopher	Sanders, Jacqui
Bishop, Mike	Curtis, David	Holt, Marie and	Southworth, Peter
Brankin, Daniel	Deas, Linda	Martin	Stevens, Anne
Calland, Marian	Del Creco, Carmine	Hopkins, Barbara	Storr, Daniel
Cassell, Brian	Dolan, John	Huxtable, Zoe	Torbati, Abbas
Chourbaji, Pat	Duddle, Reece	Ironmonger, Robert	Warner, Clara
Collinge, Gordon	Fisher, Stan	Jackson, Ashley and	Watkins, Julie
Constable, Sophie	Fletcher, Edna	Dan	Weighman, N
Coombe, Roy	Gallagher, Ricky	Johnson, Alvin	Young, Charles
Cooper, Jason	Gilbertson, Keith	Margison, Susan	
Cordwell, Peter	Gregson, George	Mitchell, John	
Crome, Steve	Griffiths, Mary	Nugent, Joe	

**Chair's Report (Sue Rocca)**

12 months ago Chas introduced me to you as Madam Chair for season 2007-08 and invited you all to bring any problems or issues you may have with MUDSA to me. I have to say one year on thankfully I have had no complaints from you so either word didn't get around as to who people should bring issues to or everyone is happy with the way MUDSA is being run. I am hopeful that it is the latter.

I have certainly heard lots of positive comments this year particularly about the November Dinner, the Bowling Event and the Rollin Reds Magazine and I should like to thank my fellow committee members for all their hard work this year. I have deliberately not singled out anyone for a name check because everyone has contributed so much this year giving their time and energy so enthusiastically.

When deciding what I should say tonight I took some time to reflect on the last season, and we have all witnessed a fantastically successful year for the team, but more importantly, in MUDSA terms, I have been able to rediscover what MUDSA is all about.

In my working life I talk to hundreds of people and many have heard my stories of the MUDSA match day set-up, and MUDSA taking 50 people bowling and taking 26 wheel-chairs and visually impaired supporters to Moscow and so many people say they are surprised that disabled people organise and take part in events like this, but to us, MUDSA, it's what we do.

We organise things and join in; we accept challenges; we take part; we move things forward; we evolve.

And talking to these people makes me feel really proud of this organisation and the opportunities we have and create, and the camaraderie that is shared amongst us all. Match days are special – yes, because we are privileged to watch an amazing football team, but they are more special because match days are shared with you the MUDSA members who I think of as friends.

So again thank you to the rest of the committee for their hard work, but thanks also to you, the members, for your contribution to what MUDSA is.

**Sue Rocca (Treasurer)**

I have distributed copies of the final accounts to year-end 31 May 2007 together with the Financial Statements from our Accountants, Beevers and Struthers. I have also distributed the year-end accounts to 31 May 2008 which have yet to be sent to the Accountants.

Without going through the accounts with you line by line there are just a couple of things I would like to bring to your attention. Last year we reported a loss to you of £10226.84 which was a result of us receiving no membership monies a little income across the board. In this year's account things were looking much healthier until we had a last minute

expenditure items. If you look at this year's account I have reported them to you in a way that explains things – hopefully. Our “normal accounts” this year were on course to show a profit on £12909.50 being a result of membership monies being received from the club for 2 season and increased fund-raising/donations. On the very last minute we found ourselves having to put a £30,000 deposit on a plane to Moscow. This is to be repaid from the sales of tickets and we have achieved this figure. However the Club collected the flight ticket receipts on our behalf as they had to facility to collect credit card payments and we are now (this week) expecting repayment of the balance deposit from the Club. Unfortunately this is too late to contra across in the Accounts and as our year-end is the 31st May I have to account for the figures on that date.

Other categories don't show any major fluctuation, the merchandising is showing a loss this year and that is simply because we have restocked ready for next season -last year this category made a profit of £1283 –this figure varies on where we are up to with stock rotation. The hundred club is down by about £400 this year because the season membership books were late being produced at the printers. We have taken steps to ensure the booklets will go out earlier this year so that loss should be recovered next season.

