

MUDSA AGM 2016

Tuesday, 23rd August 2016, 7.30pm

Ability Suite, Old Trafford

Allen Gale	
Ambler David	
Chase Dallas	
Chase Phil	
Clarke Gareth	
Clarke Rachael	
Colman Steve	
Falla Ian	
Hall Jackie	
Hall Julie	
Hunt April	
Hunt Phil	
Joule Kenneth	
Joule Linda	
Kirk John	
Lee Mick	
Lightfoot David	
Lightfoot Dilys	
Lyons John	
Nield John	
Rocca Paul	
Russel Brian	
Simister Emma	
Simister Linda	
Struthers Annette	
Struthers Cameron	
Yates John	
Yates Nathaniel	

Present: Phil Downs, Sue Rocca, Ann Marie Lewis, Chas Banks, Jamie Leeming, John Simister, Ashleigh Davison.

Apologies: Liz Edwards, Des Turner.

EGM – Short EGM held before AGM for absence of AGM in 2015

JL introduces PD for explanation for missing AGM in 2015

PD explains why there was no AGM last season, due to circumstances and influences which prevented MUDSA from making any real progress, in part this was down to the Club having a restructure and the scrutiny that MUDSA were under due to what is offered in terms of facilities to supporters.

PD explains that MUDSA were the target of social media shaming which blocked a lot of MUDSA's communications on the basis of criticism being levelled at the majority of things that MUDSA was attempting to do down to the everyday aspects of the role.

PD explains that in light of that situation he advised the committee after discussions to not hold an AGM in 2015 until MUDSA could provide clear responses to an ongoing process.

Elections for the last AGM.

Phil Downs up for re-election – Proposed by Chas Banks

Vote is put to membership – Phil Downs re-elected as Secretary

Des Turner up for re-election – Proposed by Phil Downs, Seconded by Jamie Leeming

Vote is put to membership – Des Turner is re-elected as Editor.

AGM commences 7.37pm

Minutes of AGM 2014

JL asks if there are any matters arising from the minutes of AGM 2014

No comments

Matters arising

No comments

Chairs Report – Jamie Leeming

JL introduces himself and welcomes everyone to the AGM and thanks the members for attending.

JL has been chair of MUDSA for two years now due to no AGM last year.

JL tells members of his pleasure to serve and head the regular committee meetings.

JL states that before the meeting closes he will hand the chair position to John Simister.

Secretarys report – Phil Downs

PD expands on the reasons for not having an AGM in 2015 by saying that for approximately 75% of the season MUDSA were still engaged in trying to work around the constant criticisms being levelled at us including such comments as 'the MUDSA mafia'.

PD explains the critics claimed to have the best intentions of disabled people at heart and they probably still believe the same. PD believes that belief to be misguided and explains further that it seems there is now the potential for a dilution of service due to the persistent degradation of anyone attempting to serve disabled supporters to the best of their abilities.

PD announces that latter 25% of the season involved MUDSA and the Club discussing all of the available alternatives in developing more positives for our fans. MUDSA now have a way forward in the shape of a five point plan. PD explains the main aspect of this plan is that MUDSA are no longer involved in any of the match by match ticketing, this has now gone into the ticket office under Emma James who is the new DLO – Disability Liaison Officer.

PD elaborates on the new DLO role but reiterates that MUDSA are here to assist members if they have any problems but MUDSA would always advise that any issues relating to ticketing should first be discussed with Emma.

PD explains that going forward MUDSA has new responsibilities, focusing on 'ultimate inclusion', PD further explains that MUDSA's intention is to work closely with the MU Foundation to create a programme which offers hope to those that can't attend games due to lack of support or transport.

PD announces that MUDSA has also been given another opportunity to work with the MU Foundation on a project with community indications. PD states that this project is about building a programme to allow disabled people to become directly engaged with sport.

PD reiterates that MUDSA will remain a representative body for disabled fans, with the backing of the club. With that in mind MUDSA will also be used for reference purposes in terms of the future development of places and changes to the facilities made available to disabled members. Some discussions have taken place but the whole project is a long way from moving into the more detailed aspect of discussing what is eventually to be produced.

PD refers back to the 5 point plan to note MUDSA will lend a hand to 'once in a lifetime requests'

PD explains that at this moment he cannot offer more information as MUDSA does not have it. Even though things are changing MUDSA will stay the same and will be more relevant to the everyday lives and needs of the disabled supporters of Manchester United. The membership will be kept informed of any developments.

