

Cardiff City  
Supporters' Trust  
Magazine  
April 2013



# moving to a different beat



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**W**e're back - welcome to the new edition of Moving To A Different Beat.

It's been a while since our last magazine, although we've not been sitting on our laurels. We produced the commemorative brochure to mark the completion and erection of the fantastic Fred Keenor statue.

This season has certainly been volatile off the field with the rebranding controversy while on it the Bluebirds have been pushing hard for promotion to the Premier League. We wish the team well as they bid to reach the top division for the first time in more than 50 years.

Key to the success of any team is a solid defence and goalkeeper David Marshall, a rock between the sticks, took time out from training to talk to us about his life at Cardiff City and starring for Celtic against Barcelona.

We've also had a sit-down with City legend Roger Gibbins who tells us about his life as a footballer and playing against

footballing greats like Franz Beckenbauer and George Best.

Media Wales journalist Steve Tucker writes an entertaining piece as he gives his take on following the Bluebirds while we also tell you about the highlights of the 1983 promotion celebration, plus all the latest Trust news, including the recent fans' survey.

I hope you enjoy the read and as ever, if you want to get involved, [help@ccfctrust.org](mailto:help@ccfctrust.org)

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# a word from the chair



**W**hat a season, what a team! I am truly hoping that after all the years of pain, 2013 will finally see the Bluebirds promoted back to where we all want to be.

This season has been a roller coaster ride both on and off the pitch and the Trust has worked tirelessly to represent the fans interests so that Cardiff City is a true community club.

We now have the magnificent Fred Keenor statue to admire every time we visit the stadium. It was a long haul but thanks to your generosity we have a fitting tribute to one of Cardiff's greatest. We helped get the Memorial Garden started and that too will soon be finished. We have convinced the club of the merits of supporting a safe standing pilot in the Football League to see if clubs can be allowed to reintroduce some form of terracing and we have also helped oppose travel restrictions when we play away.

The Trust has been busy in the community playing friendly

matches against Cardiff's Somali and Bangladeshi communities and arranging tickets to try to get new and different people to share our passion for the City. Our social evening in February saw us reunite the promotion winning 82-83 team and they didn't disappoint, even after 30 years. Thanks to Jimmy Mullen, the Bennett brothers and all the players who shared their memories of that great season (See Page 12)

The rebranding of the club has been a major discussion point ever since it was announced. Our recent members' survey (See Page 11) shows that you do not support any further major changes. This is now the Trust's position and we will be lobbying the club to that end. The survey also asked how we can improve the match day experience and how the Trust should spend its money.



We had some great responses, from questions about the colour of the away kit to how fans can fly their flags at the stadium. We will discuss these issues with the Chief Executive, continue to keep a close eye on the club's finances and ask when the club will be paying off of our historical debt.

The Trust took part in Supporters Direct's recent lobby of Parliament. SD has made the case for a formal, structured relationship with fans to be part of a club's licence, for sports grounds to be listed as community assets and for a government advisory group to be set up to reform the game. Football is an important part of our heritage and the trust movement will do all it can to ensure the game is run properly and for the benefit of fans.

We would like to thank former club chairman TG for his support and wish him all the very best for the future. It is some two-and-a-half years since we met him face to face and we now hope to meet the new chairman and Vincent Tan at the end of the season to put your questions directly to him. The members' poll showed that you believe consultation with fans on a regular basis is vital.

Many thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to push the fans' agenda forward but there's plenty more work to be done. We need new blood to help run the Trust so please do get involved with us this year.

Here's to a hopefully historic season for the City!

**Tim Hartley**  
Chairman

# in safe hands

It's said that behind every great team there's a great goalkeeper. Since his £500,000 transfer

from Norwich City in the summer of 2009, David Marshall has fought off all competition to make himself Cardiff City's first choice number one.

With the Bluebirds sitting pretty in pole position for the majority of the 2012-13 campaign, seemingly on the cusp of greatness, the man responsible for laying the foundations of their impressive goals against record speaks, exclusively, to Moving to a Different Beat's David Towler.

**MTBD: They say goalkeepers are different. Most young children playing football want to emulate their goal-scoring heroes, what inspired you to become a 'man between the sticks' instead?**

*DM: I went for trials with Celtic when I was nine. Because I enjoyed playing in goals, I went as a goalkeeper and managed to get in. Obviously I made it eventually to the first team, but at the time it was just a phase I was going through - I never really knew how good I was at it.*

**MTBD: The role of the goalkeeper has changed over the years through style of play and also the intervention of the back pass rule, were you a good footballer generally growing up or have you had to work on the technical side of things since becoming pro?**

*DM: I always played outfield for my school team, I probably enjoyed it more to be honest. I was a striker - I liked scoring goals, just like any other kid. But, after I had got through the trials at Celtic as a goalkeeper, I could hardly turn round to them and say, 'Oh, by the way, I want to be a striker!' So I stuck with it and it's worked out pretty well.*

*Using your feet is definitely a big part of it though. When I started playing, the back pass rule had just been introduced and those types of tactics were starting to come more into the game. In*

*this league, being able to use your feet is not so important, depending on your style of football - but in the Premiership it's a must.*

**MTDB: You signed your first professional contract with Celtic in 2002, having progressed through the club's youth ranks. Did you ever cross paths with your present day manager, a certain Malky Mackay?**

*DM: I remember watching a Celtic vs Rangers game and Malky scored a header, in the Scottish Cup at Parkhead. I'll always remember it - (Paolo) Di Canio was playing that game and they flicked up a free kick and he hit the bar with it. But no, I never really met the gaffer. I was in the Scotland squad with him, but I was only 17 or 18 at the time, while he was coming to the end of his career. I just kept my head down at that age. Funnily enough, until he came here, I'd never really had a conversation with him.*

**MTBD: Did you go to many matches growing up then?**

*DM: Yeah, I was a massive Celtic fan growing up. I was lucky enough to have a season ticket from the age of seven.*

