

# Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

Working for Club & Community



Issue # 21 • Winter 2012 • £2 (free for members)



## THE SEASON SO FAR

PAGE 8

**In this issue**



Behind the Scenes at BRFC



Reserves Review



All Shook up!

[www.berwickrangers.org](http://www.berwickrangers.org)



## Newsletter No. 21 Winter 2012

c/o 10 Golden Square  
Berwick-upon-Tweed  
Northumberland  
TD15 1BS

**Telephone:**  
01890 860329

**Fax:**  
01289 306980

**E-Mail:**  
trust@berwickrangers.org

**Chairman:**  
Colin Pike

**Vice-Chairman:**  
David Cook

**Secretary:**  
Isla Barber

**Treasurer:**  
Gordon Dickson

**Membership Secretary:**  
Bill Purvis

**FC Board Representative:**  
John Bell

**Committee Members:**  
John Bell, Ronald Kirk, Stephen  
Scott, David Spence, Michael  
Smyth, Keith Hall

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Michael Smyth

**Designed/Published by:**  
Paul Smith / www.vivadigital.net

Pictures by Doug Stenhouse,  
Andrew Robertson, Tweeddale  
Press & Angus Blackburn

## Greetings...

AND A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and really great 2013 to you all. It hardly seems credible that we're at the end of another year and as usual in the life of our Trust it's not been a boring one!

Since our last newsletter to you our new season is now into its second quarter with ,as I write, the team having pulled itself right onto the shoulders of those in the play off places. Our manager has put together a talented squad who are playing attractive football with it generally being agreed that a couple of additions would make us into genuine contenders. Our Trust remains as active as ever and it's hugely pleasing that our membership numbers remain at an all time high, and that of course is down to you the members, without whom we would not exist.

Our financial assistance to the football club continues with us handing over what we consider to be a useful sum to our club every season although we do not measure our contribution purely in

what we are able to donate in fiscal terms. I know all within the club do not share this view but we shall continue to do and contribute what we can whilst maintaining a watching brief.

Having resigned my position on the Scottish Council of Supporters Direct, if you have a spare hour I can tell you why, I watch with interest as the newly organised SD in Scotland takes its first faltering steps. Being part of the Council which secured their not insignificant funding from the Scottish Government (£130,000 per year) I probably have more interest than most in their progress.

To finish for now, can I remind you that as usual you can attend any of our board meetings with no prior notice required. You can also contact me on anything to do with our Trust or the wider Trust movement always glad to hear from you

Keep the faith.

*Colin*

### FOOT NOTE:

If you have any questions or issues, or any contributions for our newsletter, email: [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org)



## vice-chairman

DAVID COOK

First of all, some good news to report since our last newsletter. The Trust has appointed Isla Barber as Secretary, replacing the long-serving Karen Thorburn who provided excellent support to the Trust over the years. Many supporters will know Isla from her sterling work in the club shop, and we're delighted to have her on board.

While it's a relief to have filled the Secretary's position, we're still in desperate need of new blood on the Trust board. There's another article in this newsletter inviting people to join the board, but the fact of the matter is that we've been seeking new members for a couple of years now with barely a flicker of interest. We've been in idle mode for some time now, and whilst membership numbers remain constant, an injection of new blood will help kickstart new initiatives and bring new ideas to the table. So if you're a Berwick Rangers supporter, have some time on your hands to commit to the work of the Trust and have access to a pc and email, come on down.....

On the pitch, Ian Little and Robbie Horn have created the best team since the 2006/07 championship winning side. For my money, the current side are a better footballing outfit and has more quality players than Coff's champions. So why, you might ask, have Rangers struggled to break free from midtable all season? I think there are a number of answers to that. Again, this is a personal view, but I believe this is the

strongest Third Division for years, a point highlighted by the 2 point spread from 7th to 3rd positions at the time of writing. The biggest frustration so far has been Rangers' domination of games and the high cost of not having the killer instinct to finish off the opposition. Darren Lavery's improvement has been sensational, and Lee Currie's goalscoring from midfield has backed him up, but everyone I speak to believes that Rangers' signing priority should be a goalscoring striker to back up Lavery. We'll see what Santa brings in the next window. Anyone who was at the The Rangers match on 25th August had the good fortune to be present at one of the greatest days in our modern history, and if you were there, you will know that only a refereeing error denied us a famous win. It's days like that which make supporting your team through thick and thin worthwhile.

With a fair wind and some minor strengthening of the squad, we should make the playoffs. Looking at the wider footballing world beyond that though, things are clouded with uncertainty. The SFL has published what look to me like well-thought out proposals for a 16-10-18 three-league structure going live in 2015/16. One of the key elements of the SFL proposal is that Old Firm reserves should be admitted, along the lines of the Spanish model. True to form, and reeking of self-interest, the SPL has countered the SFL structure with a brainless, deeply flawed

proposal for a two-tier SPL, made up of 24 teams, splitting into 3 leagues of 8 after 22 games. Whoever is responsible needs to lay off the Buckfast. At the moment, it's impossible to tell how this will pan out, but as a Trust we'll be seeking your views once the alternatives become clearer.