Treasurers Report – Sue Rocca

SR introduces herself as Treasurer and explains that this year she has to report on two season's financial reports due to lack of AGM last season.

SR has passed out three sets of Accounts, the first being the Accountants Financial Statement for the year 1 June 2014 to 31 May 2015, as this report also picks up on the brought forward – 2013-2014 accounts SR decided not to print two sets of Accounts statements. This statement confirms the figures SR presented previously to be accurate.

SR has presented the figures for the years 2014-2015 which are the ones agreed by the Accountant and finally the figures for 2015-2016 which have yet to be sent to the Accountant.

SR explains that for the season ending May 2015 MUDSA made a profit of £11556.43, and in the season to May 16 MUDSA made a profit of £13406.88. The monies MUDSA receive each season from the Club have increased in line with MUDSA membership.

SR directs members to the set of accounts handed out, and explains the individual categories:-

SR explains the Christmas Party makes a profit between £135 -£524, the variation is down to the profit made on the raffle on the day. The Club have held food prices for MUDSA, however last year December 2014 MUDSA had a problem where the Club changed the party day at the last minute, and MUDSA had to reimburse some travel costs for members who had booked flights and hotels. This was a situation completely out of MUDSA's control. Thankfully this year everything went to plan and a decent profit was made. Donations have stayed about the same in the last two seasons at about £300, this is down to the generosity of members and MUDSA supporters.

SR points out the half time draw has now levelled off at £1465 and £1803, this is after falling in the previous season. It really is down to MUDSA's match going members as more new faces arrive at games SR has to explain the draw to the new members, some join in some don't, and some join in

after being asked a few times. Previously MUDSA had more regular faces who knew what the draw was about, but at least now MUDSA seem to have that at a more regular level.

Merchandising has gone from an expense to an income and this is down to stock levels.

SR advises the miscellaneous category on the accounts is used for lots of expenses but mainly used for transactions between MUDSA and the club where MUDSA pays out and the Club reimburses MUDSA, so again the number at the year-end reflects where MUDSA are with the payments coming back. SR keeps detailed records to ensure the money comes back to MUDSA.

SR speaks about the November dinner (Annual Dinner) which has increased in profit from £225 in November 2014 to £3429.11 in November 2015. MUDSA did increase the ticket price, which had previously been held for about 10 years.

SR explained the 100 Club was £820.00 in the 14-15 season but reduced to £448 in 15-16. MUDSA are now accepting payments via paypal and Jamie Leeming promotes this regularly in the hope that MUDSA can start to bring in numbers.

SR advises the social event at Belle Vue is self-funding and the members pay for the face ticket price, it only appears on MUDSA Accounts as MUDSA have to pay the Stadium up front and then collect the members money, as the event is in July SR will have paid the deposit in the previous accounts year.

SR stated admin and stationery costs remain fairly constant. In the last 2 season MUDSA have had some additional expense around the anniversary publications and events, obviously these are one-off expenses.

SR explains the bowling event is self-funding with a cost to MUDSA for trophies and medals for the children. MUDSA hold a raffle on the day to make some money back on the cost of these. MUDSA are now doing a lot more work on publications in-house and this has helped keep the costs more constant – thanks to Jamie.

SR explains the savings account has seen no movement as MUDSA need to have money in the Bank to cope with unforeseen changes. As interest rates are so low anyway SR have not transferred as much between current and savings as there is little benefit.

SR expressed hope that the membership are a satisfied with her handling of the money, SR states that she never forgets that this money belongs to the membership and respects this. SR also expressed her honour that the membership entrusts her with the monies.

SR adds that if anyone ever wants to speak with her about MUDSA Accounts, to just get in touch.

SR extends her thanks to her fellow committee members for their support in helping her to keep things in an orderly fashion.

Committee report - Rollin Reds – Jamie Leeming

JL explains to members that the magazine has changed a lot since he became involved and he continues to try and produce good engaging content and articles.

JL advises that this season Rollin Reds will see at least three new contributors who include Alex and Jon Nield who will be reporting on their travels to away games, and Tom Williams a graduate

sportswriter who works at the club and is a friend to MUDSA. JL hopes that with the changes MUDSA faces he feels there will be a lot more interesting content to come.

JL extends his thanks to regular contributors Phil Downs and Chas Banks as well as to all members who send their messages in to use on the letters page.

