



## 3rd Annual SAFC NASA General Meeting, May 14-15, 2015 - Boston, MA

### Minutes

Present: Committee Members – (Chair) Derek “Degsy” Aspinall, (Interim Merchandise Director) Kevin White; Members/Guests - Alex J Shahin (4D), Andy Cooke (5), Marci Cooke (5), Paul Whilliams (6), Todd Jenkins (7), Annette Jenkins (7), John Ellington (4C), Jim Diffendel (4C), Rob Sinclair (3A), Dave Vine (3A), Dave Vine 2 (3A), Terry Dunbar (3A), Toni Dunbar (3A), Dean Redfearn (3A), Lindsay Gardner (3A)

Special Guest via Satellite – Reuben Agboola

### Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

NASA Chair welcomed members and guests to Boston, MA. Committee members and Regional Reps were introduced with notable absentees mentioned. 17 Sunderland fans attended weekend events.

## **Opening Statement by the Chairman**

Chair thanked all in attendance. Additional personal thanks were given to the 2015/16 committee, Honorary Life President – Ritchie Pitt; Sunderland legends Stan Cummins, Reuben Agboola and Kevin Ball, Jimmy Montgomery; SAFC Chairman – Ellis Short; SAFC's Commercial Director – Gary Hutchinson; SAFC's Branch Liaison Officer – Chris Waters, other SAFC employees Andy Jones, Lou Wanless and Karen Casey; as well as the Regional Rep's and the SAFC Ambassador for their continued support throughout the year.

*My highlights of this year include:*

Chair shared his highlights which included the growth of our supporters association - surpassing 240 members; becoming an official not-for-profit organization; facilitating SAFC's pre-season tour for our members – organizing venues, transportation, meet and greets etc.; furthering ties with the club via SAFC Ladies sponsorship; traveling to DC to meet with other local NASA members.

He also mentioned that there are a few things the committee is still working with the club including the addition of our banner at the SOL and a new 'fan pack' is also in the pipeline.

## **Treasurer Report**

Chair delivered in absence. *Available upon request.*

## **Secretary Report 2015-2016**

Chair delivered in absence.

Association now has 245 members with several already looking to sign up ready for 2016-17 season. This is increase on last year's numbers and is believed to be down to the introduction of the family membership as well as SAFC's pre-season tour of North America. We are now able to contact some 380+ Sunderland supporters located this side of the pond.

It was reported that Region 1 boasted the largest fan-base within NASA, Region 9 (Cali) and Region 7 (Ohio) not far behind. Biggest growth was recorded in Region 4C under the direction of John Ellington who is doing a wonderful job in the PA area.

The most active region was 7 who hosted no fewer than 21 Black Cat Gatherings over the season. Shout out to AJ Shahin and Andy Cooke for increased participation in their regions.

Although we have seen growth in some areas, and stability in others, we have also seen some decline in once popular markets (Houston, New York/Jersey). This is something the committee is looking to address going into the 2016/17 season. Focus is on ensuring Regional Reps are delivering in their roles, following the guidelines as set out by our association.

Even though our membership numbers have increased we have been ousted by the Scandinavian Branch and are now the second largest overseas SAFCSA branch.

NASA continued to grow its bonds with the Club, and the SAFC tour to California and Canada last summer gave a lot of the membership base a chance to see the team in preseason action and get close up to the players. In Toronto, NASA members got to attend a special social event held by the club, with not only the senior players in attendance but also the backroom and club management, including Ellis Short.

NASA sponsored SAFC ladies team player Brooke Chaplen for the 2015 season. This worked out to be a great deal for both parties. NASA received advertising in their match program as well as a presence on SAFC Ladies website. The costs for this were offset as this deal included match tickets which we were able to sell back to traveling NASA members at a discounted rate. We're currently finalizing a deal for the 2016 season where Kylla Sjoman, Canadian international, shall become the sponsored player of choice. In late April, a group of NASA members, including the current Chair, visited the UK and in addition to a dinner with Ellis Short in London, received tours of the Academy of Light, Stadium of Light and met the team and management, keeping the NASA brand inform of the club.

We managed to secure several additional tickets for fans travelling back to the UK for home and away matches. I would like to remind members again, that all requests should be made through the committee.

The Association introduced the role of Merchandise Director to the Committee and Kevin White agreed to fill this role. All inventories have been passed to the care of the Merchandise Director and the Committee encourages members with suggestions for merchandise to contact Kevin directly.

### **Results of Player of the Season Awards**

Young Player of the Year – Duncan Watmore

Player of the Year – Jermaine Defoe

Ladies Young Player of the Year – Abbey Joice

Ladies Player of the Year – Beth Mead

### **Results announced of the 2016/17 board elections**

The following NASA members were nominated and seconded and subsequently accepted these positions:

#### *Promotions Team...*

Graeme Pritchard – Membership Director

Kevin White – Merchandise Director

Paul Weir – Secretary

Justin Warner – Treasurer

Derek Aspinall – Chair

Stephen Jennings – SAFC NASA Ambassador

\*John Ellington – Promotions

\*Greta Young - Promotions

Please note that Ritchie Pitt's role as Honorary Life President is not impacted by elections.

Current Regional Reps shall be contacted posted AGM to see if they wish to retain said position, if not, an alternative will be sort.

### **2017 AGM – Host City Announcement**

Shall be announced once the 2017 MLS schedule has been confirmed. Explain criteria.

If EGM is necessary, central or west coast venue would be sort

### **Any Other Business**

John Ellington – Region 4C – Updates from Phila  
SOL pilgrimage announced for 2018 – 5th Anniversary of SAFC  
NASA

\*\*\*\*Special thanks The Banshee for hosting this event.

### **Special Guest – Reuben Agboola – Q&A**

Reuben Agboola joined us via Skype and presented some wonderful stories from his time at Roker Park. Cites Denis Smith as the nest manager he ever played for and Gabbiadini being the best Sunderland player ...

It is my privilege to introduce via Skype a Sunderland legend and one of my favorite players ever to wear the red 'n' white stripes of Sunderland.

### **Prize Draw**

Prize draw was conducted containing signed memorabilia from former Sunderland players.

### **New England Revolution vs. Chicago Fire – 4pm**

Traveled with the Midnight Riders (NE Revs supporters group) to and from the game. Great tailgate and wonderful fans.

### **Sunday, May 15 – Sunderland vs. Watford**

Weekend concluded with a gathering at The Banshee to celebrate another year in the Premier League.

Thanks to all in attendance.