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**DON'T FORGET
TO CHECK OUT**

www.aisa.org

AISA GALA DINNER

FRIDAY 17TH MAY – 7.30pm for 8.00pm
HOSPITALITY SUITE, CLOCK END, HIGHBURY

Hosted by Tom Watt with very special guest speakers:

• **Liam Brady** • **Charlie George**
plus others to be announced

Three course meal | Celebrity auction | Great raffle prizes

TICKETS – £48 (if ordered before April 17, £55 after that date)
TABLES OF 10 AVAILABLE AT £480

AVAILABLE FROM: Steven Powell, 32e Arundel Square, Islington, London, N7 8AS
(cheques payable to "Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association")

FURTHER DETAILS: Steven Powell 07881 950613/ 020 7609 6783

Our thanks to Ken Friar and Arsenal Football Club for their support for this event.



Scenes from last year's Gala Dinner. (Left) Liam Brady makes Ken Friar, Sammy Nelson and Charlie George chuckle. (Right) Sammy Nelson returns the compliment, and has the audience in stitches.

FIGHT THE TOUTS RING 020 7704 4300

Following a supporters-initiated discussion at the Fans Forum the Club and the police have stepped up their action against ticket touting.

The unauthorised sale or offering for sale of tickets for designated football matches is a criminal offence. Many Arsenal supporters are regularly forced to pay way over the 'face value' for tickets. Matches at Highbury this season have seen some fans paying

as much as £300.

Following the Fans Forum the Club used the programme to report that last season the police carried out ten anti-tout undercover operations resulting in 27 touts being arrested. Ten people have received banning orders around the stadium (which usually restrict access to all areas within two miles of the stadium). In addition over 250 Ticket Registration Scheme member-

ships were cancelled last season.

AISA supports the Club's efforts to stop the touts being able to source tickets, usually through the Ticket Registration Scheme. The Club has set up a Tout Prevention Hotline – **020 7704 4300**.

If you have purchased a ticket for above face value from an individual tout we would encourage you to call the hotline, write to the Stadium Management Department, Arsenal FC, Arsenal Stadium, London N5 1BU or send an email to info@arsenal.co.uk

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

■ Operate democratically, and work towards the objective of an elected supporter on the Arsenal Board

42 Supporters Trusts already exist in England and Scotland. Some have already made massive progress, including the election of supporter directors.

The national Supporters Direct movement co-ordinates and leads this week, and representatives of Supporters Direct will talk about what they can provide, and the experiences of other fans.

To help us with catering arrangements please register in advance.

ARSENAL SUPPORTER

www.aisa.org

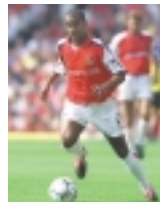
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ARSENAL INDEPENDENT SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION NUMBER 4

AISA PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

Patrick Vieira was the overwhelming winner of AISA's Player of the Year award for 2001

Patrick said:
"It is a great honour to win this award. Could I ask you to pass on my appreciation to all the members of the Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association. Your commitment to Arsenal Football Club is absolutely fantastic."

Ashley Cole won the Young Player of the Year award.



Ashley Cole



VICTORIA DISCORDIA CRESCIT?

For AISA the last couple of months have been an extremely busy time, to say the least.

First came the elation of the Stephen Byrne decision on Ashburton Grove; a tremendous victory for the Club and every supporter who lobbied, petitioned and wrote letters in support of the new stadium.

The politicians and the professional lobbyists all agree that fans efforts made a significant difference to achieving a massive victory amongst Islington councillors, which then led on to the positive decisions of Livingstone and Byers. Well done everybody!

Then came the crest announcement (of which more below) but in between also two small achievements.

First, persuading the Club to put on a special train to Newcastle for the cup match.

Then, obtaining agreement from the Club to compensate

fans who purchased the new goal shirt with the two year "guarantee tag".

On the crest the Club's managing director, Keith Edelman, argues that it had to be changed for copyright reasons, and says he decided against consultation with supporters because it would have been "a sop and a charade".

AISA commands Mr Edelman for his honesty but disagrees with his decision. There are many ways in which fans could have been brought into the process, especially given that it took the Club over 6 months to make a decision.

Any change to the crest was bound to upset some fans. Nevertheless many companies and institutions (even other football clubs) find a way of involving their "customers" in decisions of this kind, and not just a focus group of 20 or 30.

As a correspondent in Gunflash observed "the lack



of consultation and information given to fans prior to the change being made has given a focus to the more generalised feelings of resentment over loyalty to the club being abused and the increasing expense in supporting Arsenal F.C."