**MTBD: Like most young 'keepers at big clubs, you had to bide your time for chances in the first team at Celtic. But, when Rab Douglas was sent off after an altercation in the tunnel at Celtic Park during half time of a UEFA Cup tie against Barcelona in**

**2004, you were suddenly thrown in to the spotlight. Aged 19 and after only a couple of prior appearances, you contributed to keep a clean sheet. Not only that night, but also in the return leg at the Nou Camp - a performance described at the time, as the best ever by a Scottish shot-stopper. What was it like?**

*DM: It was unbelievable. I was getting to that age where, having been around the first team since I was 16, I was desperate to play a first team game. I was thinking about going out on loan. Even though I was on the bench, I hadn't started a first team game and I didn't really feel part of it at all. Then, when 'big Rab' got sent off in the tunnel, I was pitched straight into it. But, the second half of that game, I had absolutely nothing to do. Alan Thompson scored and we won 1-0. To get chucked into a game of that magnitude was incredible. It helped that they had a couple of players sent off, one with Rab in the tunnel and then their striker (Javier Saviola) in the second half - I never had much to do. They substituted Ronaldinho, because of their players that were sent off, so it was an easy game to slot into really.*

*All of a sudden, we have to play the return leg and we managed to sneak a 0-0 to go through. The second game was a lot more difficult, but I got to pull off a few decent saves. I'm not sure it was the best ever performance by a Scottish 'keeper. I think because of my age it got blown out of proportion - I had only turned 19 a couple of days before the game. There was a lot of talk about Magnus Hedman, who was at the club at the time but on loan, in Italy. In the paper, every day, there were articles saying, 'Magnus is coming back to play in the Barca game'. So I had it in the back of my mind that I would get let down, but (Celtic manager at the time) Martin O'Neill said, 'No, we're going to stick with you.' Thankfully, it worked out great.*

**MTBD: And the following season, this time in the Champions' League group stages, against Barcelona, you saved a penalty from Ronaldinho?**





DM: Yeah, we were 1-0 down and they got a penalty. I managed to save it, then it went straight up the pitch and Chris Sutton scored to make it 1-1. Henrik (Larsson) was playing for Barca, it was his first game back at Celtic, he scored and they ended up winning 3-1. But those are good memories.

**MTBD: You made 35 league appearances for Celtic on the back of your heroics against the Catalans, not to mention gaining your first senior Scotland cap. But, despite this encouraging start, you fell out of favour at Celtic Park. Were you disappointed to be leaving Parkhead?**

DM: Yes and no. I thought I was ready (for the first team). O'Neill had left, Strachan had come in and I was the only senior goalkeeper left at the club. But, we had a couple of bad results, in Europe we lost 5-0 away and we drew the first league game of the season 4-4, so Artur Boruc came in. For the 18 months he and I were there, he was unbelievable. I knew by then that it was time to go.

**MTBD: You spent two seasons at Norwich, making a total of 92 league appearances but you were unable to prevent the Canaries from being relegated in 2008-09. As a goalkeeper, do you feel the burden more than most, when you're losing matches and your side is relegated?**

DM: Yeah, definitely. I remember the first season, we were safe with two games to go, and we beat QPR at home to achieve safety. But the second season seemed to just be a bad time at the club. We got relegated from the Championship on the last day (of the season) and I signed for Cardiff a week later.

**MTBD: Dave Jones signed you for Cardiff City in May 2009 and you become the first 'keeper to keep a clean sheet in a competitive fixture at the Cardiff City Stadium. What attracted you to Cardiff?**

DM: They seemed to be up near the play-offs nearly every time. I had played at Ninian Park a few times and the atmosphere when I had played there was brilliant. Obviously my first year coincided with us leaving Ninian Park, but I always liked playing Cardiff.

**MTBD: During your first season with the Bluebirds, we witnessed for ourselves those same abilities that defied Ronaldinho. One of**

**the defining memories from that season is David Marshall celebrating at CCS following the penalty shootout against Leicester in the playoff semi-final. Is that the closest emotion 'keepers get to scoring goals?**

DM: Yeah, there's no pressure on 'keepers when it comes to penalty shoot outs. It's all on the takers. People always speak about the saves, but I think our five penalty takers scored that day and Leicester's first three had scored, so there was massive pressure on the boys. But goalkeepers don't tend to get much praise - so I'm happy to take a pat on the back when I get it.

**MTBD: Could you believe Leicester's French striker, Yann Kermongant, tried to chip his penalty?**

DM: I look at that again and I have no idea why I stayed [in the middle of goal]. Usually, I would pick a side and dive, but it must have been sixth sense that I knew he was going to try something silly. I think I can tell by the run up most of the time, which side they are going. But I would never ever think that someone was going to dink it, not in that situation, especially because everybody prior to him had scored. Maybe I thought he was just going to smash it.

**MTBD: You practice penalties with the rest of the players, does our designated penalty taker, Peter Whittingham, put many past you?**

DM: Yeah, he scores pretty much every one!

**MTBD: But the play-offs were ultimately to end in disaster at Wembley, losing 3-2 to Blackpool.**

**With all the goals coming in the first half, have you ever played in such a crazy 45 minutes?**

DM: No, I don't think I have. At half time, when we were 3-2 down, I still thought there was plenty of time. With another half to go, I was sure we would get back into it, but it was such a hot day and after such a manic first half, by about 50,

60 minutes both teams were just jogging - nobody could find any extra energy whatsoever. It's the worse place to lose, Wembley. I wouldn't say we threw it away, Blackpool played well on the day and we were disappointing - it was a hard, hard knock to take.

**MTBD: Tom Heaton was signed to contest your place in the team for the start of the 2010-11 season. Do you respond positively to healthy competition?**

DM: Definitely. During my first season Encks (Peter Enckelman) was here. He came to the end of his contract at the end of that season, so to get somebody in, like Tom, was great. I had actually injured my elbow, in the play-off semi final, the season before. I had tried to play through it, but it was getting to the stage where I couldn't train. I probably couldn't push on as much as I would have liked, so when Tom came in it was great. Unfortunately we lost Tom too, at a big time later that season, and Steven Bywater came in.