JL explains that the MUDSA website has recently had a redesign aimed at making it clearer and easier to navigate. JL states that there will soon be more features aimed at increasing accessibility.

Committee Report – Visually Impaired Supporters Rep – John Simister.

JS introduces himself to the membership and advises he was elected to the committee in 2014.

JS sells merchandise in the Ability Suite on match days. JS advises that for the 15/16 season he sold over £1000 of merchandise. JS thanks everyone for their purchase and for their support.

JS expressed his pleasure in his role and meeting members of MUDSA and away fans too. He feels privileged to be in the role and notes that if anyone has any problems or concerns to get in touch with him.

JS notes that there is a new poppy badge for this season, and MUDSA will be making a donation to the British Legion for the sales of the badge.

Committee Report – Social – Chas Banks

CB reports that the 2014 & 2015 dinner were held in the Manchester suite, this provided extra space and increased the capacity to 570 for the 2015 dinner. The room is now easier to navigate. The 2014 guest was Gordon McQueen and Tony Jo as the comic, in 2015 the guest was Bryan Robson with comedy from Duggie Brown.

CB explains the MUDSA anniversary honours made Sir Alex MUDSA patron, David Gill President and Lyn Honorary vice President. The Club were presented with a plaque which is now proudly displayed on the wall outside.

CB extends his thanks to Sue Rocca, Ann Marie and her Mum, John Simister and Family for assisting with the dinner.

CB announces that this year's dinner will be on Friday 28th of October in the Manchester Suite tickets are £35 for a 3 course meal with tea and coffee. CB is trying to get Lou Macari to be guest speaker but the comic will be Johnnie Casson with Mark Jones as compere. CB said that he has sent an email to the majority about the dinner but advises that if you have not received not to wait get in touch with him as soon as possible as the dinner will sell out.

CB discusses the Christmas party from 2015 stating that the party was in the Manchester Suite due to the Santa run. CB notes that Ann Marie does the bulk of the work on this event, CB main job is the logistics which went well. Meal served at the party is a breakfast buffet and the player of the year was Chris Smalling.

CB explains that the Christmas party made a small profit which went into MUDSA funds.

CB discusses the MUDSA evening at the dogs, thanking Ann Marie who has taken over ticketing for the party and the Q and A, and extends thanks to Sue Rocca for helping with the money in regards to the events.

CB explains that he is proud of the level of professionalism MUDSA strives for and mostly achieves, he adds that it is a privilege and a pleasure to do the job.

Committee Report – Family Social – Anne-Marie Lewis

AM discusses the bowling event which took place on Sunday 8th May at Didsbury Bowling Complex. 63 Mudsa members and their family and friends attended the event. Trophies and medals were handed out. AM explains that the club sends two reserve players down to the event to distribute the medals. The raffle made a profit of £100.

AM extends thanks to Chas Banks and wife Shirley Banks for their help and to the club for allowing the players to attend.

AM announces that if any members want to attend the event they will need to email her.

AM talks about the evening at the dogs which took place on Friday 29th July, 60 mudsa members and their family and friends attended the event.

AM explains the change of room to the carvery room as there is a lot more room for members to move about. Mudsa sponsors a race and the photos of the evening will be added to the notice board outside of the Ability Suite. The raffle on the evening raised £100. AM extends her thanks to Chas Banks and Ashleigh Davison.

AM discusses the previous trips to Carrington and announces that the waiting list is very long, AM explains that MUDSA have only had one trip to Carrington in the last 5 seasons. However AM is hopeful that these trips may continue after meeting with the club.

AM states that MUDSA are only allowed to take a small group each time. AM will notify the next members due to attend the event when one is arranged.

AM explains that the MUDSA Christmas party is one of the most popular events and it is always heavily oversubscribed. AM reiterates that MUDSA rarely get much notice for the event due to fixtures and the teams responsibilities around Christmas time.

AM discusses the event this past year which was held in the Manchester Suite due to the Santa Run. Most of the first team attended and spent time going around every table signing items and having their photos taken. Wayne Rooney gave a speech and Chris Smalling collected his MUDSA player of the year award.

AM announces the raffle from the party made £365, and an auction for a giant Toblerone raised £144.50.

AM explains that application forms for the party are available from the first week of November on match days, a link to the form is available on the MUDSA website at the same time.

AM explains that with the amount of applications each year members get the chance to attend on their 4th application. AM assures members that applications are treated fairly and everyone will eventually get their chance to attend.