As you know, we have our AGM on 8th December prior to the home match v Peterhead, and I hope we get a good turnout from members. I want to use that meeting to get a sense from you about what our priorities should be for the year ahead. As usual, we'll be looking at ways of raising money to support the football club, but I'd also like to have a closer look at the nature of the relationship between the football club and the Trust. Our proposals for regular tripartite meetings between the football club, Trust and Supporters Club just haven't taken off, so we need to revisit how, as a major shareholder with a director on the football club board, we can best represent Trust members' interests at Berwick Rangers FC (for example, a number of people have expressed concern at the lack of atmosphere in the ground, despite improving crowds, since the Duckett fence was taken down)

Thank you again for continuing to support the Trust.

**David Cook**  
Vice-Chair  
Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

## A look behind the doors of Shielfield Park...

LYNDSAY FLANNIGAN took on the role of Financial Officer at Berwick Rangers at the start of the 2007-08 season. She has worked in accounting since graduating from Napier University in Edinburgh with a degree in Business Studies.

Lyndsay admits that before linking up with the club, she had no particular interest in Berwick Rangers nor in football in general. Now however, she is a mine of information, some of which she recently imparted to Trust Board member Michael Smyth.

### BUDGETING FOR THE SEASON

Lyndsay explained that she maps out a budget for each season based on 'a worst case scenario' i.e. that net income from home league games will average only £1,000 per game and that the club will fall at the first hurdle in all cup competitions



having been drawn away in each with the consequent travelling costs to be considered, too. Income from a couple of home friendlies is also factored in.

Lyndsay pointed out that before the season starts, the club knows how much will be received from its main sponsor, shirt and back of shirt sponsors. Money from individual players' kit sponsorship also goes into the general pool though the season can be underway before all these deals are tied up. The arrangement with kit suppliers Zoo sees the company supplementing purchased kit with other free equipment.

Fixed costs include wages for non-playing staff (the groundsman is the only full-time employee), training costs and those for staging home games e.g. refreshments for players and officials and floodlighting. The club is fortunate that so many people give their services free. These include those on the turnstiles, programme sellers, stewards and the Assistant Safety Officer.

The major variable cost is the players' wages. Players only receive wages, they are not paid separate expenses.

### MONEY SPINNING FIXTURES

Luckily, in recent seasons, Berwick Rangers have played a number of games which have proved financially beneficial. There was the home Scottish Cup tie with Celtic in early 2011 and Lyndsay admits that the club has been very prudent with the funds garnered from that game. One major item of capital expenditure afterwards was a brand new tractor for the ground staff. The club toyed with purchasing a second hand one but decided that obtaining a new vehicle would make more economic sense as maintenance costs would likely be lower.



The club also did well out of a pre-season friendly against Hibs last season which drew a 1,400 crowd, the Easter Road club content to ask Rangers only to reimburse the cost of their coach travel to Shielfield. (Hibernian were also very undemanding when they loaned out Danny Handling and Jordan Forster last season.)

Then this year, we had the visit of our Glasgow namesakes and a capacity crowd of over 4,000. Lyndsay said the club did reasonably well from this match but unlike the Celtic tie, it received no direct television income. Instead, all the TV money from ESPN and Sky coverage of Glasgow Rangers' fixtures is going into a central pool to be divided up amongst SFL clubs at the end of the season. This arrangement also covers the next two seasons.

Furthermore, the bill for policing the Rangers' match was appreciably higher than that paid to their local constabularies by other Third Division clubs who have hosted the Ibrox men. Obviously, this ate into the gate receipts and was only partly offset by income from electronic advertising on the perimeter of the Duckett and from good match programme sales.

Lyndsay gave the assurance that with the experience of these big games behind it, the

Board will be looking at every possible way of reducing the cost of staging similar fixtures. When it is a cup tie, the home club is allowed to deduct a proportion of gate receipts to cover the costs of hosting the tie, usually about 15% of takings. The rest, minus VAT, is split evenly between the two clubs involved. None of the cash goes into a general Cup pool for division between all participating clubs.

### SEASON TICKETS

Sales are up this season. Lyndsay puts this down to two factors. The attraction of two matches against the Ibrox Rangers enticed purchases as season ticket holders are guaranteed tickets for these games at no extra cost. In addition, online sales have attracted more customers this year.

The SFL decrees that all season ticket holders are included in attendance figures irrespective of whether or not they attend matches. So, are crowd figures inflated in this way? Lyndsay referred to the club's gift of free season tickets to youngsters who attended July's 'Open Day' training session and conceded that perhaps only half of recipients might be present at any one game but the assumption must be that those paying for season tickets intend to use them for most games.

## MATCH DAYS

Lyndsay arrives at the ground at 12:30 p.m. One of the first jobs is to read the starting numbers on the turnstiles in order to calculate that day's attendance figure later on. She then prepares the floats for the gates and the bar. She must also sort out match day cheques e.g. for Bond winners, because these require a director's signature as well as her own. Referees must be given team lines by 2:00 p.m. though Yano usually has his ready an hour earlier.

With business relating to the club shop and then receiving the gate money and that from programme sales, Lyndsay is lucky if she gets to see the whole of the second half of a match.

## CLUB SHOP

Revenue from the shop on matchdays has doubled this season. There is now a committee running it under the leadership of director Bill Parkin. The shop has been totally restocked with items such as wallets, ties and key rings as well as replica kit and polo shirts from Zoo and fleece and hoodies.

However, the display of items needs to be improved. A major problem is the amount of space given over to old programmes, some of which are on sale for as little as 10p each. Might a separate 'old programmes kiosk' be the answer? Then again, volunteers would be needed to run it.

## RESERVES AND UNDER 19s

The Reserves are now much more integrated within the club set-up. Lyndsay also keeps their accounts. The club granted a sum of money to help finance the team this season and main sponsors cornice and plastering specialists, City Crafts Ltd, also made a valuable contribution.