**MTBD: When Malky arrived at the club last summer, he was left with just 10 outfield players at his disposal and**

**embarked on a major recruitment drive in order to rebuild the squad. However, he seemed to be far more contented with his choice of goalkeepers. How did Malky handle who to pick as his first choice number one?**

DM: He didn't tell me I was his first choice. I was just recovering from injury (when Malky joined), so I missed the first week of pre-season. I was a little bit nervous, that if I couldn't get fit and start training, that I would fall away. But I managed to crack on and we played the same amount of pre-season games. I think he watched us both during the matches and ended up giving me the nod on the Friday before West Ham.

**MTBD: Last season we suffered heartbreak at Wembley again, but this time, in the Carling Cup against Liverpool. Were you gutted to have not played much of a part in that cup run?**

DM: I was disappointed. You go on these cup runs and there are so many good teams that you never think you will make it to the final. I thought, when we got Blackburn we had a good chance and obviously to be playing Palace home and away in the semis was great. It was disappointing not to play, but Tom did so well in getting us there. He was superb in the penalties against Palace and in the final against Liverpool. It was heartbreaking - it just wasn't to be, again. Tom saved the first one off Steven Gerrard and you thought that it was going to be our day, but the boys had put so much into the game that they were shattered by the time of the penalties.

**MTBD: Having failed to get promoted via the playoffs in each of the seasons following your arrival at Cardiff, the playoffs are well and truly off the agenda this season, right?**

DM: I hope so. That's the plan - to be sat on a beach watching the play-offs. But you never know in this league.

**MTBD: What makes this season different to all the others?**

DM: We've got a really, really good squad of players. Over the last few years, we've had good players but probably not the strength and depth that we have this year. Compared to my first couple of seasons here, the work rate of the



team is faultless. It won't be for a lack of effort if we're not winning a game of football. If you have that quality, everybody stays fit and works hard, then that can be the difference.

**MTDB:** Following your impressive displays against Barcelona in the UEFA Cup, you earned your first international cap for Scotland, aged only 19 you must have thought it was the first of many. Now, with Cardiff City flying high, partly due to your great form this year, your next international appearance is surely not far away. Have you been frustrated by a lack of chances at international level?

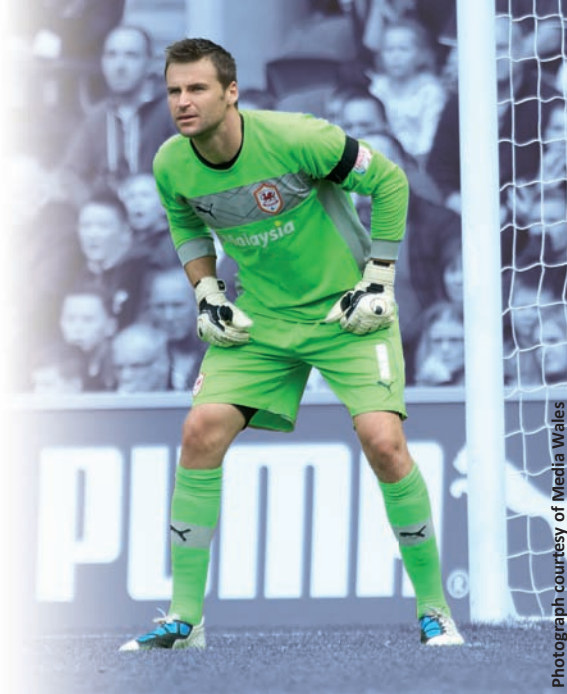
*DM:* You can get frustrated. I must have been in more Scotland squads than most of the players. But in terms of playing in games it's been difficult. Craig Gordon was flying at that point (when first called up), but obviously he has suffered with injuries and Allan (McGregor) has come in and is flying now. It has been disappointing but that takes a back seat. When you know you're not going to play it's different. When you think you're going to play and then you get disappointed – that's the main thing that gets to you. But I can't complain about the two goalkeepers ahead of me – they have done well.

**MTDB:** How has the club changed since Malky took over the reins?

*DM:* For me, personally, I like to come in and work hard. I think most goalkeepers do like getting their head down with the goalkeeping coach. But I think the club in general has become that little bit more professional. He wants everything to be as professional as it can be. There are restrictions, being a Championship club, in terms of what we can do, but he won't leave any stones unturned in terms of preparation for games. With regards to who we're playing and their particular kind of style, right up to the starting 11, he and his staff have been meticulous.

**MTBD:** How does a South Wales derby compare to old firm affairs?

*DM:* They are comparable - fans are the same everywhere, they love their club. It was different for me, playing in an old firm derby, being a Glasgow boy. I would go home and my next door neighbour was a Rangers fan - he was one of my best mates, so that aspect is different. But the atmosphere was incredible when Swansea were down here – hopefully next season we will have a Premiership



Photograph courtesy of Media Wales

*South Wales derby and we can talk about a proper derby then!*

**MTBD:** Finally; some of the fans have apparently lost their passion for the club since the rebrand. Has playing in a red kit with a dragon badge affected the passion of the players towards the club in any way?

*DM:* No, definitely not. I can understand how it's difficult. I was a Celtic fan and I can remember when Celtic brought out a home strip and there were only a couple of white bits under the arm, as opposed to the traditional hoops. The fans kicked off and eventually got it changed. So I completely understand where the fans are coming from.

*The passion from the players has always been there. Every year I have been here, we have been in the play-offs, every year we try to get better. I think we have done that, so I don't think you can question it – especially the gaffer and his staff, they have been outstanding. The owners have got their own thoughts on it - they have put a lot into the club and have got us to where we are. I can understand where they (the fans) are coming from, but hopefully they can get behind us and help get us to where we want to be - because at the end of the day, we are definitely still Cardiff City!*

# the votes are in



**T**he Trust launched its members' survey in February so we could find out more about what fans thought of supporting Cardiff City – and what they want the Trust to do on their behalf.

