



SENIOR TIGERS

www.seniortigers.org.uk

Chair & Newsletter Editor: Rev'd Allen Bagshawe
allen@bagshawe.karoo.co.uk

NEWSLETTER **29** FEBRUARY, 2023

Welcome

Last month we welcomed 133 members to our meeting with David Myler. Fabulous meeting. Unfortunately, David was unable to bring a supply of his Biography but he has promised to bring them to one of our meetings and sign them. Twenty members have already asked for a copy when they become available, if others would like to add their names to the list please let me know. A simple email should be sufficient.

Our February meeting is on Thursday the 2nd in the Dug Out. We are delighted that **Tan Kesler**, our Vice Chair, will be joining us for this meeting along with **Greg Docherty**.

Player of the Month/Season

The votes in December saw **Jean-Michel Seri** lead the way with 37 votes, 2 votes ahead of Jacob Greaves. The next on the list were Oscar (22) and Regan Slater (21).

Regan continues to lead the way over the season at the halfway point. He has a total of 144 votes. Behind him is Jacob with 116 and Oscar with 100 votes.

Tony, who leads our Memorabilia Team has asked for a bit of help. Please, if anyone can help him get back in touch.

"The Memorabilia Team have a large number of newspaper pages that they would like to scan for inclusion on the website. They are looking for the use (preferably free or at a low cost) of a large scanner to

complete the task and use it if they require more papers in the future.

Secondly, if there are any members or a member who is an amateur photographer who would like to give their services to the team, we would like to hear from them. This is a task that we require on only a few occasions but is important as we want to obtain a high quality of all images. In particular, we find it difficult with lighting and the taking of framed pictures which are behind glass".

If anyone can help please contact Tony Conway or any member of the Memorabilia Team or the Senior Tigers Committee.

20 YEARS AT THE MKM STADIUM

Tony Conway

Senior Tigers Memorabilia and Heritage Coordinator.

It's hard to believe it's 20 years since we first witnessed a game at the MKM Stadium (The KC Stadium at the time). Whenever there is an Anniversary one tends to look back over the good times and sometimes the bad. I wonder what your memories of the stadium are? The decision to build a 'Super Stadium' has turned out to be a fantastic move for both **Hull City** and **Hull FC**, plus the community of Hull and East Yorkshire. It heralded the best times for the Tigers in their 119 years history, with 6 promotions, 5 seasons in the Premier League, an FA Cup Final appearance, a short adventure into European competition and a Football League Cup Semi-Final. Unfortunately, there were 4 relegations.

Who would have thought all that was possible as they witnessed the first game in the stadium on that freezing night on 18 December 2002? To celebrate the opening of the stadium City played a friendly, named the Raich Carter Trophy, against Sunderland. 22,467 attended and witnessed City winning 1-0, the goal being scored by **Steve Melton** (photo below).



Before moving on let's not forget the emotional last game at Boothferry Park, when City lost 0-1 in front of 14,162 fans. I thought watching the Tigers would never be the same again or as enjoyable. How wrong could I be? Within half an hour of the start of that first game, I was hooked, as were many thousands of football fans in the area. It wasn't the same, it was so much better and as it turned out also very enjoyable. Great viewing from all seats, modern catering facilities, up-to-date toilet facilities with warm water (sometimes), fantastic lighting, large enthusiastic crowds and as it turned out a successful team.

Let's have a look at some of the best moments and the great times we have had. It could be **Peter Taylor** leading us to back-to-back promotions in 2004 and 2005 to reach the Championship. **Ian Ashby's** leadership on the pitch, **Stuart Elliott's** goals and the acrobatic celebrations, **Damian Delany's** 2 spectacular solo goals, **Ben Burgess** and **Jon Parkin's** swashbuckling forward play and goals, also for the first time in years crowds of over 20,000.

It seemed like every year we got better and as such expectations increased. Then on Wednesday 14 May 2008, we had the best night of all. City was in the Championship Play-Off Semi-Final. Already 2-0 up from the 1st leg at Watford's Vicarage Road, City roared to a 4-1 win. Goals from **Nick Barmby**, **Caleb Folan**, **Richard Garcia** & **Nathan Doyle** resulted in unbelievable celebrations amongst the sell-out crowd. We were going to **Wembley** for the first time in our 104 years history.