Lyndsay has been 'manning' the gate at Reserves' home games this term so knows what amounts of cash are generated by entry fees and programme



sales. Whereas the SFL pays for referees and their assistants, in the East of Scotland League, the home club pays their match fees and travelling expenses. (It is the main reason why official linesmen are rare, at least in the EOSL First Division.) Whatever is left after the ref has been paid goes into Reserves' funds. Any spare programmes are given to the Club Shop to sell-- and to take up more space!!

Reserves' coach Mark Lamb negotiated the purchase of a minibus ( not brand new ), a cost effective measure as it cuts the petrol expenses bill by transporting all the team in one vehicle.

The costs of running the Under 19s are not great. No one gets paid. With Salvesen F.C. happy to have a team into which it feeds its players, it pays the all the match day expenses for home games at Forrester Complex in Edinburgh. Another of Lyndsay's jobs is taking the minutes at Berwick Rangers F.C. Board meetings.

**On this occasion, it wasn't her doing the writing but giving of her time and openness so that Trust members might get a clearer picture of how their club is run, is much appreciated.**

Thanks, Lyndsay.

**There was a time when the visit of one of the bigger clubs to Shielfield would have caused excitement on the terraces and mild panic in the boardroom.**

The Safety of Sports Grounds Act along with greater awareness of crowd control issues meant that the days when capacity was a definition of how many people you could get into a single space and everyone was happy is very much a thing of the past. Clubs like Berwick were rarely tested on the capacity issue and often paid lip service to the requirements needed to host one of the big boys. Consequently, when such an eventuality occurred, it resulted in a number of intense meetings, often held at the last minute since cup draws didn't allow for a great deal of lead-in time.

This had been the case at Shielfield for a number of years. That has gradually changed over the last few years but gained momentum with the visit of Celtic a couple of years ago. The club, at that stage, had already had the experience of hosting both Hearts and Glasgow Rangers in consecutive seasons and had taken on some of the lessons learned from those matches. Training of staff and a more professional approach was adopted and supported the work of the club in gaining accreditation under the UEFA Licensing scheme.

The Celtic game presented not only crowd issues, but also the "will it or won't it?" scenario in relation to the weather and the presence of live TV. In the event, the match passed off with few issues of concern but, instead of resting on its laurels, the club looked at improving and learning from the experience in the hope that another such occasion would present itself in the near future.

As it turned out, that occasion occurred only 18 months later and under circumstances no-one would have predicted with the demise and resurrection of our namesakes from the west coast. Although it was a league game, the uncertainty relating to the Glasgow club's status effectively gave the club a "cup tie" like timescale in which to host the game. However instead of mild panic, the club implemented the practices established over the last few seasons which allowed the match to pass off successfully, save for the eyesight of a certain man in the middle ten minutes from the end of the game.

Although this had been an all round effort from every part of the club, Trust members should know that many of your fellow members were actively involved in this event, from our representative on the club board to the many members who set out barriers, manned gates and sold tickets in the lead-up and during the game. Furthermore, your subscriptions have contributed to the infrastructure and facilities at Shielfield that help these type of matches to go ahead and give the authorities faith that the club is capable of carrying its responsibilities in a diligent and professional manner.

A final word about the club chairman, Brian Porteous, who was very hands on on the day and was seen around the ground, even during the game, ensuring things were present and correct. It would be a great temptation to let others take on the responsibility and enjoy the day behind the glass of the directors' box, but that is not Brian's way and all credit to the man who has led the club to the position it finds itself in now. That is, moving forward and with money in the bank.



**Someone, who probably wore a wig and smelled of sewage, coined the phrase “There are lies, damned lies and statistics”.**

Which is a clunky way of assessing Rangers’ 7th place in the league with 11 matches played, made up of 14/18 home points and 1/15 away points. The stats shout out that Shielfield is a fortress, not an accolade that’s been levelled at the old ground in recent seasons and that we’re as crap away from home as we are good before our adoring home support. As ever, it isn’t quite as simple as that.

At the time of writing (just after the classy 3-1 win over Annan), Rangers sit in 7th but are a mere 2 points behind third-placed Peterhead. This is a very, very tight league, tighter than the Trust chairman’s wallet, and although The Rangers are starting to show signs of life for the first time this season following an ominous climb to the top of the table, there are still 3 play-off places up for grabs with our Rangers, the real Rangers, very much in contention.

There is no disputing our impressive home form. The two draws - 0-0 against a ten man Elgin side and 1-1 against The Rangers, could easily have



■ *New Arrivals: Back Row L to R: Neil Janczyk, Damian Gielty, Dougie Brydon, Dean Hoskins Front Row L to R: Craig Stevenson, Phil Addison, Devon Jacobs, Marc Lancaster*

ended in wins, with the Black & Gold the better team on both occasions. The 4 victories have been very comfortable, albeit against some of the weaker sides in the league. It’s been a different story away from home however, with Rangers managing a single point from their five trips on the road. It’s difficult to put your finger on the sharp contrast with our home form. Received wisdom at the start of the season was that Rangers, with the most technically-proficient squad in living memory, would outplay their opponents on the new generation of 3 and 4G pitches. Except that it hasn’t worked out quite like that. Rangers produced their poorest performance of the season in a 3-1 defeat against a resurgent Montrose at Links Park, and chucked away a two goal lead at Annan before succumbing to a 3 goals in 6 minutes burst early in the second half of that game. With fixtures on the plastic at Ochilview v Shire and Cumbernauld v Clyde looming, it’s imperative that Rangers start and make the most of their very obvious gifts.