AISA consists of season-ticket holders, shareholders, TRS members and other Arsenal fans from all over the world. We remain absolutely committed to the success of Arsenal Football Club, and confident that our role in articulating and representing supporters' views can make a contribution to that success.

WHAT WILL THE ARSENAL SUPPORTERS TRUST DO?

A SPECIAL MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SETTING UP OF THE ARSENAL SUPPORTERS TRUST

Where: The South Stand, Arsenal Stadium
When: Tuesday 16th April, from 7.00-9.00 pm

The meeting will discuss how the Trust can:

■ Enable every fan to have a financial stake in the Club, regardless of whether they are able to contribute £20 or £2 million

■ Ensure that the Club takes fans views into account on issues such as ticket prices, catering, policing and stewarding

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ARSENAL SUPPORTER is published by Paul Matz on behalf of the Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association. Designed by David Dewhirst. Printed by Hartington Fine Art.

JOIN AISA!

AISA is independent supporters' organisation, made up of Arsenal fans throughout the UK and beyond. We strive to give a voice to fans views and to articulate concerns through a constructive relationship with the Club.

Membership costs just £5 per annum (£4 standing order, £2 concessions, £10 overseas).

I apply to join AISA

I agree to abide by the constitution and rules. (copy on request)

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS**

Surname _____

First name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Email address _____

Home _____

Work _____

Telephone _____

Home _____

Work _____

Mobile _____

I enclose a cheque/money order for £ _____

In payment of full/concessory/associations/leaves membership (payable to Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association)

I enclose a further donation of £ _____
to support AISA work, making a total of £ _____

or

I would like to pay by standing order

The Manager _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Insert the name/address of your bank/building society

Please pay to the Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association on _____

Insert the date of your first payment due now

the sum of £ _____

the same amount on 01 July each year thereafter until further notice £ _____

Your account number _____

Your sort code _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association

Account number 6506601 sort code 08-92-99

Co-operative Bank plc, Business Direct, Kings Valley, New Street, Stockport SK4 2JU

Reference (office use only)

Return to AISA Secretary, 11 Tannington Terrace, Gillespie Road, London N5 1LE

YOUR LETTERS

Dear AISA

I am a life-long Arsenal supporter, now living in Australia. I was born in the Royal Free Hospital in Liverpool Road and saw my first Arsenal game when I was about 6. It was against Newcastle, yes it was 0-0 and yes it rained!

As a 14-year-old I spent the night outside Islington Town Hall so that I could watch Frank and the boys parade the trophies on that memorable weekend in 1971.

I managed to purchase a house in Highbury Hill and could hear the crowds on match day and would leave home at about quarter to 3 and be in place by kick off.

I was deeply upset when it was decided that Arsenal were going to leave the hallowed marble halls of Highbury. I got over it. I took comfort in the fact that I still have a piece of the original North Bank terracing in the back garden of my house in Highbury Hill, which is now rented out and has a clause in the lease that forbids the tenants from removing the "piece of concrete" that's in the corner of the back garden.

Well done for all your efforts on Ashburton Grove.

Gary Quattromini

Dear AISA

I was reading in the papers today about Neil Quinn giving all his money from his testimonial match to charity; what a great thing to do.

Shed a few tears when listening to him on the news tonight, as the visit to Great Ormond Street that he talked about was to the ward that my son was in, it meant the world to me as it was in the players own time and every one was there.

He wondered how many of the children lived, as far as I know sadly only one, my son died a few months after, but we were invited to Highbury and I carried him up the stairs. Hope to take my other son Liam before it is just a footnote in history.

Mike Geary

To contribute to this newsletter write to AISA at 11 Tannington Terrace, Gillespie Road, London N5 1LE
Email: paulmatz@arsenal.fc.net

Oh crest!



Dear AISA

I would like to register my disgust as a supporter for over 50 years with this horrible looking crest. What possessed the Arsenal Board to accept this design, which certainly does not do justice to Arsenal Football Club?

To take a decision of this importance without the views of Arsenal supporters is truly amazing.

M J Wheeler
Halstead

Dear AISA

HELPII!

What are they trying to do; they want me to wear a crest on my shirt that's been designed by a 10-year-old in his big brother's computer.

Please help to stop this madness before we become the laughing stock of the Premiership. We want something we can wear with pride; something that reflects the Club's great history, not a watered-down version of a truly great design.

T Fitzimmonds

A faithful Arsenal fan

Dear AISA

When the new crest was first brought to my objection I thought it was some stupid joke. To my horror I have discovered that this is in fact supposed to be our new image!

The new crest reminds me of the latest energy drink can, or a badly designed beer label. Not the image I held for my club - the club my grandfather, my father and my son have all supported.