I am not going to say much more because I appreciate Accounts are not an exciting topic for most people. I am one of the sad folk who love numbers.

### **Phil Downs (Secretary)**

Largely speaking everything seems to be running according to plan.

Quadrants Some people like it and some people don't but it's working well. Staff are excellent now that they are more familiar with the routine.

Accessible Transport accessible coaches now going regularly to away games which can accommodate three static wheelchairs. People have experienced problems in booking a place on the coach and have quite rightly complained. We will speak to the Ticket Office to ask if we can get the tickets earlier and try to have an advanced booking system. There is some resistance to that at the moment but we will keep badgering.

Away Tickets have also proved to be problematic at times by nature of the fact that they have arrive so late on my desk.

Stats Significant growth in emails this year, although letters seem to be at the same level. Massive growth in phone calls with single highest month April 08 with 14,792 calls. 74,924 in 9 months – average of 8324. This gives you an idea of the demand on us and the club but we hope not too many people will complain. Approximately only 5 calls are missed each month which is a tiny percentage.

Committee Vacancy We provided Job Description and Person Specification to all 8 respondents but they all subsequently withdrew. In the circumstances, we hope to be able to co-opt 2 or 3 people onto the committee to help.

Alternative Formats We are introducing matchday programmes in alternative formats. We want to be able to offer Braille, Large Print and Audio. We made good progress this season and discussions are underway to progress this next season.

Website main focus of development next season. We want to make the website work harder for us and want the website to pass on information to members as quickly as technology allows. All types of information can be passed on. you can tell us what you need the most. Andrew Endlar will be doing the larger part of it.

Moscow: huge triumph for the club to win the Premiership and the Champions League. Colossal effort to get MUDSA members out to Moscow and thanks to the sterling work of Chas who made it all possible and thanks to the club who gave MUDSA a £10K donation. Suffice to say we have set a new world record of taking 72 to Moscow (we took 54 to Barcelona).

Info Booklet last year's delay in getting the books out hopefully won't be repeated. ....should be with the printers next week or week after and going out mid July or third week.

### **Nigel Taylor (VI Representative)**

As another season of football finds it's way into the ever expanding history books of our great club, it's once again time to take stock from a visually impaired perspective. Last season witnessed the launch of the Braille and large print United Review. Phil Downs and his PA Margaret have risen to and overcome the challenge of getting this project off the ground, and those visually impaired recipients of the programme in a different format are ecstatic about this long awaited for and momentous event. To be able to read the boss's column and some of the other articles independently, and on the same day as everyone else, is a joy to behold. Those of you who have not yet had the experience of reading the programme in an alternative format and would like to, please talk to Phil on the usual number before the start of next season. It is important that you let us know in advance if you would like to receive this service.

Here in the visual impairment section we have continued to enjoy our usual high standard of match commentary from David Hooton and supporting cast – usually Wilf McGuinness. We have always had the best commentary facilities here at OT, even as far back as the mid - 70's. When I go to away games in this country, I can usually find a local commentary that's just about palatable; when I go to European away games (where there is no English commentary) it makes me realise just how much of the game I am actually missing. Without our commentary from United Radio (and occasionally from other sources when things don't quite go according to plan), match day would not be the rich experience that it undoubtedly is. So, a big thank you to United Radio, the commentators, and those backroom people who make it all happen. Thanks also to United for continuing to provide the outstanding and excellent facilities that we should never take for granted. Another facility that has taken off recently is the one that allows visually impaired

supporters to bring along their own small screen device and, using the connectivity under the seat, receive live pictures of the game. Not only can the user enjoy action replays, but also view the parts of the game that are too far away to see. Combine this with the match commentary through headphones, and you have almost got the perfect match experience. I say almost because there are two drawbacks: the TV pictures are approximately four seconds behind actual play, so you could end up celebrating a goal after everyone else; and you do need to be a little careful about spontaneous celebrations, or you may end up scattering your equipment far and wide!

Because everyone's visual levels vary, and because we all have our different ways of getting what we need from the game, not everyone will find this service useful. If you are unsure about it, why not give it a try?

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few individuals and organisations who have again helped to make last season a memorable experience.