Crowds are up this season at Shielfield and it isn’t just down to The Rangers’ bounce, even though the Black and Gold’s superb performance in front of a national tv audience sent waves of pride rippling through the town. My guess is that the real reason more people are turning up to Shielfield is because Ian little & Robbie Horn’s team plays some sublime football, and, as important, it features some high quality players of the type who put bums on seats. Step forward the obvious stars of the team - Dougie Brydon, a revelation since his signing from EoSL Duns, and Darren Lavery, who has blossomed into one of the best strikers in the lower leagues following a tough baptism in the reserves. The supporting cast isn’t bad either. The Hoskins/Jacobs pairing is the best since the days of Davie Murie and Alan Neill, while Stevie Notman and Lee Currie remain two of the best third division midfielders around. The return of a fitter, stronger, more tenacious Ross Gray has given Rangers another string to their attacking bow (he puts in a decent defensive shift now too), while the likes of the impressive but fragile Dene Droudge add further quality to the squad.

Which brings me neatly to the weaknesses in the squad. Lavery looks classier with every game he plays, and already has a decent goal return of 6 with two thirds of the season remaining. If he maintains that strike rate, he’ll not be a kick in the backside away from 20 goals. The big problem is where the rest of the goals come from if, God forbid, anything happens to Lavery. Yano’s 4-5-1 line-up has morphed back into something approaching an orthodox 4-4-2, which is getting Rangers up the pitch quicker and in greater numbers, thereby increasing their goal threat - except that the other strikers aren’t weighing in with regular goals. Fraser McLaren and Phil Addison popped in a few at the start of the season, John Ferguson registered a double at home to Stirling Albion, and Stuart Noble has yet to get off the mark. Lee Currie sits level with Lavery at the top of the scoring charts, but Rangers desperately need another proven goalscorer (admittedly, they’re not exactly thick on the ground) if they’re to make that extra push to get ahead of the 6-7 teams capable of reaching the play-offs. I’m hoping that the January transfer window will bring a solution to the one major flaw and the biggest source of frustration in the season to date - Rangers’ inability to kill off teams that they’ve dominated.

The other achilles heel lies with the goalkeeping department. I’ll say this about big Yossi, he’s a good shot-stopper and brilliant at saving penalties - witness his heroics in the Ramsdens Cup loss at home to QP - but he’s like Dracula after a case of Buckie when the crosses start raining in. Anyone who was at the rollercoaster Raith cup tie and saw the carnage they caused at corners, and then again at home to Stenhousemuir in the Scottish Cup, will know what I mean. He’s a big powerful guy but he needs to dominate his area at set pieces, and the reason that The Eagle, who made a suitably sedate return at home to Annan, is back in goal is because Yossi needs to sort out that part of his game. One of the players I haven’t mentioned is Neil Janczyk. Janny is a sublime footballer and I love watching him play, but his inclusion in the 4-5-1 formation tended to slow the game down.



So what will the rest of the season bring? The management team deserve huge credit for sticking to their principles and building a real footballing team that it’s a pleasure to watch. If they can start and register some away points and sustain their home form, they’ll make the play offs. I’ve only seen one team this season that I think is better than us, and that’s Elgin, and even then, we could have taken something from our two games against them. Our performance at home to The Rangers was one of the best in modern times - we outplayed them and with a braver referee would have taken all three points.

But here’s the nub; we haven’t finished higher than 5th in the last five seasons and that needs to start changing. It’s all very well people preaching patience, but supporters want to see real signs of progress. I think we finally have that this season, and my hopes are that with some decent luck (and believe me, we’re due some) and some additional punch up front, we’ll finish in the top three. Yano, over to you.



David Spence and Colin Pike with 'Elvis'

An Elvis Presley Tribute Night was held on Saturday, 20th October in The Black & Gold Club organised by BRFC Supporters Trust Committee Member David Spence and Trust Secretary Isla Barber.

Danny Allan, a 23 year old originally from Hawick, showed real professionalism and tremendous ability as "The King" from the very first song "CC Rider" until the last encore with the crowd singing along to "Can't Help Falling In Love With You" – a song very familiar and popular with Berwick Rangers supporters, too !!

The set also included so many of Elvis Presley's classic hits like "All Shook Up", "Return To Sender", "The Wonder of You" & "Suspicious Minds".

It wasn't just the music that made the night such a success but the humour too, Danny had

great audience participation with the use of his American style accent.

A pie and pea supper was supplied to the attendees at the interval, during which time a raffle and an Irish Bingo were held. For those of you do not know what one of them is about, we will be featuring another at our next disco or tribute night which should be around spring/summer next year, so look out for details – all are welcome and these nights are quite good fun.

Around one hundred people attended the function and a sum of around five hundred pounds was raised. This will be used for the benefit of Berwick Rangers Football Club.

Elvis has left the building, but I am sure he will return in the not too distant future.

## A TRIBUTE TO EX GER, TREVOR KEMP

The untimely death of former Berwick Rangers' star and local legend Trevor Kemp on 15th October brought back memories of a bygone age in football, but one that Kempy kept very much alive with colourful stories about his playing career, and in particular, his pioneering exploits in the new footballing frontier of Australia.