AM thanks Chas Banks, Mark Jones and the players for their help and time at the event.

AM discusses the Q & A and the fact that MUDSA have not had this event for a few years, again AM hopes this will start again through discussions with the club.

AM notes that after every event she encourages members to send their photos in so they can be included on the notice board

AM would like to thank all committee members and Ashleigh for the help she receives throughout the season, and a big thank you to all the members that come to the events.

Committee Report – Quad Rep/Memorabilia/Information Coordinator – Liz Edwards

As Liz was not present at the AGM she provided the report in advance which was read to the members in attendance.

I send my sincere apologies that I cannot be with you tonight, I have written this short statement to be read out in my absence.

As the quad representative for 2015/16 I collect the half time draw monies and sell merchandise in both quads.

I distribute the Rollin Reds' magazine and I am a general point of contact, keeping members informed of upcoming events.

During the season I collected £276 from the half time draw and £103 from the merchandise and I would like to thank all members for their support.

I have been a member of the committee for 6 seasons and have thoroughly helping members and making new friends along the way.

But it is with regret I now have to resign from the committee due to personal reasons.

I will still support MUDSA and the committee in any way I can in the future. I have really enjoyed working along side Phil, Chas, Sue, Anne Marie, Jamie, Des, John and Ash they do a tremendous job and I would like to thank them personally for supporting me through a very tough time. I wish them all the very best for the future and hope you will all fully support them.

Committee Report – Editorial Assistant – Des Turner

Des was not present for the meeting

Election of Officers

Sue Rocca was Proposed by Ann Marie Lewis and Seconded by John Simister

A members vote was conducted and Sue Rocca was re-elected as treasurer.

Chas Banks was Proposed by Phil Downs and seconded by Jamie Leeming

A members vote was conducted and Chas Banks was re-elected as social events rep.

Any Other Business

Before opening up the floor JL had three questions proposed by members who could not make the meeting.

Pat Hutchings (via Email): wants to discuss the possibility of season tickets for disabled supporters.

PD responds by stating that it's difficult to describe the situation as nothing is concrete. PD states that it's quite likely that charging is under discussion, although that is nothing to do with internal desire from the Club to charge but by external pressure. PD has no certainty in the form this will take as there are 2-4 options for charging. The situation is still a 'wait and see' but it is more than likely going to happen.

Vicky Besley (via Email): wants to discuss the safety of members by the away fans at Old Trafford, she said 'I have become anxious after the Liverpool UEFA match last season to the point where I am worrying about coming to Old Trafford'

PD responds stating that the upset was down to a failure of safety and security on that occasion. PD states that Vicky will not be the only person that feels vulnerable following this type of behavior and that it is a genuine concern that MUDSA need to take to the club to see if they can install a physical barrier to protect supporters on the platform from missiles etc. PD notes that it is a problem that the Club has had for a long time, at one point they tried to move the Away fans to the north stand but it was not feasible. PD notes that Vicky's comments will be taken to the club and hopefully they can produce an answer.

Mark Crick (via Email): wants to discuss the number of externally available accessible toilets. He said 'the only ones I know of are internal, which is inconvenient if you need to use one but are not yet ready to enter the stadium'

PD responds by stating that Mark is correct to say this.

SR states that there are portalooos located on the edge of E2 car park which have one disabled portaloo included.

PD responds to SR comment that it means the grand total of accessible toilets outside of the stadium is therefore 1. PD states that the issue has been raised with the club and hopes the club would consider this situation along with the extra provision to the platform.

Dave Ambler: When new seats are in will there be a rep from MUDSA to offer guidance?

PD responds confirming, PD explains MUDSA met with Richard Arnold and were introduced to a '5 point' plan for MUDSA, part of the plan was for MUDSA to be 'a sounding board for the Club with respect to developments, policies and procedures that may impact disabled supporters'

With permission PD seeks to put the 5 point plan onto the MUDSA website. There is a commitment from the club to include MUDSA in the debate around the new facilities.

Jon Nield: The Club are taking all ticketing, which hints at the changes, will the club discuss with you around proposals.

PD responds that he can't be sure as at this moment he is not clear. PD explains the club has a new DLO in office and a new DAO which is required by UEFA. These two people are doing the one job that PD was before. PD will now take on a consultancy role with the Club to help with the implementation of facilities.

Jon Nield: my concern is that we have people in place that are not qualified.

