



President - Steve Perryman M.B.E.

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13th May, 2003

Mr. D Levy
Chairman
THFC
Bill Nicholson Way
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Dear Mr. Levy

With the recent conclusion of the season it is now appropriate for us to formally express the views of many of our club's loyal supporters.

A purely statistical analysis of the 2002/3 season shows that the first team recorded only five victories from the nineteen league games played since Boxing Day. Indeed our form since the opening months of the campaign has been so poor that had the league table been calculated from Boxing Day onwards our club would have finished the season in nineteenth place. I would remind you that Sunderland finished the 2001/2 season in a similar fashion, and their failure to address the root causes of that form has resulted in their relegation from the Premier League with a record low points total.

The reaction by many fans on Sunday during the humiliating defeat at the hands of Blackburn Rovers demonstrates the levels of frustration that is being experienced by our fans. We hope, and presume, that you understand and share this frustration and that you will act accordingly during the close season. Our fans, and our players, need to see a genuine indication of ambition which gives hope that we will not be next season's Sunderland. Bearing in mind the impending season ticket renewal deadline we hope and expect that this demonstration of ambition will be forthcoming sooner rather than later.

There are only ninety six days until the 2003-04 Premiership season kicks off, ninety six days to bring to the club suitable replacements for the likes of Teddy Sheringham, Les Ferdinand, Sergei Rebrov and Steffen Freund. In addition to replacing those players who have already left the club it is clear that the squad needs improved quality and depth. In the official statement at the end of the last transfer window, the club said that "we have a strong, deep first team [and] a healthy reserves line up", but this has been recently contradicted from within. Many supporters are understandably confused and dismayed by the apparent reluctance to try out some of the promising youngsters we were led to believe were coming through..

Clearly there will be a cost to this exercise but make no mistake, a failure to seriously address this lack of quality and depth is likely to be even more expensive, both financially and emotionally. It appears to many of our fans that our club has reached a vital crossroads, failure to take the correct decisions, failure to show genuine ambition this summer will have far reaching consequences.

We acknowledge that press speculation should not always be believed, but the number of stories concerning the manager's ability to motivate and even talk to the players and the continued whisperings of internal dissent at the club, is of very serious concern to us, especially when the allegations go substantially unanswered. We appreciate that we do not perhaps have the full picture of everything that is going on at the club and so as fans we look to you, now, to either back the manager 100% and give him the support so desperately needed to demonstrate the ambition referred to above, or secure a suitable replacement shortly so that he will have as many of those ninety six days as possible to assert his own methods and ideas and secure the players of his choice.

The Trust has always maintained that it will not interfere with the running of the first team and this remains our position. However, as we have now reached the close season in a position which most fans perceive as desperate, we feel, as the officially recognised voice of our fans, that we have an obligation to voice our concerns. We hope and trust that our observations are taken in the constructive spirit in which they are meant.

Our club has the history and tradition that is the envy of many in the footballing world, but the club has been drifting in a sea of mediocrity for too long. We are looking to you to ensure the club emerges from that mediocrity now, for if we fail to make determined progress this summer we will, without question, struggle to maintain our Premiership status.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Wynne
Chairman
THST