Kempy was a proper Berwicker, a rare breed at Shielfield in modern times. He played over 30 times for the Dream Team during 1962-63, having put pen to paper on a contract that earned him the less than princely sum of £106 for the entire season. Today's overpaid prima donnas earn that per hour, but unlike them, Kempy was the real deal - a man who played football for the love of the game and not the financial rewards.

After leaving Shielfield, Kempy took the slow boat to Australia, where he starred for Melbourne Hungaria for a number of seasons. After his antipodean sojourn, Kempy returned to his home town to live and work, but his interest in football never waned. He kept on playing for the best local sides, and it was that experience which gave rise to one of my favourite Kempy stories. Picture the scene - there's a match at the Five Arches pitch in Tweedmouth, next to the main east coast railway line. Trevor lines up a free kick 45 yards out, and sticks it in the top corner, Brazilian-style. A passing 125 steps to take in the action, and when the ball hits the back of the net, the passengers disembark, applaud the goal, then resume their journey, their day made better by his moment of genius. The story went national after being

related to 'Four-Four-Two' magazine by Trust chairman Colin Pike. That was Kempy to a T - a showman yes, but a man with a deep love and understanding of the romantic value of football.

After hanging up his boots, Trevor went on to manage a number of local sides in the Border Amateur and North Nothumberland Leagues, including Highfields United, Tweedmouth Amateurs and Shielfield Rangers. Berwick Rangers' hall of famer Martin Neil and George "Voice of Shielfield" Thompson featured amongst the ranks of budding stars brought up in the best footballing traditions by Trevor.

One thing is for sure - even though Trevor is no longer with us, he will long be remembered as one of the last true Berwick characters whose memory will live on as his stories are passed down. So next time you're in The Pilot, Trevor's watering hole of choice, raise a silent toast to the man who reminded us all that football was most of all about having a good time.



Berwick Rangers 1962-63: Trevor is pictured bottom row, second from the right

**There has been a complete overhaul of the Berwick Rangers Reserves' squad this season with only local boy Michael Robinson remaining from last term.**

Five of last year's regulars, the Hill brothers, Connor Wood, Sam Young and Ross Cowan joined Juniors Dunbar United and Andrew Renton signed for East of Scotland neighbours Duns.

Mark Lamb was appointed Reserves' coach with clear instructions to seek only players who might possibly be good enough to have a crack in the SFL Third Division. Amongst others, he brought in a number of former Alloa Under 19 players including Grant Sandison, Kenny O'Brien and Greig Smith, the subsequently injury-unlucky Steven Bennett from Cowdenbeath and EoS-experienced Josh Morris (Tynecastle) and Steven Finlayson (Craigroyston).

Theoretically, this new signing policy suggests that the much changed team should be doing well at East of Scotland First Division level, so is that the case? The season commenced with the Qualifying League in which the Reserves were up against five other sides including two from the Premier Division. Both were beaten, Whitehill Welfare at Rosewell and Lothian Thistle Hutchison Vale at Shielfield. In the end, the only point dropped was in the opening game, a goalless draw at home to relegated Selkirk.

Amassing thirteen points out of a possible fifteen was more than enough to see the Reserves top their section and automatically qualify for the Quarter Finals of the League Cup later in the season. In each of the middle three Qualifying League games there was a sprinkling of first team men in the side. Fine. We were promised that senior players trying to regain match fitness after injury, or on the fringes of the first XI or, as in Stevie

Notman's case, suspended for SFL matches, would play for the Reserves but as the team coasted to a 4-0 victory over Lothian Thistle HV, the question which arose was how would the second string fare without guys like these?

The answer appeared to come in the first league match away to Eyemouth. 'The Fishermen' finished bottom of Rangers' QL section but deserved their 4-2 success in this game. Naivety partly led to the loss of two points in the next game at Kelso and it was only a late winner which secured all three points at Burntisland.

In the first home league game, Gala Fairydean were beaten 3-2, Stuart Noble playing his first serious game of the season. That win was a little fortuitous but there was nothing lucky about the next result as Easthouses Lily were swept away 10-2 on their own turf at Newbattle. A trend appeared to be emerging of a side made up mainly of aspiring rather than established players that was beginning to find its feet.

The opening league defeat at Eyemouth was avenged with a 4-3 win at Shielfield before a three figure crowd but the most striking feature was that all Berwick's goals were scored by Josh Morris. It brought his haul to twelve goals in just four appearances. Whilst the Reserves were winning 2-0 at Duns the following week, Rosyth-based Morris made his first team debut as a late substitute at home to Clyde. Thus, he joined Reserves' teammates Smith and keeper Sandison in appearing for the top team off the bench, Smith at Annan in August and Sandison in a couple of friendlies including the Newcastle game.

By this stage the Reserves had moved up to second in the table behind local rivals Coldstream. They could have moved level on points with the Home Park side if they had beaten Ormiston at Shielfield at the end of October but squandered a 2-0 lead and had to settle for a 3-all draw.

As the season progressed, signings included Jonathan Fairbairn from Milfield, near Wooler, returning to the U.K. from U.S. soccer with Mississippi Storm, defender Ross Brady from Livingston and ex-Aberdeen man Dean Carse who notched five goals in his first three games before injury struck. Spaniard Alberto Garcia only stuck around for two matches. In addition, Under 19 team graduate Ben Miller has been in and out of the Reserves' line-up. Carse returned to play in part of the 3-2 loss at Selkirk on November 17th but Grant McNicoll, signed to be the 'old head' in the team, had yet to make an appearance by that stage, taking longer than expected to get over a knee problem.