*Galloways* in Preston have continued to record the Rollin' Reds magazine on to tape and CD and have regularly managed to issue the audio version before the print. Many thanks to everyone at Galloways for all their hard work.

*The Stewards*. It's not worth thinking about what life would be like without Lynn, Viv, Tom, Amy, Helen, Alan, Scott and the rest. As I wrote last year it is easy to see how everything would descend into absolute chaos on match days if these kind, caring and genuine people were not around to assist us at every turn. So thanks for everything, you are invaluable, and we will never stop appreciating you.

*Sue Dooner*. As always, I have run out of words to describe my appreciation and thanks to Sue for her continued support. Sue regularly extricates one pound coins from visually impaired supporters for the half time draw. In addition, Sue has been a great help in many many ways and I do not know what our section would have done without her. So not only from me, but from everyone in our section, thanks again Sue for everything and for doing what you do so unobtrusively.

And finally, but by no means least, I would like to thank the visually impaired supporters and their minders for putting up with me for nearly three years. I have met and got to know some really wonderful people amongst you, and you have given me endless support, constant encouragement and many offers of help. Thank you for your tremendous support and I look forward to continuing to be your representative for next season.

### **Chas Banks – Social Events**

#### **DINNER 2007**

The dinner was a great success by any measure with 443 guests. Martin Buchan was excellent and the comic Ted Robbins was superb. Thanks to Martin's generosity in not charging us a fee, we raised £1419.81 and this was in spite of holding the ticket price to £25.00 again. The venue had to be changed from the Manchester Suite to the International Suite at 48 hours notice because it was felt unsafe for so many wheelchair users to be in a room that depended on lifts in the case of an evacuation. I had to change table plans at last minute but everything worked well on the night in the end. There was good circulation space between the tables and no complaints! So in the end it worked out well.

I'd like to say a big thank you to Sue for doing the door and taking care of the money on this event and Ann Marie and her mum who did a great job selling the badges and pens. It was the 10th Annual dinner which was somewhat of a landmark and I think it's safe to say that we've reached our original goal which was to make it in to the flagship event of MUDSA. Proof of this can be found in the large number of people from the club who attend. I'm also pleased to be able to tell you that over 75% of the tickets to this year's dinner were already sold before we knew who would be speaking. I think if people knew who the guest of honour was earlier, we'd be sold out before a ball had been kicked in the coming season! We are just waiting for 101% confirmation, but we are quietly confident this year's guest speaker will be Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. Our comic will be Sean Styles and of course Mark Jones will be there to comper. The date is Friday 31st October. We will be providing a five course meal and Amazingly, the price is still £25.00 a head. I have to warn you though that this is definitely the last year at this price and it will have to go up next year. I'll be sending out an e mail shortly, but if you want to go don't wait, send me an e mail now and I'll put you on my wait list.

**Christmas Party:** This year's party was smooth as it could be on my side. Mainly due to Gary Neville being the captain. Fantastic turn out from the players. Club gave us the menu we wanted at the right price too.

MUDSA held a raffle this year which helped us to maintain the ticket cost at the same level as the last five years.

Anne Marie did a superb job organising her side of things, as well as selling the raffle tickets! Especially as she was flying solo for the first time! I think eating after the players had left suited everyone, well there were no complaints anyway!

**Q&A:** Unfortunately, there was no event this year. I can't say that the player I approached said no, but in spite of many attempts I could never get the yes I needed to move ahead. Then of course the fixture list became too crowded, so I had to let it go. Hopefully next year will be different!

#### **MOSCOW**

We took an astonishingly large group of disabled supporters & Carers (72) to Moscow for the European Cup final (as I like to still call it) and we won! It was a mad but amazing experience, which will be reported at length in the Rolling Reds. However, I would like to take this opportunity to place on the record MUDSA's thanks to the club, from top to bottom. Without their help, we would never have been able to do it. And most definitely not at the price we did anyway. A big well done to Phil and Margaret who both worked their socks off to make it happen. Right in the middle of Bruce Springsteen too! If anyone who wants to put their names down for MUDSA's trip to Rome next May, come and see me after the meeting finishes!