PD yes we need a consultation not a 'non-sultaion'. United is massive and it takes a lot.

Jon Nield: how do you see the future for disabled supporters?

PD responds that external people have influences on the club. These people have principles on

paying which someone may not get involved with if they couldn't. This is a concern. MUDSA do not disagree with making everywhere accessible, but basing this on the social model of disability is a worry. The club should talk to the MUDSA membership to get their understanding of the situation.

Jon Nield: it's a shame what happened, it's a shock.

PD responds the EHRC in 2011 didn't find anything an issue, but now we have a list of things to do from their most recent visit. The Club is fine with doing it but it will likely be 2-3 years before we see full implementation. The Club have always been supportive and behind fans.

Jon Nield: so the club wont meet the criteria by next season?

PD responds the Club have every intention, but no practicality as its not 2017. We have a slow build of activity which will burst forth when the deadline approaches. I would be concerned about full implementation straight away I would prefer staged process.

Jon Nield: is it around 15 Wheelchair spaces per one standard seat?

PD: more like 13

Jon Nield: I suppose you can't relocate people in the East Stand, lots of things to consider when planning.

PD: If the platform ran into the North East corner and if the Bournemouth situation was real, then it wouldn't be the best in an evacuation situation. It's not an option for me. The Club has its own Counter Terrorism Officer who has detailed plans for future situations. The Munich tunnel gets too congested so would be difficult to maneuver down.

John Kirk: I would just like to say thank you, I appreciate what MUDSA does. It is frustrating not getting tickets for every game, but I understand the situation.

Ian Falla: if charging comes in what happens with the carer? I can't come without someone and It's always stated that you get a ticket for a carer.

PD: don't worry – anyone needing a PA for a game is able to come with them free. The debate is when disability is in a grey area an whether that person needs a carer.

Ian Falla: but who decides that?

PD: it used to be me.

Ian Falla: this goes back to the club and the people that do not know disability like MUDSA. Should we not be worried?

PD: don't be worried. It's a different job to find that information out. There are occasions when people take advantage. We have options to work with, Nimbus disability has an access card that does everything for you and decides if you get a concession.

Ian Falla: is there any chance that information can go on the website

PD: I only mention this to dissuade any fears about people taking advantage.

Ian Falla: thank you

Dave Ambler: in regards to areas of the stadium that are not an option like the South Stand. Are there any other areas you wouldn't consider?

PD: Top of Stretford... Family stand would be difficult. There are about 15-20 various options in discussion about where to put these facilities. We should have around 280 Wheelchair spaces and visiting supporters would get 10 percent of those. So 28 in total, most rarely take the 12 offered to them now. In effect we could be expected to over provide. Think we should debate that fact. The overall project has lots of aspects to it.

Jon Nield: short fall 280 places and we currently have 120?

PD: yes 104 at this level and 16 in the quads. That's another 160 places you can imagine how big. Hope we can displace towards Stretford end. Most likely is extension of existing but don't want that.

Jon Kirk: why have they done nothing until now, they can find 80 million for a player. They should have done this years ago.

PD: yes, it would have been better to not be so far behind. But I think every club is in the same position.

Jon Kirk: I went to Derby and it was terrible, people piled all over you there was no barrier.

PD: should be a physical barrier between the platform and away fans.

Jon Kirk: I brought my friend here a West Brom supporter and he couldn't believe how good it was.

Ian Falla: have the ticket office taken away the yellow and red card system?

PD: it hasn't been in place for a while. But we didn't announce it to see if it made a difference as we had a few instances of touting. But overall it's been gone for a while.

Jon Nield: all boxes have one seat for a wheelchair user, will they ever be realistically used?

PD: they make it available to whoever needs it; they take the physical seat out and then put it back in should it not be needed. However we can't really regard the number in with our provision that's why we never have included it otherwise the number would be close to 220 spaces.

Mick Lee: I would like to thank the committee for a great job

PD: we appreciate your support for coming when things are uncertain. But we will try to make MUDSA the best it has been, it would be great being instrumental to bringing people together.

Jon Nield: Carrington and Q and A?

AM: it stopped because of building work in Carrington a few seasons ago, then the change in managers from Moyes to Van Gaal. We are hoping to get back to it, we are trying.

End of Questions

Jamie Leeming hands the position of Chair over to John Simister to proceed for the next year.

Meeting closed at 9pm by John Simister.