In my honest opinion I don't think we will ever get used to this crest. Its' novelty will have rubbed off in a few years and it will be an embarrassment to the Club.

Richard Webber
Season ticket holder

Dear AISA

I'm an Arsenal fan living in Cardiff. Just wanted to register my views on the new logo!

It's bright modern and I understand the copyright issues and the need to protect and have full management of the Arsenal brand. The logo has undergone change before and should do so again, especially at this time to move forward to be one of the big four clubs (in Europe that is).

Keep up the good work.

Andy Peters
Cardiff

ASHBURTON GROVE - ALMOST THERE!

DECISIONS OFF THE PITCH CONTINUE TO MIRROR THOSE ON IT

Whilst the team's hot streak is being placed in jeopardy by a small, unrepresentative group of bureaucrats (the Football Association) the new stadium successes in winning over Islington councillors, Ken Livingstone and Stephen Byers are being threatened by an equally small and unrepresentative group of Islington residents (ISCA).

Legal action commenced in the High Court last month when ISCA applied for

Islington Council's decision to grant planning permission to be quashed.

The writ alleges that the procedure adopted at the Council meeting was incorrect and that the environmental statements that accompanied the applications were insufficiently detailed.

Commenting on the move AISA chair, Steven Powell said: "What gives this self-appointed, self-serving bunch the right to speak on behalf

of me and tens of thousands of Islingtonians who support the plans?"

"Having comprehensively lost the argument over two years and I don't know how many meetings ISCA now wants the courts to overturn a decision arrived at by elected councillors and endorsed by the Mayor of London who was elected with the votes of hundreds of thousands of the capital's citizens.

Ken Livingstone says the plan is a model of socially responsible development worth over £60 million in community benefits. He's right. All those self-centred intolerant people behind ISCA should hang their heads in shame."

AISA Treasurer, Geoff Bedingfield added:

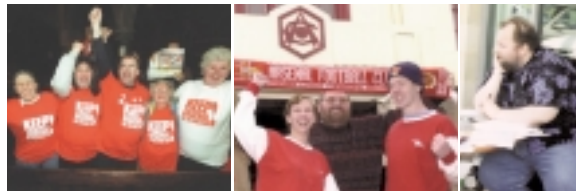
"I hope the courts through this nonsense out in short order and award full costs against those responsible. My

taxes shouldn't have to pay the costs of defending this action."

Meanwhile AISA has launched its own fans consultation exercise on the facilities to be provided at the new stadium. Key issues, which AISA has identified, are:

- ticket pricing and grading
- arrangements for current bond holders, season ticket holders, ticket registration scheme members, junior gunners and all those on the waiting lists
- financing of the new stadium, including possible naming rights and any bond or other schemes
- catering and other supporter facilities
- maximising the atmosphere

The AISA website www.aisa.org will be devoting a special page to the consultation exercise, and the results will be forwarded to the Club for discussion.



(Left and centre) Celebrations after the Union Chapel and Stephen Byers decisions, but, right, Steven Powell was not so happy about the NIMBYs ignoring the democratically arrived-at decisions

ARSENAL AGREE SHIRT COMPENSATION

As a result of representations from AISA, Arsenal have agreed to compensate fans who purchased the new gold strip from the Club shop. AISA pointed out that the Arsenal's Club Charter states explicitly that "all replica strip designs have a minimum lifespan of two seasons".

Following letters from a number of supporters complaining that club staff were saying the shirt design would be "unchanged" next season, and therefore no compensation would be offered AISA wrote to Arsenal. We suggested that all fans who purchased the gold shirts before February 2nd (when the new crest was unveiled) should be given at least £10 vouchers

redeemable at the Club shop.

We also detailed the research we had carried out, which found three premieriership clubs, Ipswich, Leicester and Newcastle, all of whom have compensated fans for less significant changes than are being made by Arsenal. We argued that the two changes being introduced by Arsenal are significant, and on top of that, it appears that the Club knew in advance of the gold kit being issued that the crest would change, and almost certainly also knew that the Club sponsor would change.

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THE FANS FORUM

Many fans have asked us what the aims of the Arsenal Fans Forum are, so we list them here.

- To establish a dialogue between the Club and fans
- To develop a better understanding of issues that affect supporters
- An opportunity for the Club to discuss new ideas

AISA believes that it is too early to form a judgement about the Forum, but we strongly support the objectives and the "end goals", the primary one being:

- Ensuring that supporters - whether on the Forum or not - feel valued in their loyalty to the Club



New crest and new sponsor on next year's shirt

Kolo Toure Arsenal's new signing from the Ivory Coast