AMBER NEWS

Cambridge Fans United

CFU

"Uniting Our Community"

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Wembley Special

At the beginning of this season many of us were unconvinced by the FA Trophy. Now people see it



for what it is – a great day out, the possibility of honours and the deserved reward for a rapidly developing and talented team. The sign of an excellent side is that it tries to win all its matches – whatever the competition. Some argued that we made things easier for Luton by dumping them out of the Cup, resulting in a backlog of fixtures, cancellations and a loss of form for us. Well maybe – but, for me, the home game against Luton was a turning point. A very cynical performance from them had the fans determined to beat them and to win our first trophy in over a decade. It may be, of course, that a win at Wembley will prepare us for a return visit when promotion to the League is at stake. Wouldn't it be great if people looked back on 2014 as the year we regained our rightful place in the League AND won the cup.

As a fan of considerable vintage, my favourite Wembley experience was the Play-Off Final against Chesterfield. Like Elton John some years later, I had never expected to see my team competing on the same hallowed turf on which England won the World Cup. The newly introduced play-off finals gave every team the opportunity to play at the national stadium and give their fans a day they'd never forget. I'd arranged to meet my mother and Nana by one of the twin towers and as I walked up Wembley way the crowds parted and suddenly there they were. Later, we more or less carried my nana up a great many





steps to our entrance. When Dion Dublin scored my brother and I were lifted out of our row of seats and ended up two or three rows away! I was very fond of the real and original Wembley Stadium and will never forget that winning feeling!

We all have our favourite Wembley stories and, in celebration of reaching at least one Wembley final, I asked a selection of United fans for some of their favourite cup

moments or their experiences of Wembley Stadium, new or old.

Gary 'Gilbert' Stroud offers the following story:

<u>My Wembley experience</u>

I will never forget our first visit to Wembley via the play offs at Dartford. The early train to London, the gathering at the Globe Baker Street where my best mate Mush draped his massive Amber and Black CUFC Flag for all the passing motorists to see that the mighty U's were in Town. The picture and that rendezvous point spawned the famous but short lived Cambridge magazine "The Globe". The first edition captured our day out at Wembley with photos and the front cover was a picture of that Flag.

That day I also spent time chatting with Dion Dublin's brother and his mates who had come down from Leicester to cheer on the mighty U's. Little did I know that the legend that is Sir Dion was going to score that winning goal.

I will never forget the celebrations after the match and the party we had at the "Great Northern" at the top of station Road where a certain well known U's fan and resident of Shelford shinned up to the top of the War Memorial Soldier and placed his Black and Amber hat on the Soldiers head!



Subsequent visits to Wembley have always been by train and via the Globe at Baker Street although the last 2 visits weren't as fruitful and both ended in defeat therefore weren't as joyous.

But every trip to Wembley starts with Great Expectations of another glorious win for the mighty U's

←Me and my son vs. Exeter

Me vs. Torquay→



I did get to meet Scott Rendell's wife whom my wife had met a year earlier on holiday in Egypt (small world) when we by chance bumped into her outside the stadium before the Torquay match.

Every time we visit the expectations are greater that this time we will emulate that glorious 1st visit. This year I expect and hope we will win there but rest assured the day is already planned for an early train to London and a rendezvous at Baker Street.

Come on you U'sssssssssss!

Gilbert

Lifelong fan, Gary Atyes, has this happy memory of our play off final against Torquay:

In the lead up to the Torquay Play off final the club were offered a number of Club Wembley boxes to sell. The opportunity was offered to the club at cost and we then upsold them to make additional profit.

During this period my car was sponsored by a St Ives company Snipster Leasing. The proprietor Peter Brooks wanted to hire a box for a terminally ill friend as a special day out with a group of friends. However he could only afford the cost price, so because of his gesture and his friend's situation I went to the Chairman (George Rolls) and asked him to allow it and he agreed.



The group had a fantastic day out at Wembley despite the scoreline and amongst them was a St Ives businessman Paul Reason, who so impressed by the gesture and the passion and behaviour of the clubs fans that day, contacted the club through Peter after the trip with a view to sponsoring the club.

Paul is the Managing Director of R Costings. A meeting was set up and as a result of one small act of kindness by the football club, one of the biggest commercial deals in the clubs history was negotiated for Paul's company to become stadium partners.

