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Thursday, 22 December 2011

FC UNITED SEE ROBINS AT CHRISTMAS

Boxing Day football is one of the great festive traditions and the match against Ashton on the 26th should be a proper Christmas cracker, hopefully without the rubbish prize. FCUM have been playing some great football recently and the future looks very bright as we head into the new year. The team is showing real quality, with performances that have both skill and determination.

The new recruits are settling in well and 2012 has much for us to look forward to. The Pink would like to thank all the players and fans for the past 12 months. The football in 2011 was fantastic, but the news about the stadium in Moston was the best present we could ever have. Have a great Christmas and best wishes for 2012. Get yourself to that football ground for Big Coat Day...



Mike Norton has recently returned to scoring form

BIG COAT DAY

The game against Ashton sees FC once again staging Big Coat Day. It's a tremendous cause and last year it was a big success.

Last year the impact of the cold winter months on the North West took someone's life every half hour. FC United of Manchester's decision to organise the Big Coat Day collection of warm winter clothing at its New Year fixture, coincidentally against Ashton Utd, proved timely. The winter was the coldest in almost 40 years. However a fantastic response from the public and football fans alike saw a 5.5 ton wall of winter clothing collected to keep the poor and needy warm around the city.

We've had loads of celebs getting involved this year, so spread the message and bring along all your unwanted coats. For further details visit the FC United website at <http://www.fc-utd.co.uk> and if you haven't had chance to see what our celeb friends have been saying about Big Coat Day then here are all the links:-



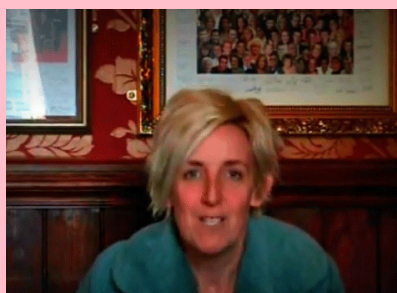
[Johnny Vegas](#)



[James Quinn](#)



[John Henshaw](#)



[Julie Hesmondhalgh](#)

Justin Moorhouse - <http://bit.ly/tCIP2V>

Coronation Street lovebirds Eileen Grimshaw and Fireman Paul - <http://bit.ly/vCDPxs>

John Henshaw and James Quinn double act - <http://bit.ly/suoStM>

MARGY SAYS

Despite losing to two good sides in Guiseley and Northwich lately, we have been very encouraged by the way the team has played.

We've been persevering with a 4-3-3 system of late, which I first considered last season when Brighton didn't allow us to get a kick in the FA Cup replay. We were at home but they kept the ball brilliantly in the middle of the park. I wanted to know why so I looked into how they played in quite some detail. I think we needed an extra player to play this system and this season we've had the personnel in place to do that.

We're handily placed going into the New Year and I think we can build on this position to make a play-off place by the end of the season. It's important that we don't get carried away though and there is not a chance we can take Boxing Day's visitors for granted. Any team that Danny Johnson puts out is going to be hard to beat, well organised and disciplined.

It's been an up and down year for me personally, but I'm feeling a lot better than I was a couple of weeks ago and it's time to go clean living. Even at Christmas! Best wishes and all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Enjoy the game, Margy

A full version of this interview can be found in the FC United v Ashton programme, price £2

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO FC!

FCUth will again this season be having an Easter party, as the fixtures have not been kind for us to arrange a Christmas Party. However, Santa was a little disappointed not to be seeing our younger members at Gigg Lane.

So, we have invited him along on Boxing Day to meet them. He will be in the Social Club before the match, and on production of a current junior membership card they will be able to go in and see him and receive a small gift.

So, on big coat day, come along and see the man that wears the biggest red coat.

AN EXTRA CHRISTMAS PRESENT – KIDS GO FREE!

In all the excitement of the build up to Christmas it may have gone unnoticed that the Boxing Day game against Ashton United is free for under 18's. Well now's the time to remind family, friends and neighbours that you've got somewhere to go on Boxing Day to give the kids some welcome fresh air and exercise after the excesses of the day before. You could even get them to help carry the sacks full of warm clothing for Big Coat Day.

BOXING DAY FOOTBALL

Boxing Day Football is one of the traditional festive rituals, along with turkey, mince pies and the sacking of failing managers by panicking chairmen.

If the sacrifice made by the likes of Adam Jones and Mike Norton seems tough, leaving their families at home to carry on the festive celebrations without them, the players of yesteryear had it even tougher.