I'd like to thank all the members for their support. As ever, it is a privilege and a pleasure to do the job and I look forward to another great year for MUDSA and Manchester United.

### **Des Turner – Magazine Editor**

Good evening. Again this year we produced four editions of Rollin' Reds and there were 500 copies per edition. As most of you will know, when a new magazine is produced I go around the platform and the Ability Suite giving out copies to members – or anyone that wants one. The five hundred copies usually lasts for about four or five home matches after it is first issued and this takes into account my sending around eighty copies to management at Carrington and at Old Trafford and I also mail out several copies to various people on a regular basis. I also make sure that the quadrants have enough copies, (24 to each corner) to cover three rota groups. I'm pleased to say that once again we were able to secure an interview with a player for each of the four editions, whereas at one time we were lucky to get maybe one or two interviews per season. So we've progressed in that department and I'd like to thank the United staff at Carrington for that, and also to Alex Griffiths who usually sets the interviews up these days. This season we introduced a 'celebrity Red' feature which has proved popular, and will continue with this in the new season. So that was last season. Before the new season begins we are planning some improvements; we are hoping to be able to increase the number of pages from 28 to 32 per issue on a regular basis. We feel that we need to do this as we are rarely short of copy and there is very often too little space to fit everything in, meaning that items have to be cropped or left out altogether. Although we're rarely short of copy, we always want to hear more from MUDSA members; either by means of a letter or by sending us photographs of interesting things that you've been doing. We particularly like letters that praise the MUDSA committee to the skies, they are almost certain to get printed! We also feel that the front cover might benefit from a new look, and again this is something that we aim to look at before the season begins. That's all I've got for now so thank you very much.

### **Steve Crompton (Database) - given by Phil Downs**

Unfortunately Steve can't be with us. He has been ill for quite some time. We do give him something to do as a committee and that keeps him going and what he is doing is vitally important to MUDSA, namely collating all our email contacts. The idea is to be able to produce an email newsletter as a means of contacting our members easily and efficiently. This will mean, for example, we can let people know when the phone-in is due to take place when there's a Bank Holiday fixture.

### **Anne-Marie Lewis (Social Events and Merchandise)**

**Bowling challenge:** This year's bowling challenge took place on 20th April at Didsbury Bowling Alley and about 50 MUDSA members and their families came along. As Marian was not very well she and I organised the event and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. I'd like to thank her for helping me to arrange everything and helping on the day. Thanks also to Chas for arranging the trophies and to Barry Moorhouse and the two reserve players who gave up their time to come and make the presentations to the winners, and also thank you to everyone who took part.

**Haydock Park Races:** This year's race day is due to take place on Sunday 13th July. The first race is at 2.20pm and the last race is scheduled for 4.50pm, although sometimes they do add an extra race. This event is open to all MUDSA members and their family and friends. Wheelchair users and under 16s go free, OAP's & students £8.50 (with a valid NUS card). There is free disabled parking (please make sure that you bring your blue badge). Last year there was money off vouchers in the local papers – so look out for these. I have information letters with me tonight for those wishing to attend.

**Carrington:** Marian and I liaised with Carrington and we eventually received a confirmed date for the visit from Barry Moorhouse and sent letters to the first 15 people on Marian's list, asking them to ring me on receipt of the letter confirming their ability to attend or otherwise. I was amazed that only 8 of the 15 individuals actually replied, which meant my having to ring the other 7 a week before the event and only one of them wanted to attend. I had to fill the other 6 places at very short notice, which was surprising to say the least. I'm pleased to report that the day itself went without a hitch. We went back to the red café for dinner before going on the stadium tour. Again, I'd like to thank Barry Moorhouse for his help in organising the visit, the players and the staff at Carrington, the red café and the stadium. There is still a considerable waiting list for this event but everyone will eventually get a chance to go. Please be aware that we only get about a two week notice of the date and it is always subject to change.