In addition, Paul was adamant that the clubs fantastic fans should get their wish and see the name Abbey returned within that deal (from the Trade' Recruitment Stadium).

Which just goes to show in life that "what goes around, comes around" :-)



Occasional fan, Shan Tait, remembers her first experience of the new Wembley thus:

A fabulous day out. The long walk in with the stadium in sight. The enormity of the place with people on all sides. The beer and the company at half time discussing how it should have been. The roars and screams of the assembled Stephens clan (plus guests). Magical. We even managed to avoid a fight with a drunk on the way in.

Richard Stephen, who missed out on our first Wembley experience because he was in Germany, is returning specially from that country for the game against Gosport. Here are some of his favourite FA Cup memories:

My first memory of watching the U's came at Bournemouth back in November 1972. We were having a really good season in the old Division 4, and were drawn away in the 1st round. Bournemouth were themselves having a fine season in Division 3. Indeed the game created so much interest that most United fans travelled on a special train which somehow negotiated London and arrived a few hours later on the south coast. Around 1000 United fans shouted themselves hoarse, alas to no avail, Bournemouth including the very impressive Alan Groves tore United apart and we lost 5-1, John Collins scoring with a fine header.



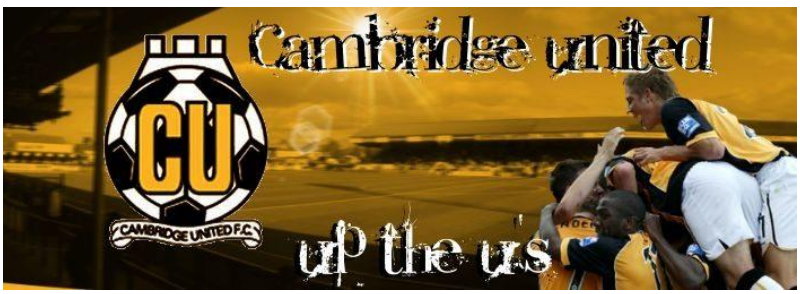
Another televised game came in in early 1981 as the U's were drawn away to Norwich City, the game covered by Anglia TV. The U's performed well but lost a close game by 0-1. A poor

performance in 1982 saw defeat away (again) to Doncaster Rovers, losing by 1-2. The following year the U's (yes still in Division 2, beat Weymouth 1-0 at home in the 3rd round, the game though was not as close as the score might suggest. A rare home draw saw the U's beat Barnsley 1-0 and make the 5th round. Another home draw in round 5 saw a terrific game v Sheffield Wednesday, the U's just being nudged out by 1-2.

Things had started to go wrong for the U's in 1983/84 and a 0-3 loss at home to Derby County was typical of results in that very poor season. With the U's relegated at the end of 1983/84 it meant a return to life in the 1st round of the FA Cup. However, worse was to follow, we lost, at home, 0-2 to the Posh. Can it get any worse? You bet defeat again the 1st round came in another away draw at Dagenham & Redbridge who were then a non-league club, losing by 1-2.

Our First Quarter Finals

The U's started brightly in the 1st round back in 1988 and scored a convincing 4-1 win at Woking, before heading off to the south coast to win 1-0 at Bognor Regis Town, a game shown on TV highlights. Another long trip to Plymouth in round 3 lead to losing by 0-2. Plymouth drew Everton in the next round. The U's kicked off in the 89/90 FA cup winning 1-0 at Aldershot and followed that with a fine 3-1 over Woking. This match featured a long range goal from Chris Ledbitter, a fine player in what was becoming a fine Cambridge United team. Now getting the rub of the green, the U's earned a home draw but squandered chances to only draw 0-0 in the 3rd round. Victory was very sweet as victory was obtained by 3-1 in the replay at Feethams. The dizzy heights of the 4th round saw the usual away draw, this time at Millwall, The U's were now made of stern stuff and secured a 1-1 draw. Victory at the replay came courtesy of a very bizarre own goal, see for yourselves if you have not seen it before. An own goal by David Thompson, with former United Keeper Keith Branagan in goal for Millwall.