The survey was undertaken online, by phone and at the Cardiff City Stadium, and there were almost 700 responses to the survey, with 261 responses from members. The results showed that:

- **Almost 60% of members rated the past 12 months as above average, however, over a third felt the year was disappointing.**
- **Following press speculation and on-going uncertainty of the direction of the club's identity it was unsurprising to find that over 80% of members wanted us to push for more information from the club on their plans.**
- **Concerns raised by respondents ranged from the club's name, to fears over increasing debts. Over 40% of members also wanted us to prioritise increasing membership and lobbying for safe standing.**
- **Over half of our members want the Trust to oppose the rebrand, whilst 14% were supportive.**
- **Almost three quarters of members also want the Trust to lobby for a compromise kit – though the majority still clearly preferred a return to blue to any other choice.**

The undoubted success of the team on the pitch was something we were all united on, both our Carling Cup appearance and team performances throughout the 2012/13 season were the highlights for many supporters. In particular fans have been impressed by our manager Malky Mackay and the hard-working team he has assembled. Unsurprisingly, the rebranding and, in

by jon day

particular the way it was implemented, was cited by many fans as the most disappointing thing to have happened to Cardiff City over the past year.

At the Cardiff City Stadium fans were generally happy with the facilities on offer, though issues such as safe standing and the overall atmosphere were raised by a number of fans. Others raised issues regarding the variety and cost of the catering, and getting out of the stadium after the game.

While most members were happy with the way the Trust had performed over the last year, there were a sizable number of our members who were not. Typical issues members wanted to see us improve on include getting more meetings arranged with the club, having a more confident voice and reacting more quickly to issues. The one thing that all fans did appreciate, however, was the Fred Keenor Statue, which both members and non-members saw as the best thing the Trust had done in the past year.

The survey has given a clear message that while the past twelve months has seen huge success on the pitch, the year has been tainted by the changes that have taken place to the club's branding and identity.

We have begun speaking with the club about many of the issues raised, and when the Trust meets with Vincent Tan at the end of the season we will present our findings to outline the concerns of our members.



# class of '83

by david towler

**M**embers of the Class of '83 were reunited for the Trust's 30th anniversary promotion celebration, staged at the Cardiff City Stadium.

Nine former Bluebirds stars recalled the highs and lows of a season which ultimately led to promotion to the old Second Division.

Here, is a selection of comments and anecdotes by Roger Gibbins, John Lewis, Paul Giles, Jeff Hemmerman, Phil Dwyer, the Bennett brothers, Gary and Dave, Linden Jones, team captain Jimmy Mullen and coach Jimmy Goodfellow.

## Pre-season and some of the key games

Roger Gibbins: "You may remember in the summer of 1982, the Pope was in town at Ninian Park and the stage was still there when I came down to speak to Len Ashurst about signing.

"We didn't go to Dubai or Spain or anywhere like that for pre-season – instead, we went to St. Athan for a 'holiday'. It was brilliant - we all got to know each other and had a go on the

assault course, well, apart from Phil (Dwyer)!

"It was really a great introduction though, getting to know everybody and it obviously did us the world of good - we kicked off the season losing 2-1 at home to Wrexham!"

Jimmy Mullen: "It did work though because over those few days we bonded and became friends. By the end of pre-season training we thought we could do something special that season. The camaraderie we developed in that small space of time carried us on throughout the whole season."

John Lewis: "The revival started against Millwall at the old Den the next week. I remember coming away from there thinking this could be the start of something. I scored after two or three minutes and Dave Bennett went on to score two goals. For our fourth goal I can remember their full back calling me something to do with sheep. I thought, 'Right, you're having it', so, I stepped over the



ball and drilled it in with my other foot. I can remember Roger came diving from nowhere to head it in – Linden asked me after the game, 'what did you do there, butt?', 'Oh, I just gave him the shuffle!'"

Dave Bennett: "I played right wing that game and my brother was playing right back. Millwall had some great young players at the time, like Sam Allardyce, Teddy Sheringham and Tony Cascarino. Their fans were all caged in, I had just moved down from Manchester and all these fans are throwing bananas at me and I'm wondering, 'why?!' It obviously got too much because I was running down the wing on one occasion and as I turned I saw my brother was fighting and got himself sent off."

Paul Giles: "I was really proud to be part of this group of players. I didn't get to play too many times for my home town club but to be a part of what we did that season was something special. I wanted to play more than anything but I had a fantastic player in my position. I only played when Dave (Bennett) was a naughty boy, when Len would find out that he was in a casino all night."

Phil Dwyer: "As soon as we crossed that white line and once that whistle had gone, we were together and all we wanted to do was win."

Jimmy Mullen: "Len was all about fitness, we used to come away from training absolutely hanging, I can remember seeing the smile on his face because he knew we were hurting. Within a short space of time, we knew that his relationship with Jimmy Goodfellow was going to be good - it was a good cop/bad cop sort of thing. Len could come over as a really fierce character, while Jimmy was the one who you could turn to and talk to. It didn't take

long to see we were on to something good. Even when senior players were injured we had players like Gilo (Paul Giles) to come in and keep the standard up."

Jeff Hemmerman: "I had four really good years at Pompey (Portsmouth) and didn't want to leave but they said they needed the money. I signed for Cardiff and had a decent couple of games but went on a barren spell. When we came to play Pompey at home I remember a ball came into the penalty area and as I rose up to head it, my old friend Alan Knight was in goal, I shouted, "Pick that out, Knighty!" and we ended up winning 1-0. Luckily both sides went up that year, Pompey won the league and we came second."

"Newport County on Boxing Day at Ninian Park was brilliant – I scored two that day! I can remember celebrating by jumping up on the railings of the Bob Bank and all the fans trying to drag me over – I think that's how I lost my hair!"

## On the nightmare defeat against non-league Weymouth in the FA Cup

Roger Gibbins: "We played Weymouth, we were two nil up at half time, cruising – it could have been four or five. In the second half, we didn't come out like we should have done - they got a goal back and managed it get a grip of the game and we ended up losing 3-2, right at the death. It wasn't good. On the Monday we actually watched a video of the game, which wasn't done back then but it done us good."