■ Berwick Rangers Reserves 2012-13



■ New Signing: Jonathan Fairbairn

Ducket Wanderers 2004-05



**Every so often it's nice to be able to spice up your football-watching life with something a touch more exotic than a subzero night in the rain at Ochilview, so whenever I'm overseas I try and take in a game or two.**

I lost my European football cherry in 1986, at Cercle Bruges v RWD Molenbeek (now sadly defunct), but it wasn't until the late 90s that I got the bit back between the teeth, starting off in 1996 with a dire Nantes v Metz match in front of a near-empty stadium, only redeemed by a standout performance from a young Robert Pires.

On my next French adventure, I caught fleas. Try going into a French chemist and asking for flea powder, especially in the days before smartphone translators. Les puces cottoned on to me at an incident-packed Lorient v Red Star Paris 93 second division match in a packed stadium. I found myself amongst a group of local minglers for whom the lack of personal hygiene had been elevated to a high art. The game was a cracker, 5-2 to Lorient and featuring a mini riot when a Red Star sub nipped the Lorient coach.

On the way home, we got held up in the funeral cortege for the Diana crash chauffeur - it was a surreal day. I completed my French experience with Strasbourg v Monaco, enlivened by the home support trying to get into the dugout to attack their manager after going 3-0 down in the opening 10 minutes to a Ludovic Giuly-inspired Monaco, and a couple of deadly dull games at Bordeaux against Auxerre and Lille respectively. Best thing about Bordeaux is the packed curva singing Andy Williams "Too good to be true" en masse during games. Like Caesars Palace used to be on Hide Hill, only lots better.

The Ducket Wanderers, an all-star Berwick Rangers supporters team, was set up in the late 90s and we embarrassed the good name of the club by accepting an invitation to take part in a civic celebration tournament in Berwick's twin town of Trzcianka in Poland.

After a dodgy flight to Berlin and a five hour drive eastwards, arriving in the wee sma' hours at our accommodation in a former mental asylum (honest - you couldn't make this stuff up) on the edge of a lake patrolled by killer swans, the alarm bells started ringing when

someone pointed out the posters on show around town announcing that the local side, a Polish 5th Division outfit, would be facing "Berwick Rangers". The nightmare spiralled out of control as we walked out on to the pitch at the municipal stadium to be greeted by the Mayor and civic party, before local schoolkids handed over goody bags of local gifts. We managed to retain our composure during the national anthem and raising of the Union Jack before the 1000-strong crowd, for whom the penny dropped when Big Stevie conceded the first of 10 goals in the 90th second. Yep, they'd been conned.

Subsequent trips to the Czech Republic and Hungary took in some proper football, most of which were memorable: Bohemians v Sparta Prague, which was abandoned after home supporters levelled the linesman; the sale of handguns and ammunition in the shop beside the tramstop on the way home was less than reassuring, though a 10 pint round for the equivalent of £3.00 salved the fear. Viktoria Zizkov v FC Brno at 10.30 on a Sunday morning (their chosen k.o. time as Prague's anti-establishment club) was a hangover buster, while the 2005 Hungarian Cup Final between Sopron & Ferencvaros in the remote Videoton stadium was bizarre, the unfancied minnows from the mountains destroying the favourites from Budapest by 5-1. The train back to the capital in the company of riot police and neo-Nazi Ferencvaros fans made those 70s trips to old Bayview seem an oasis of calm.

Since then, we've taken in a magnificent performance by Waalwijk against Volendam in the Dutch Second Division, with ex-Ipswich midfielder Martin Reuser scoring a 40 yarder on a 'Baltic' night made more comfortable by inward-facing roof-mounted heaters. Willem II v NAC Breda produced one of the worst matches it's been my misfortune to see, and Germinal

Beerschot v FC Brussels in Antwerp wasn't much better. Thank God for Belgian beer. German football, on the other hand, never fails to disappoint, and my German side, Union Berlin in Bundesliga 2 are well worth a visit. This is what all football should be like - cheap, cracking atmosphere, with good beer and Eyemouth United badges on sale at the stall outside the stadium. Energie Cottbus v Dortmund was a cracking 3-3 draw, preceded by a walk through a public park to the stadium featuring a small lake populated by massive coypu. Babelsburg v Tennis Berlin was memorable for an entire Ramones' album played over the p.a. before kick-off. They really do have some style in Germany.

Two years ago, I went along to see Maritimo beat Porto (Falcao, Hulk et al) 1-0 before a paltry crowd of 4000 in Funchal, Madeira, and earlier this season, I took in FC Bruges v Standard Liege, on another perishing afternoon made worse by the absence of an away support who were boycotting the game due to high ticket prices. Summer saw my last visit to a European match, this time in the Spanish Third Division, to see Cadiz beat Balompedia Linense 3-1 (not a medical condition, apparently) before a healthy crowd of 8000.

Looking forward to Lokeren v Genk next, though one eye will be fixed on the rolling result from Shielfield, as ever. Old habits die hard.





# News Snippets

## BRFC TRAVEL CLUB

A couple of times over the last year, the Trust Board has been asked to assist with the cost of buses taking supporters to away matches. At its September, 2012 meeting, the Board agreed that only in exceptional circumstances could it release money to help towards such costs. In effect, these circumstances would be matches away to Highland League opponents in cup competitions where the longer journey times add to the expense of hiring transport.