As recently as the 1957-58 season the top-flight clubs in England played on Christmas day and Boxing Day. On December 25th 1957 Manchester United played Luton Town at Old Trafford, winning 3-0 with goals from Bobby Charlton, Duncan Edwards and Tommy Taylor. Twenty-four hours later the very same clubs reconvened at Kenilworth Road, Luton, where Taylor and Albert Scanlon netted to salvage a 2-2 draw for the Reds.

Back-to-back fixtures were common then in the festive period, with unusual scorelines and reversals of fortune often a feature. By 1963 however Christmas Day games were gone and Matt Busby took his players to Turf Moor on Boxing Day for the match with Burnley. Inspired by 4 goals from Andy Lochhead and the dazzling skills of Willie Morgan, the Clarets trounced the visitors 6-1, and Busby accordingly made changes for the meeting at Old Trafford on December 28th. George Best returned to make the second first-team appearance of his career, and ran Burnley ragged along with fellow winger Willie Anderson. Best scored his first senior goal and United ran out 5-1 winners.

Fast forward to 2011 and FC United entertain Ashton United at Gigg Lane in their own Boxing Day fixture, seeking to return to winning ways after succumbing 1-2 at Northwich Victoria on December 17th. The inclement weather has limited FCUM to 3 Boxing Day clashes so far. In 2005 Flixton were held to a 1-1 draw at Valley Road, Adie Orr netting after 12 minutes and the home side's Stewart Walker being shown a Red card for some less than seasonal behaviour.

In 2006 a five-goal cracker of a game was watched by 2,924 at Gigg Lane, Ramsbottom United racing into a 2-0 lead thanks to Carl Lomax (later to join FCUM) and a gift of an own goal by Rob Nugent. In a blistering last 18 minutes, the home side battled back to win 3-2 with David Chadwick, Alex Mortimer and Nicky Platt on target. In 2007 Chris Baguley salvaged a point in the 86th minute in the 1-1 draw against Radcliffe Borough at Stainton Park.

In recent seasons Ashton United have shared the spoils in fixtures against FCUM. The first meeting took place on December 27th 2008, where Ben Deegan opened the scoring for the Robins, who went on to take all the points with a 2-1 victory despite a late strike from Tommy Turner. Revenge was sweet, though, in March 2008, when Carlos Roca rifled in a hat-trick for a 4-0 win.

At Hurst Cross in April 2010 Roca scored twice in the opening 11 minutes, but the Reds were denied again when Matty O'Neill and Adam Morning struck in the second half to earn a 2-2 draw. 2 weeks later the Robins completed a notable 'double' with a 3-2 win at Gigg Lane. Phil Marsh's 20th minute opener provoked a 3-goal response from the visitors, with a Deegan goal for FCUM this time not proving to be enough.

In 2010-11 Marginson's men again left Hurst Cross unhappy, this time Lee Steele's goal close to half-time settling a tight contest. Ashton led after 5 minutes of the meeting at Gigg Lane in January 2011, but by half-time Mike Norton and Matty Wolfenden had converted the scoreline to 2-1 and this proved to be the final score.

A happier visit to Ashton occurred in October 2009, Roca netting the third goal after Marsh and Adam Tong had scored in a 3-1 FA Trophy victory. The sides also met in the League Challenge Cup in November 2010, former FCUM striker Aaron Burns scoring in a 3-1 win for the Robins in a game where 17-year old Matt Tierney scored for FCUM on his initial first team start for the club.

Last chance to buy for Christmas - special festive opening hours for the Mega Cabin at Gigg Lane

If you're stuck for ideas for what to buy friends and family this Christmas then fear not because the FC United club shop is coming to the rescue with special Xmas opening hours at Gigg Lane.

Our shop, at the Mega Cabin at Gigg Lane, will be open one last time to supply all your last minute Xmas gifts, saving you the hassle of braving the shops and massive crowds and queues. See how kind we are to you!

The final festive opening time is: - Thursday 22 December: 12noon - 4pm

So, what are you waiting for? Get yourself down to the Mega Cabin on Thursday and get your Xmas shopping wrapped up!

COMMUNITY SHARE SCHEME – UPDATE

The fantastic response to the Community Share Scheme offer has continued. The total amount of money raised and signed over to the new scheme now stands at £1,326,889. The amount still to be signed over from the Ten Acres Lane scheme is £87,902.

Over a £100,000 of new applications have been received since the new scheme was launched however we still need the stragglers to sign over their investment to the new scheme as soon as possible. You can call at the Membership Stall on Boxing Day to leave your form or complete a new one or download and post it direct to Cobbetts from here: <http://www.fc-utd.co.uk/communityshares>

FC UNITED CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

The annual Christmas raffle will be drawn at half time at FC United versus Ashton United on Boxing Day.