# trust member interview



## John Sithers

Phil Dwyer: "I had a nightmare against Weymouth in the second half but one bad game out of about 500 isn't bad! Then, Southend the following Friday night at Roots Hall we came away, after working our socks off, winning 2-0. We could have murdered them. From there we just took off."

Jimmy Mullen: "We didn't need to be told by anybody else how poorly we had played – we told each other. That was the camaraderie in the group that pulled us through."

### The Bennetts' and Camaraderie

John Lewis: "Dave (Bennett) was top draw. Why he was released from Man City, god only knows. He was different class - he gave us a new dimension. He could beat people, score goals and set them up – he was the catalyst."

"Gary Bennett on the other hand was a thoroughbred, the goal he scored against Reading -he just galloped past them all and put it in the bottom corner."

Gary Bennett: "We had a team spirit about ourselves, thinking that we couldn't get beaten. We stuck together, when we came back from games, win, lose or draw, we all went out and sorted out our differences between ourselves."

Linden Jones: "I'm not sure any of us defenders playing in our day could even walk on a pitch now - you only have to breathe on players and they are falling over. Back then we knew if you lived by the sword, you died by the sword. Some of them wingers I came up against were out for a fight and I wasn't about to disappoint them!"

Paul Giles: "I only played six or seven games that season, whenever Dave (Bennett) was

naughty but it was a wonderful time. The spirit amongst the players was irreplaceable. I can listen to the Weymouth story all day, because I was on the bench. Len had brought me on when we were 3-2 down and I can remember I was the only one who came off the field cheering, because I had got my appearance money!"

Roger Gibbins: "We lost 1-0 to Newport on Easter Monday and in the changing rooms after the game at Somerton Park, nobody said a word for about five minutes. Len didn't raise his voice - instead, he just came in and said: "It's up to you, I think you can do it (gain promotion), but it's up to you now on whether we actually do.' We went on to win five and draw two of our last seven games!"

"We all worked for each other and we got what we deserved that season. You can make comparisons from our squad to the one Malky has developed now. I love the team he has got this season. Like we had, he has got the right type of players."

Dave Bennett: "I think the goal I scored against Leyton Orient to win us promotion was my favourite, just because of its importance."

Jimmy Goodfellow: "When you talk about comradeship in football, I don't think anybody would be able to surpass these lads!"

### On getting injured against Bristol City in the last game of the season.

Jeff Hemmerman: "It was an anti climax to be honest. We were like a family. I can remember after the game, Jimmy was looking after me and there wasn't really any celebrations going on, everyone was really sad for me. It was a sad way to go out."

### Where do you live?

*I live in Lisvane, Cardiff*

### Which stand do you sit in?

*I'm a Premier Club member and sit on the upper tier of the Grandstand just above the Directors Box, more or less centre pitch. I was lucky and got 2 front row seats 'off plan' well before the new stadium was opened.*

### Which year did you start supporting Cardiff City and what game did you see?

*I'm going back a long way so can't exactly remember when. It was probably 1952/3. My uncle, who lived in Grangetown, used to take me along. We would go early in order to get towards the front of the Bob Bank as there used to be massive crowds at Ninian Park. I don't know who we played the first time I went, but I was a regular through the 1950's and my favourite player was Trevor Ford*

### What is your most memorable match and why?

*I could say any of our 'regular' Wembley matches because it's such a special place to visit.*

*But probably my favourite in recent times it was our 2-1 win against Swansea in April 2010. The stadium was packed and the atmosphere was electric.*

*Stephen McPhail had a fantastic game and Chopra scored twice. The Swansea fans celebrated our win by ripping out the seats.*

### Who is your favourite player/s and why?

*It has to be Graham Kavanagh. I thought he gave his all in every game, was so solid in midfield and was a Bluebird through and through. I was delighted when he arrived and so sorry that our dire financial situation in 2005 meant he was sold to Wigan. I remember that Kav was devastated that he had to move on from Cardiff*

### What is your favourite goal?

*It has to be Mark Hudson's 70 yard stunner against Derby last year. I doubt I'll ever see anything like that again...and he said it wasn't a fluke*

### What key memories of Ninian Park stand out for you?

*I'm tempted to say the Clarks pies as they seemed much nicer than the hard baked ones served at the Cardiff City Stadium. In truth it was a comfortable stadium and I fondly remember everything from the creaking blue painted turnstiles to the hard wooden seating in the Grandstand. The key thing though was the wonderful atmosphere and the noise when everyone was in full voice.*

### Do you follow the City away? If so, what game sticks out in your memory most?

*During my working life I spent much of each week away from home so never got into the routine of spending Saturday at away games apart from on the odd one or two. However I do listen to the live commentary of every away game either live on TV, or radio Wales or Cardiff City i-player.*

### Why did you join the Trust and what do you want the Trust to achieve on behalf of fans?

*Probably like many fans I joined the Trust when the Club was in financial crisis. I thought the Trust would be good at getting the fans message to the CCFC Board, and so it has been. I attended a few meetings, got to appreciate the many things the Trust does on broader issues around football and community, and became more and more involved. I'm now joint membership secretary along with local football guru Paul Evans, and enjoy the interaction with members.*

*For the future I want the Trust to significantly increase membership and get to the situation where it is clearly seen and respected by CCFC management and others as the voice of the fans.*



# clubs back safe standing campaign



The Football Supporters' Federation's Safe Standing Campaign is in the news thanks to a stream of clubs who have come out in support of the FSF's plans and an MP's Early Day Motion (EDM) in Parliament calling for safe standing trials to be allowed.

- It's great news but the FSF also needs action from fans too. It'll only take a few minutes of your time – please visit: [www.fsf.org.uk/campaigns/safestanding](http://www.fsf.org.uk/campaigns/safestanding)

Half the Football League already have standing or support the call for safe standing trials while Aston Villa and Peterborough United have told the authorities that they'd like to pilot safe standing areas.