Whilst the Board is always willing to consider helping to finance something unusual, special or unexpected, the main purpose of the Trust is to raise money for Berwick Rangers Football Club. Regular subsidising of fans' away travel would eat into funds which the Board feels should more appropriately be channelled towards the football club. It is hoped that Trust members will appreciate and support the reasoning behind this decision.

## U19 UPDATE

As of the middle of November, Berwick Rangers were sitting at the foot of the SFL Under 19 Division with only one win in their nine matches- an impressive sounding 5-0 triumph over East Fife. The team has also been on the wrong end of some big scores, leaking seven goals against both Cowdenbeath and Arbroath ( in a match which produced eleven goals altogether ) and six away to Queen's Park in the season opener.

In the Scottish F.A. Youth Cup, Berwick took Raith Rovers to extra time at Starks Park, Kirkcaldy before going down 3-0.

Mark Lamb, who oversees the team, explains that it is a young side even for the under 19 Division and hopes that as it picks up experience, its fortunes will improve.

The Under 19 team is managed by Kevin Martin, who turned out for the Reserves on a number

of occasions last season. Kevin is assisted by Richard Murphy and Mark Beveridge, father of goalkeeper Kieran Beveridge.

## SUPPORTERS TRUST AGM

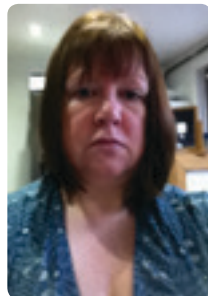
Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust will hold its Annual General Meeting in the Black and Gold Club at Shielfield on Saturday, December 8th, 2012, commencing at 11:00 a.m.

Rangers' Chairman Brian Porteous and manager Ian Little have been invited to attend and it is hoped that before the usual formal AGM business, there will be an open forum with discussion of the season to date and plans for the rest of this campaign and beyond particularly in the light of emerging issues such as the recent League reconstruction proposals and doubts about the future of speedway at Shielfield.

All Trust members are invited, as are prospective new members who can join up on the day. There are still vacancies on the Trust Board and anyone interested in standing for a position can contact the Trust at [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org) for further details.

## NEW TRUST SECRETARY

Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust is pleased to welcome Isla Barber as its new secretary. Born in Glasgow, Isla has lived in Peebles most of her life. She has been involved with Berwick Rangers for the last eight years, initially helping to sell programmes and then covering for Trust Board member Gordon Dickson in the Shielfield shop when Gordon couldn't be there. She continues to work in the shop on home match days and is also a member of the committee now responsible for running it.



Isla was previously a Hearts season ticket holder but is unhappy with the current Lithuanian-dominated regime at Tynecastle.

Isla's nine year old grandson, Lewis Barber, has attended several games at Shielfield and has become very interested in Berwick Rangers. Lewis plays for Peebles Under 10s in Borders 'junior' soccer--- that is 'junior' as in 'youngsters', not as in Auchinleck Talbot, Bonnyrigg Rose, etc!

## CALENDAR CRISIS

Members should have received their 2013 copies of the popular Trust calendar along with this newsletter. In the past, the calendar has paid for itself through advertising. However this year, we have been unable to fill all the advertising spaces which means there is a cost to the Trust, raising doubts about the future viability of the calendar. Any businesses interested in supporting future editions, please email [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org).



## RESERVES PROGRAMMES

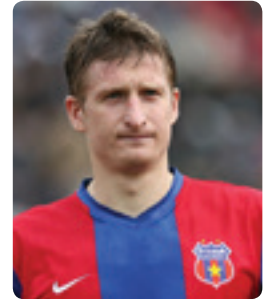
As explained in this edition's feature on Berwick Rangers Financial Secretary Lyndsay Flannigan, any spare programmes from Reserves' games are donated to the club shop for sale to collectors. Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust sponsors the production of these programmes, chairman Colin Pike being the editor, so it is especially pleasing to hear from new Trust secretary Isla Barber, who works in the club shop, that they sell well.

Normally on offer in the shop at the £1 cover price, their attraction appears to be their relative rarity compared to the number of first team programmes available for purchase. Money generated in the shop goes to the football club so this is another small way in which the Trust helps to finance Berwick Rangers.

## US? FATTIES?!!

asks Michael Smyth

Glasgow Rangers' Romanian international Dorin Goian didn't make it to Shielfield on August 26th as he went off to Italy just beforehand to play for Serie B club Spezia Calcio. However, he had sufficient early season experience over here on which to base some interesting comments about life in the lower reaches of the Scottish Football League.



Though describing opponents such as Brechin City, East Fife and Peterhead as being of 'modest standard', he conceded that they all showed great ambition when playing against his team. Goian was quite frank. "I thought we'd be playing against fat amateur players but they are not." Clearly in his time in Scotland, until the demise of the Ibrox club, he had not made himself familiar with much beyond the confines of the SPL. Taking Berwick Rangers as an example, 'fat' is the last word one would use to describe the likes of Stevie Notman, Chris Townsley, Fraser McLaren or Darren Lavery.

This is not to condemn Goian who went on to say that in his short spell in the lower echelons, he had encountered many good young players, who even if they didn't have the qualities to make it ( to the top ), were all very hardworking. He was also complimentary about the stadia. Small they may be but he was surprised to find they had good playing surfaces with plenty of grass and no big slopes.

It's a pity Dorin didn't get to Berwick. Going by the above, he would have been positively drooling about the excellent state of the Shielfield pitch!