The great Wembley victory over Bristol City resulted in our first season in the Premier League (PL) and another great occasion as we beat Fulham 2-1 in the first game. City came from behind with goals from Geovanni and Caleb Folan. We raced away to be in the top 4 for several weeks and witnessed some great displays both home and away. Eventually, we settled down and the form was not so great, however, we survived and after the last game we celebrated again plus we endured Phil Brown serenading the achievement!

City signed some good players and some that did not reach the required standard to survive in the PL. We played against the top teams in England and saw the best players in English football at the KC and it was so enjoyable. However, after 2 seasons we were relegated but the ambition to return to the PL was always present and in May 2013 led by Steve Bruce we gained automatic promotion back to the PL.



Steve Bruce

It took an agonising last game of the season to secure it. Who will ever forget the 2-2 draw with Cardiff City and the 15-minute wait for the Watford-Leeds result? Then news filtered through that the result at Watford had gone in our favour and we were back in the PL.

Two more seasons of PL football followed with memories galore. The 3-1 win over Liverpool, the first after 17 attempts. 4 weeks later on 28 December 2013 City demolished Fulham 6-0. Despite the 6 goals being scored the highlight for me was the **Tom Huddlestone** goal. What followed was unique as Tom had his hair cut on the pitch. Tom had accepted a challenge to not have his hair cut until he scored his next goal. His last goal was way back in April 2011, hence his long hair. Tom eventually raised £57,000 for Cancer Research UK as a result of this action.



Tom Huddlestone

More great times were to follow as in March 2014 the Tigers beat Sunderland 3-0 to reach only their second FA Cup Semi-Final in their history. We all enjoyed 2 more trips to Wembley, the 5-3 win over Sheffield United in the Semi and the 2-3 loss to Arsenal in the Cup Final. By the virtue of the Cup Final appearance and other teams league positions, we qualified for Europe. The first competitive European game in Hull was on 7 August 2014 when we played Slovakian side AS Trencin. A 0-0 draw in Slovakia and a 2-1 win at

home (goals from **Ahmed Elmohamady & Sone Aluko**) resulted in a further game against KSC Lokeren from Belgium. 2 games we should have won but disappointingly failed.

Relegation in May 2015 resulted in a season back in the Championship but again a good season resulted in a Play-Off Final appearance at Wembley against Sheffield Wednesday and a 1-0 win. The 2016-17 season was hard to take with managerial changes, a lack of quality signings and fans unhappy with the owners. Relegation was inevitable but not before we reached the FL Cup Semi-Final for the first time in January 2017. City lost 2-0 at Old Trafford to Manchester United but won the second leg 2-1 with goals from **Tom Huddlestone & Oumar Niasse**.

Some not-so-good years followed including relegation to Division One. COVID was now affecting all entertainment and season 2020/2021 was played behind closed doors. If you watched football it was on the TV or via the iFollow streaming. City was surprisingly successful under these conditions and won the Division One Championship. Their first title in 55 years.

City probably provided you with the best memories of the stadium but we should not forget there were other events and sports which you may recall with affection. There have been 5 England Under 21 games, some with near-sell-out crowds. The highlight was in February 2004 when England beat Holland 3-2. **Hull FC** have also provided 20 years of memories for their fans. Their debut in the stadium was on 9 February 2003 with a 24-16 win over Halifax. There have been 12 Rugby League Internationals including some World Cup games. 2 Exhibition Twenty-20 cricket matches involving Yorkshire CCC and Lashings World X1 were trialled. You may recall that even a Polo match was played on the hallowed turf and the Allams also used the stadium for their number one sport of Squash. Lastly, several top entertainers have performed in concerts over the last 20 years. Namely, Elton John, Brian Adams, Neil Diamond, REM, Bon Jovi, The Who, JLS, Rod Stewart, and Jeff Lynne's ELO.

We should thank the City Council for their foresight, planning and risk-taking way back in the 1990s when the project started. Everyone will have their special memories of the last 20 years, whatever they are, there is no doubt it's been a great success and a feather in the cap for the City and Region. Let's hope that those now in charge of the Council, **Hull City AFC** and **Hull FC** have the resources to maintain and improve the

stadium and surrounding area so that the sporting community can enjoy another 20 years of the high-class and successful sport.

~ ~ ~



*Richard interviews our January speaker,
DAVID MEYLER.*

If you want to reserve a copy of David's autobiography let me know.



*Presentation of the special Thank You gift
from the Senior Tigers to our former Chair,
DAVID JACKSON*

**If you jump off a Paris bridge,
you are in Seine.**