Cardiff City and 20 other clubs in the Premier League and Football League already back the FSF's Safe Standing Campaign, as do the Scottish Premier League. Of course not every fan knows the ins and outs of the argument - so why does the FSF back safe standing areas?

**Popular support** - nine out of ten supporters

back the choice to sit or stand (FSF National Survey 2012). Every week thousands stand in seated areas supporting the team they love - they deserve proper safe standing areas.

- **Choice** - everyone benefits as those who wish to stand can do while those who prefer to sit no longer have to worry about having their view blocked. Clubs should have the choice to introduce safe standing areas if they see fit.
- **Safety** - safe standing can be introduced within stringent safety standards laid down in the **Government's Green Guide**. **The Government does not claim that standing at football is inherently unsafe. This is new technology – any waffle about “going backwards” is rubbish.**
- **Flexibility** - **UEFA regs mean European competitions must be played in all-seater stadiums. Safe standing areas can be easily converted to and from seating so a club competing in Europe can go all-seater with minimum fuss.**

- **Pricing** - in both England and abroad ticket prices for standing areas are typically lower than in seated areas making the stadiums more socially inclusive.

A big part of the FSF's Campaign is education. Not all fans (or clubs and MPs come to that) understand what safe standing's about and a good place to start is to watch the embedded video on the Safe Standing Campaign page: [www.fsf.org.uk/campaigns/safestanding](http://www.fsf.org.uk/campaigns/safestanding)

The major misconception is that standing is unsafe. It's not true and the Government acknowledges there is no evidence to suggest it is. Opponents often cite the Hillsborough Disaster but this was caused by appalling policing and stadium neglect

(among other things). Neither the Taylor Report nor the recent Hillsborough Independent Panel blamed standing - read more at the FSF's Safe Standing Mythbuster.

The message from the FSF is this – lobby your MP to sign the EDM, sign their petition, tell your mates. These types of things force the powers-that-be into change and you can do it all online in about five minutes from the comfort of your sofa from this link.

The FSF represents more than 200,000 individual and affiliate members (such as supporters' clubs and trusts) and is officially recognised by the authorities. The FSF is free to join: [www.fsf.org.uk/join](http://www.fsf.org.uk/join)

Scottish Premier League

Sunderland

Hull City

Oldham Athletic

Burnley

Barnsley  
Doncaster Rovers

Wolverhampton  
Derby County

Wanderers  
Aston Villa

Shrewsbury Town

Peterborough United

Watford

Swansea City

Cardiff City

Swindon Town

Brentford  
AFC Wimbledon

Bristol City

Aldershot Town  
Crystal Palace

Exeter City

Plymouth Argyle



# Gibbo speaks



Promotions, relegations, transfer sagas and clubs in financial turmoil... Ex-City utility man Roger Gibbins has seen it all before

**H**aving been the Championship's nearly men over the last few campaigns, Cardiff City fans could be forgiven for getting nervous during the business end of the season.

However, one man who knows what it takes to achieve promotion is adamant Malky Mackay's Bluebirds of 2012-13 will, like him, experience the magic of the number three. Roger Gibbins joined Cardiff for the start of the 1982-83 season and enjoyed instant success, gaining promotion to the second tier of English football. Ten years later, having spent time away from the club - including a spell in America - he was back and achieved the feat again, this time playing a key role in Eddie May's third division title winning side of 1992-93. Again, a decade later, he witnessed the Bluebirds winning the play-off final at the Millennium Stadium against QPR in 2003.

If Malky's men make it over the line this time around, then Cardiff City will have achieved promotion in each of the last four decades which feature the number three in the year. "There's no doubt in my mind that they will make it up there

(to the Premiership), they'll be fine. Malky's team has those same ingredients that were there in '82-83 and '92-93. They all work together, but they also have that quality," said Roger.

Born in Enfield, north London, in 1955, Gibbins has a rich family heritage in football, providing the stepping stones to a lifelong career in the game.

"My father (Eddie) played for Spurs - all my family were Spurs fans. So when I was a school boy playing football for Enfield, Tottenham was the only team I wanted to go to," said Roger.

"My father started taking me to the football, but eventually I started going on my own at the age of 10 or 11. I was watching people like Danny Blanchflower, John White, Bill Brown and Maurice Norman at the back - legends in Spurs history.

"Bill Nicholson was the Tottenham manager and he came to watch me play for Enfield. I was rewarded with a two-year apprenticeship and then signed on professional terms halfway through this second year.

Although showing promise, the young Gibbins was unable to break through into the first team. Gibbins never made his

by david towler

debut for his boyhood team and was eventually released.

"Then I got a call from the manager at Oxford. I trained for two weeks like a man possessed, because I wanted to impress. Thankfully I was called me in and gave me a year's contract.

"Oxford were in the second division, it was a good standard. We had some good players but we weren't the best in the league and we eventually got relegated."

But as at Tottenham, a change of manager meant a change of fortunes for the 20-year-old Gibbins. He was duly released from Oxford after his first season but unlike his exit from Spurs - he wouldn't need to wait long before an upturn in fortunes.

"The Oxford physio told me: 'Expect a call in a couple of days.' And sure enough, I got a call from the head scout at Norwich, who were in the First Division," said Roger. "So I had left a club who had been relegated to the third tier and got a call from a scout in the top tier a week later.

"John Bond was the manager



Photograph courtesy of Media Wales

- who sadly passed away last year - and the club was brilliant, it was a no-brainer - top division; lovely club; great area; brilliant fans - full house every week. That was the turning point in my career."

Having finally established himself in the top flight, Gibbins' career literally took off and he flew across the Atlantic in 1978, during the prime of his career, to play for the New England Tea Men in the North American Soccer League.

"Towards the end of my second season at Norwich, John Bond called me in and said: 'There's a team that want you in America, in the NASL. He said: 'I'm not worried either way. I'm happy for you to stay. There will be a place in the team but I can't guarantee you will play every week because I'm going to bring in Martin Chivers from Switzerland.'

"I was thinking: am I going to be pushed out? If not, will I be sold to lower league side? Or, do I go to America? They're going to give me an apartment, a car and I will triple my money - so in the end I plumped for it.