## PUBLICITY, PROMOTION AND BERWICK RANGERS

It is easy to criticise so let's start with the positive. Berwick Rangers' 'Open Day' for youngsters in July was a great success ( see last newsletter ). In an attempt to build on the interest it created, all the young folk who attended were offered free junior season tickets. Most accepted.

The income generated from the sale of these would have amounted to several hundred pounds and the club's gesture flies in the face of those who would condemn it for doing nothing for local youth.

In fact, at £140 for 18 home league games ( and possibly home play-off matches ) plus entry to Reserves' home fixtures in the East of Scotland League, the full adult season ticket represents particularly good value. To put this into some sort of perspective, Erith and Belvedere who play in the Kent League, a definitely inferior brand of football, charge £100 for a full-priced season ticket. Their matchday admission charges of £8 and £5 ( concessions ) almost match Berwick's £10 and £5, Rangers remarkably having stuck to these prices for over a decade.

By all accounts, the £10 flat rate of entry for August's match with The Rangers, went down well with followers of the Ibrox club, appreciative that Berwick were not trying to cash in via inflated prices, let alone were they ripping off anyone.

There were some murmurings amongst the Shielfield faithful about season tickets not being valid for pre-season friendlies as they had been the year before. The later, hastily arranged friendly with a Newcastle United XI also cost £8 and £4 to watch and some felt a bigger Friday night crowd would have been attracted if full

adult admission had been cut to a fiver. That's debatable. In view of the short notice given of this particular fixture, an attendance of 309 paying spectators wasn't bad and noticeably higher than for the two pre-season Shielfield games v. Livingston ( 205 ) and Dunfermline ( 180 ).

Only one professionally produced poster advertising the Newcastle game was spotted but presumably, there were others about. However, nothing similar concerning the SFA Cup tie with Wick Academy was evident. If it hadn't been for a healthy travelling support, the crowd for this game would have dipped below 400. On the day of the match, one Trust Board member was asked on the street what was going on, the questioner's attention drawn to Wick supporters out and about in the town centre. Anecdotal evidence at least, that awareness of the tie was not as great as it might be.

The local press generally serves Berwick Rangers well but sometimes, a little push may be necessary. Did nobody at the club consider that an approach to the paper to build up the tie might have helped? 'Only' a Highland League club perhaps, but the angle could have been that this was a first visit to Shielfield by Scotland's most northerly senior club. Furthermore, the Berwick Rangers' box on the back page of 'The Advertiser' on the Thursday before the match was so cluttered with other information that a microscope would have been handy to read the details that were actually given about the game! In this instance, could a slightly bigger space not have been requested? At this level of football, if a bit more publicity can attract 20-50 extra customers, that makes a significant difference to gate takings.



Returning to the positive. The new style club website (pictured) is about a year old now. It will have its detractors of course. 'Webmaster' Alan Bell is open to suggestions but it conveys key information about what is going on concerning Berwick Rangers. The site is bright and light with no morbid background colours. Of course, not everyone uses a computer. Some people rely on more traditional sources of information so we are back to contemplating other effective ways of using these.

The Trust Board has an idea for generating publicity in Berwick town centre but the processes involved are too lengthy and time consuming for this to have turned into a reality

for this season. We'll keep you posted! We hope it will fare better than our suggestion last year that the football club should offer free admission to all at one league match, but invite spectators to make donations into buckets.

The Trust was prepared to underwrite any shortfall on the projected gate receipts that would normally be expected from the visit of the particular opponents that day. In fact, the Board hoped, as a number of other clubs who did this happily found, that the total accrued from donations would significantly exceed the normal level of gate takings. However, the football club board declined to conduct this experiment.

# The Pilot Inn

Always three Real Ales on tap  
En-Suite Accommodation  
Bar Meals



Football fan special:  
10% off accommodation rates



CAMRA  
CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE  
WHERE IT IS

[www.thepilotinn.net](http://www.thepilotinn.net)

31 Low Greens, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1LZ  
Tel: 01289 304214 E-mail: [spadge@thepilotinn.net](mailto:spadge@thepilotinn.net)

## Cheeklaw Garage



Keith Hall (Proprietor)  
Duns Industrial Estate  
Station Road  
Duns  
Berwickshire  
TD11 3HS

Tel: 01361 884449  
Mobile: 07970515925

- Servicing & Repairs
- MOTs
- All Makes...All Models
- Cars, LCVs & 4x4s

## KEENWELD (Welding Supplies)

Machines - Gas Equipment - Safety Equipment - Consumables  
Machine Repairs - Gas Safety Testing - Welder Training  
Technical Advice - Regular Deliveries To Lothian & Borders,  
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear

Telephone: 01289 302 649

Shop/office open: Monday to Friday 9.00am - 1.00pm  
Unit 7b, East Ord Industrial Estate, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 5XP

## ADVERTISE HERE

Competitive rates - support *your* Trust!

Email: [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org)

Design • Printing • Website Design • Embroidery • Signage

Think Creative... ...Think

[www.fantasyprints.co.uk](http://www.fantasyprints.co.uk) Tel: 01289 303242



# VIVADIGITAL™

Branding \* Web Strategy \* Print

We help businesses and organisations with branding,  
online strategy, social engagement and design for print.  
We'd love to help grow your business.

Call: 0061 405 055 623

[www.vivadigital.net](http://www.vivadigital.net) // [hi@vivadigital.net](mailto:hi@vivadigital.net)

PROUD TO SUPPORT THE  
SUPPORTERS TRUST