Our volunteer half time draw sellers will be selling these tickets on Boxing Day instead of their usual Pound for the Ground tickets. The winning numbers will be announced on the scoreboard (if it's working!), outside the ground after the match and of course on the website.

Tickets only cost £1 each, with more than a dozen prizes available.

The full list of prizes is:

Framed FC United shirt signed by Bryan Robson
Food and Drink Hamper
One night's stay (with breakfast and parking) at the Castlefield Hotel, Manchester
Leather handbag
Two James Morrison tickets at the Manchester Apollo
£25 voucher for an FC United cake from Newman's of Radcliffe
Two tickets to The Demise and Rise of Bunny Lamar at Sale Waterside Arts Centre (MAD Theatre Company)
£30 voucher for the Rose N Bowl restaurant in Rossendale
Hot stones pampering treatment at the Y Club, Manchester
Concert tickets of your choice (subject to availability) at Cardiff Arena plus a night in a hotel
3 bottles of wine
Tickets for up to 6 people to an FC United match
Signed FC United football
£50 voucher for FC United shop

For further details, email promotions@fc-utd.co.uk

ASHTON GAME – PRE AND POST MATCH ENTERTAINMENT

The volunteers of Course You Can Malcolm will be taking a well deserved rest on Boxing Day and the venue will not be open for this game. However the Main Stand Inn and Social Club will be open both before and after the game as usual.

In the Social Club Santa Claus will be dishing out presents and festive cheer before the game to the FCUth and after the final whistle all supporters are invited to come along and share a seasonal drink with Margy, the players and coaching staff.

YURA VERY WELCOME

One of FC United's better known fans is Yura, who recently travelled from the Ukraine to visit Manchester. In his own words here is a brief summary of his trip.

I'm 23 and I'm a Man Utd fan, so of course I followed the Glazer takeover, where I learnt about fans buying shares (MUST, IMUSA) and, I think, heard about plans to create an alternative team.

Then, in February 2006, I just started searching the web as I wanted to try and create web-sites. There was no point in creating a Man Utd site as there are loads of them. So, I found some info about FC and decided to try and create a site, even though I wasn't supporting the team or knew much about the club. But as I did my site, I understood what FC is about and so got involved! Started to make the site better and better, and created an English version.

My skills got so good that after a year I found a job, and became a web-programmer. So, actually, FC helped me to get a profession.

I did loads whilst I was here. After such a long journey from the Ukraine I wanted to do as much as I could. My best moments were visiting training and FC office. The players and staff were wonderful. I spoke with Norton and Jones for a while. Jones doesn't look like he looks on every photo - I mean like a scary rock – He actually looks friendly and he keeps smiling.

I got to see 3 games and we won in all of them. The atmosphere was great. After the Worksop game, which I travelled to on the Tameside bus, one of the supporters gave me a signed shirt that Chaddy wore in his first season.

It was great to put faces to names and everyone was so friendly. I had a great time. Thanks to all at FC United.

TROUBLE AT T'MILL

One of our supporters, Tony Nuttall, recently witnessed some undesirable behaviour between FC United fans and home supporters at the recent Northwich game and contacted us to share some thoughts on the matter.

Northwich was another game marked by some conflict between FC and the opposing team's fans. On this occasion, it was only a small number of FC fans (or people wearing FC colours) involved and it didn't amount to much. But again, it raises the question of how we should behave towards the fans of other clubs.

FC as a club is committed to trying to develop a "Better Way for Football" This means we need to win people over to our vision of football run by the fans and benefiting our wider communities. But it should also include recognising that the vast majority of fans of other clubs are ordinary working people who, like us, don't deserve abuse. So, for both these reasons, our aim should be to "Make Friends....."

We know that, on the whole, our record is good. However, we need to make sure that we always:

- ignore abuse that is directed at us - or respond with humour;
- police ourselves to stop anyone on our side getting out of line - we don't need stewards or the police to do it;
- take opportunities to make friends, including supporting/ applauding what we see as being good at other clubs.

DEVELOPMENT FUND - GALA DINNER

Following on from the huge success in March, we will once again be organising a Development Fund Gala Dinner for 2012. We raised over £22,000 when we held our inaugural event at the Museum of Science and Industry. Over 200 people were entertained by Manchester comedian Justin Moorhouse (star of Phoenix Nights) and United legends Wilf McGuinness and Martin Buchan.

We're still in talks with a couple of venues about next year's event but it will be an absolutely vital part of our fundraising for the new ground in Moston. So we're appealing to all United fans to support the Gala Dinner and get in touch now if you want to reserve tickets. You can call the office on 0161 273 8950 or email developmentfund@fc-utd.co.uk

Usual home match prices apply:

Adults £8

Concessions £5

Under 18s FREE

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