"It was incredible. Pele had retired the season before I went, but (Franz) Beckenbauer was still going and (Johan) Neeskens was playing for Cosmos; (Giorgio) Chinaglia, the Italian centre

forward was over there; Dennis Tueart; George Best. I played against George Best - there were some very good players.

"At the time they were allowed to loan players from the English league for three months during the summer, so a lot of the best English players like Trevor Francis were going over there for the money, keeping fit for three months and then going back for the start of the season.

"In our team we had Gerry Daly, from Manchester United, Keith Weller from Leicester and Peter Simpson from Arsenal. We had five or six really good English players and we won the league in my first season.

"We played at Cosmos watched by 77,000 fans - they got full houses all the time. The football was different - it was more razzmatazz, it wasn't the standard back home. It was a bit more relaxed - it had a holiday kind of feel about it. Not to say it wasn't professional - we trained every day, but it had all the razzmatazz that comes with America - national anthems before the game, names on the back of shirts, which we didn't have in England at the time. It was an eye-opener.

"After a season in America, Gibbins returned to England and signed for second tier Cambridge United where he made the transition from striker ▶



to midfielder.

"It did me the world of good. When I came back from America, I wasn't as fit as I probably should have been, but after three years with Cambridge, I was as fit as I have ever been."

After Cambridge United were relegated and during the summer of 1982, Roger was a number of free transfers brought to Ninian Park by manager, Len Ashurst.

"Len hadn't actually seen me play, but his scout lived in Cambridge and used to watch me regularly. When he heard I was available on a free he told Len and it happened pretty much straight away," said Roger.

"Dave Tong, Jeff Hemmerman, Paul Bodin, Jimmy Mullen – they were all free transfers – what a good job Len did in getting those players together?!"

"With what he had and what he brought in, it was balanced really well. Len hit the jackpot!"

Despite the optimism surrounding Ninian Park during preseason, the Bluebirds lost their opening game, 2-1 at home to Welsh rivals Wrexham – but any doubts concerning their promotion credentials would prove to be misplaced.

"We were so disappointed after that first game - it was a nightmare. But we didn't lose another game at home after that," said Roger.

"We had a great season and ended up going up as runners up. We stayed up the next season despite losing our front three: Jeff Hemmerman through injury, Dave Bennett was sold for financial reasons and Bob Hutton retired."

During Gibbins' third season with the Bluebirds, Len Ashurst left the club to join Sunderland and took star defender Gary Bennett with him. The team was slowly dismantled.

"Alan Durban came in and it didn't really work. The quality



"Cardiff are up there with the Premiership teams in terms of facilities and staff. It's all there for them. All they have got to do is get there – I'm sure they will."

Photographs courtesy of Media Wales

of players who came in wasn't great," said Roger.

Financial restraints at Cardiff City meant that Gibbins would move to arch rivals Swansea, beginning a four year exile from Ninian Park, which also saw a move to Torquay sandwiched between two spells at Newport County – all of which were dogged by financial troubles.

After Newport went into liquidation, Gibbins received a call from Jimmy Goodfellow, who he knew from his first spell with the Bluebirds. Goodfellow, now part of Frank Burrows' backroom staff, said that Burrows would be in touch to offer Gibbins a route back to Ninian Park.

"Frank said: 'As long as there is no money involved we will sign you.' I spoke to the administrators at Newport but they said: 'Oh no, we want some money for you!' I told Frank and he said: 'You have to tell them that you're going to sue them for restraint of trade.' An hour later they said I could go. And I

went back to Cardiff in March '89," said Roger.

At the end of 1988-89 season, after surviving the threat of relegation, Burrows left Cardiff to join Portsmouth and Len Ashurst returned for his second spell in charge of the Bluebirds.

"The next season was a bit difficult. In '89-90 we got relegated, and then the following season we just missed out on the play-offs. That was when Rick Wright got involved and Eddie May got appointed in 1991," said Roger.

"It was different to my first spell - we were still struggling financially, training grounds were still hard to find - but there was a slightly different atmosphere. I was now in my mid-thirties and looking for my next step in my career.

"When Eddie took over, he asked whether I wanted to help him in the coaching. So in the '92-93 season I became a player-coach, which was ideal for me.

"The first season under Eddie, we got to the Welsh Cup Final

and beat Hednesford and just missed out on the play-offs. Then the following season it really kicked off. I was now in a player-coach role and loving it.

"By that time I was playing either centre back or right back. We had some terrific players like, Kevin Ratcliffe, (Phil) Stant, (Nathan) Blake, Carl Dale, Chris Pike, Cohen Griffiths - we had so many options."

Aged 37, Gibbins finished his professional playing career on a high note, lifting the Third Division trophy with the Bluebirds - his second promotion with the club, ten years after his first.

"In June after the season ended, I was told I wasn't required any more. Now I can see Rick Wright was trying to get out. What was stupid was he stayed for that season and things got worse and worse. He didn't have any coaches left, just a youth team coach and a physio. He said some of the senior players can help out with the coaching – which was nonsense. Eddie found it tough and stepped down."

Despite having left the Bluebirds, Gibbins still kept a close eye on his adopted club's fortunes.

"After I left Cardiff I joined Cwmbran as a player coach and I had three years with them. That kept me playing and coaching, while I was doing a few other things on the side, like working for the BBC.

"I got my full time job in 1997 with L.F.E. ( League Football Education) and I joined Merthyr part-

time with Colin Addison. I had a feeling that the quality in the English non-league set up was that bit better than Wales, so that's why I joined Merthyr. We had a great year - we got pipped by Forest Green in getting into the Conference on the last day of the season. I went to Weston Super Mare and played my last competitive game was for Weston Super Mare - I was 43 years of age.

"A year later in '99 I went back to Merthyr as manager, but I didn't really get on with the chairman, so I had a rest from football and got on with my full time job.