**Christmas Party:** This event is one of the most popular events that MUDSA organises and it is always oversubscribed. This year we had 97 applications with most people wanting to bring two guests. Everyone who had ticked the box in the information booklet was sent an application form, and forms were given out on the platform and sent to people who had e-mailed me requesting one. In the end, Des and I spent several hours going through every application, sorting them into the categories that people attend matches. In the end 125 people attended the party. The demand for places grows every year but I can assure you that a list is kept of all applications that we receive every year, and eventually everyone will get the opportunity to attend. It is anticipated that people will only be able to attend once every 3 to 4 years. But please apply every year so that your name can be added to the list. I'd like to thank Chas for arranging the catering and sound system, to Mark Jones for being the compère on the day and to all of the players and Barry Moorhouse who gave up their time.

**Merchandise:** We produced two badges this year, the first was the 'take me home' badge which we sold at the start of the season. I'd like to thank Joyce Cook for helping me sell this at the beginning of the season. Then, just before the end of the season we produced a badge to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Munich, (I have this badge with me tonight if anyone wants to look at it or buy one). The pens and keyrings are still selling very well. Perhaps unsurprisingly, next season's MUDSA badge will be based on our European cup win in Moscow. Throughout the season I have tried different companies to see if we can get the badges produced cheaper, but the firm that we deal with now seems to give us the best deal.

**Ball raffles:** Finally I'd like to thank everyone who bought tickets for the two ball raffles that I did during the season; one just before Christmas and one at the end of the season, which raised £240 in total for MUDSA funds.

I have enjoyed being on the committee for the last three years and am grateful to everyone for the support that they have given me, and I'd also like to thank my fellow committee members for their help and support. Thank you.

**Election of Officers:**

Anne-Marie is the only committee member up for re-election. Phil Downs nominated her and Chas Banks Seconded and she was re-elected.

**Any Other Business:**

**Questions and Answers**

Q. There delays in receiving tickets for away games last season, will members receive them any quicker this year.

A. Tickets are sometimes only received by Phil a week before the game, so it is hard to get the tickets out in time, we will be trying for a quicker solution this season.

Q. I didn't get an invite to Carrington, wondered had he filled in an application form.

A. There is a waiting list for the Carrington trip (Ann Marie informed Chris that she had invited the first 15 members from Marians waiting list, and that she would check that his name was on the list but he may have to wait for his turn.)

Q. Will MUDSA members be getting swipe cards for matches like the able bodied supporters?

A. MUDSA members would not be issued with swipe cards as it would be hard to keep an eye on who was coming in and out.

Q. Is there any other way than be cheque of paying for the tickets for the AMM Section?

A. You can pay for your tickets by Credit Card but there is a 3% service charge, you just have to write your credit card details on the form.

Q. Can the MUDSA website be updated it looks a bit dilapidated at the moment.

A. The website is going to be updated this season.

Q. There still seems to be a lot of empty seats at matches are we reviewing the way we deal with people who do not attend the matches that they are given.

A. There have been less yellow and red cards given out last season, the empty spaces you see on TV are usually because of people turning up late for a game, or going to the toilet, also some people leave the game 15 minutes before the end which we cannot really do anything about.

We can put a piece in the next issue of the Rollin Reds showing the amount of red and yellow cards given out.

Q. Regarding away tickets – why does the internal mail take so long, can't someone go to the ticket office and pick them up?

A. A lot of the time no-one knows where the tickets are.

Q. On the expenses column in the accounts we seem to be spending a lot of money on the magazine.

A. These costs also include the VI format and some expenses of putting the magazine together.

A. Is there going to be any difficulty with the parking now that the new statue has been put up in front of the car park gates?

A. We have no details yet but it may be changed. We will have to speak to the Safety Officer to see what the plans are, but hopefully everything will be sorted out before the start of the season.

Q. ROTA GAMES – Would it be possible to have a ballot for the big games like the champions league semi final etc.

A. We could look into doing this.

Q. I notice that the biggest cost to MUDSA is the magazine. Would you like a quote from a friend of mine who deals in this sort of thing.

A. This has been raised before. We've looked at ways of reducing the cost but we don't actually pay the full cost because two die hard Reds do it as cheaply as possible. At the end of the day the solution is getting a sponsor for the magazine.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.07pm