The 5th round saw 3 exciting matches against Bristol City. The U's were the better side when drawing 0-0 in the away match at Ashton Gate. Dion Dublin scored for the U's in the replay which finished 1-1 after extra time. The U's won the toss to have the second replay at home and with one of the finest ever performances against a team riding high in the division above, saw the U's thrash the West Country men by 5-1. United goals came from Chris Ledbitter, Lee Philpott, Dion Dublin (2) and John Taylor, a great win by a great team. So on to the sixth round or quarter final then and a home game v Crystal Palace. United never turned up and lost to a single goal scored by Geoff Thomas. Despite defeat it had been a great season and there was more to come in the 90's.

So after such a glorious effort the previous year, could we keep it up? Drawn away yet again in the far reaches of Devon saw the U's triumph by 2-1 in the first round. The second round saw a Friday night, (away of course) 0-0 draw at Fulham, like many United fans I stood there and got soaked at their far from impressive uncovered end near the River Thames. So a few days later, the replay at the Abbey. The, Er, 'lively Gordon Davies. Always theatrical, fell down once again which led Fulham to take a first minute lead. An Alan Kimble penalty evened things up before a long range header from Dion Dublin brought about a 2-1 win. This impressive United team then travelled to Molineux

to play Wolves. The ever impressive Chris Ledbitter scored and the U's won 1-0 with Alan Kimble missing a penalty (a bad habit that continues at the moment).

The 4th round brought a rare event a home tie v Middlesborough. United continuing with their impressive cup run triumphed by 2-0, both goals scored by John Taylor, if you see the game on You Tube, the pitch looked like Brighton beach (with apologies to Ian Darler). The 5th round brought Sheffield Wednesday to the Abbey, yes I know I don't believe it either but another home draw. The U's were magnificent and thrashed the yorkshiremen by 4-0. The goals were scored by Dion Dublin (2), Lee Philpott and John Taylor, a really good game with the U's, being helped by some generous defending. So on to Highbury then and a draw against Arsenal, with over 10,000 United fans in attendance. Of course MOTD were there, Kevin Campbell gave Arsenal the lead, Dion Dublin equalized and it was game on. Chances at both ends, came and went but Tony Adams gave Arsenal victory by 2-1. A fantastic FA Cup season and Cambridge United at their very best. Had Dion not intervened in the fight between Adams and Dixon they might have been sent off – and deservedly so. And who knows what might have happened then?

Many would argue that the Highbury game, other than our various final appearances, was their favourite cup game and one for which we didn't really get the credit we deserved.



Julia Stanley:

10 Best bits about Wembley from a non-football fan -

*Beer in the pub before the game

*Chanting whilst walking the streets of London



*Chanting on the tube and making the train bounce

*Crazy hats / outfits / face painting

*Beer

*Electric atmosphere in the stadium

*Paper confetti

*Loud music

*Smiling fans

*Oh and the actual football match!

Rachael Turner takes the tube:

Perhaps my most vivid memory of the day out to Wembley was, in fact, the tube journey! With two carriages full of supporters and my cousin, Richard starting up the chant of "We're the U's at the baaaa-aaack" which then resounded down the carriage, changing at internals to ".....at the front" or "....in the middle".



Prior to this we had all converged on the Globe pub and were gathering outside on the street swigging from Fosters' bottles and soaking up the sunshine. The walk up Wembley Way felt like a long one, with all the vendors lining the route, the bustling crowds chattering excitedly and the Stadium itself looming ahead.....and then out onto the terraces we were looking down at a vast expanse of green pitch.....the amber and black flags waving and the thrum of fans warming up their vocal chords.

And then it began.....my first chance to see the Mighty Yellows at the new Wembley!

And finally,



This season many of us were unconvinced about the value of the FA Trophy. The wins over Luton and Grimsby were the footballing highlights and, perhaps, my favourite picture of the campaign is this one of the Yorkshire U's (Messrs Vessey and Weston) making their way to the second half of the triumph at Grimsby.

They, and the regulars, deserve their day out watching the Light Blues at Wembley. We hope for victory to banish some of those unhappy memories of defeat and, hopefully, prepare us for the play-off final. Many will just be fans for a day. Persuade them to come again.

You've already made a difference. Encourage them to.....

MAKE A DIFFERENCE- JOIN CFU