"It's during that time I started to watch Cardiff. Out of the blue Tony Wilcox (Cwmbran Town manager) phoned me up and asked me to come back to Cwmbran. Mark Aizlewood had left. At the time I had enough of football, but he was probably the only person who could have convinced me to come back - he was a great man. So I went back and had another three years at Cwmbran until 2003.

"In 2003, sadly Tony had a heart attack - it devastated the club. I took over as manager and we had a good run in the Welsh Cup. We had a semi-final which we won, but he died by the time of the final with Barry. We were very much the underdogs - it was very emotional. The lads put in so much effort, we were 3-2 up with two minutes to go and they scored, the game went to extra time and we lost on penalties.

"I went to the play-off final to see Cardiff in the Millennium Stadium a week later, I took my boy Joe, and I made a decision that day to quit football. It was a culmination of things, the death of Tony and everything else. I decided to quit football and just go and watch Cardiff, that's what I wanted – to watch proper football.

"It was such a fantastic day. Cardiff was buzzing. What a way to go up...in the play-off final against QPR in the Millennium Stadium."

Gibbins still plays an active role with Cardiff City as part of the club's match day hospitality team.

"I've been hosting (at Cardiff City) for six years now," said Roger. "I started doing it with Ronnie Bird, unfortunately Ronnie became ill and passed away, and then I took over.

"I have really enjoyed it, especially since the new stadium. It's with all the match day sponsors. We have a chat with a few squad members and a man of the match presentation."

"Cardiff are up there with the Premiership teams in terms of facilities and staff. It's all there for them. All they have got to do is get there – I'm sure they will."



# have an awful trip home



“ I have to point out that I’ve never covered a Cardiff City game drunk... although many who have read my reports might seek to disagree.”



The highs and lows of following City from Media Wales reporter Steve Tucker

**O**NE thing you are never going to get as a football writer is sympathy.

When people ask what you do for a living the usual reaction (from blokes mainly) is one of ‘you lucky swine’ closely followed by an enquiry of how they get to do it themselves.

The answer to that I suppose is to learn how to write (sort of), study journalism for an interminable period of time, serve your apprenticeship writing about village fetes and knocking on the doors of the recently deceased, get a bit lucky and then maybe one day, you too, can be told to have an awful trip home by Dave Jones.

Not that I want to complain, it would be churlish of course. In these dark economic times having a job at all is a luxury, but really being a football writer is not quite as wonderful as everyone, particularly your average football supporter, might imagine.

I grew up supporting Cardiff City, my

step-father first took me to Ninian Park in the mid 1970s and even if I had periods in exile, years attending college in London for example, I always returned to the Bluebirds.

Supporting Cardiff is like being in the mafia in that you never really leave. OK, you don’t wake up with a horse’s head in your bed although during the Sam Hammam years anything seemed possible

So you would think becoming a football writer with your main responsibilities being covering the Bluebirds would be a dream come true. Perhaps in a way it is, but what many who find out what I do for a living fail to understand sometimes is that it is actually a job.

Now the first thing I have to point out is that I’ve never covered a Cardiff City game drunk although many who have read my reports might seek to disagree.

As a fan I loved a few drinks before a match and then a bounce around the terraces issuing a few words of wisdom in no uncertain terms to the players.

As a professional representative of her majesty’s press of course such behaviour is frowned upon.

Screaming obscenities from the press box is not a good way to win friends and influence people even if the referee is not such a nice person. Whilst staring glassy eyed at Malky Mackay and slurring, ‘You’re the best bloke I’ve ever met, no really, really. Hey, you looking at my bird?’ in a post match interview is basically a one way ticket to the job centre.

The other thing I have to point out of course is that you HAVE to go to the games. Now if you’re one of those guys who’s not missed a Bluebirds’ match since Lord Kitchener was Home Secretary then fine. But if, like I was particularly away from home, you like to pick and choose your matches then this can be taxing.

You may not fancy a frost-bite inducing trip to Yorkshire in the middle of December as the wind blasts in from the Urals, but tough luck really. It does not matter that, however mad this may

seem, you’d prefer to watch Garth Crooks on Final Score from the warmth of your home than be at Oakwell with a bloke from Tonypany vomiting in your lap.

At such times if you’re a fan you simply decide to stay at home, I mean with a smart phone you can keep abreast of things whilst pretending to look at bath taps with the wife in B&Q. But as a football writer just not attending leads to strange empty spaces in newspapers and you having a hell of a lot of explaining to do when you arrive in the office on a Monday morning.

But, as I say, I’m not complaining. It would be of little use as no one would listen anyway. Covering the club you supported as a kid is a privilege. It’s just that on an icy Tuesday night in Middlesbrough as you feel your ear wax freezing it can be just a little hard to remember that.



# trust elections



**T**he Trust is in the process of holding elections to the board.

We've achieved a lot since we were set up – the most visible sign is the Fred Keenor Statue at the entrance to the ground – but we want to achieve a great deal more on behalf of fans.

We're always looking for new blood – whatever age or sex you are – to play a role in the future of our Trust.

The annual general meeting takes place in May when the new board will be in place.

## join the trust

Adults can join the Trust for just £12 a year and under 16s are free. This fee covers our costs and makes membership as affordable as possible. However to develop and grow the activities and influence of the Trust we invite all members to give an annual donation on top of their membership fee, if they can afford to.

The extra money is used responsibly to develop and extend the wider work of the Trust for the benefit of members, the community and appropriate good causes.

## what we do:

- Maintain a regular dialogue with the Club on behalf of supporters
- Encourage the Club to take account of its supporters and the community it serves, in its decision-making
- Strengthen the bond between Cardiff City, its supporters and the local community
- Maintain a shareholding in Cardiff City on behalf of our members
- Present a positive image for Cardiff City, helping to overturn negative attitudes and prejudice towards the Club
- Maintain a contingency fund for further CCFC share purchases or to help the Club in troubled times
- Use members' money to benefit members, the community and other appropriate good causes
- Ultimately, our aim is to achieve supporter representation on the board of Cardiff City

The trust gives city fans a voice. The more members we have, the louder that voice and the greater our influence. Please join us.