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To: 'Rick Robinson'
Subject: Notes

As the Dartford Barmy Army descend on Bognor to finish this historic season in style, the reserves have an exciting couple of weeks ahead before I ride off into the sunset.

In honesty I have found this season especially tough as original intentions to support the first team with a smaller squad, which appeared to be the right decision at the time, have not quite worked out as I hoped or intended. As reserve team manager, the role is to try and get players knocking on the door which for a time we had, with players like Adam Burchell, Danny Crouch, Karl Dent, Deren Ibrahim and Jack Pallen all featuring in the first team squad as well as playing regularly for the reserves. However, due to the gap between the reserve team league and that of the first team, it was felt that it would better serve the progress of the players development, to put them out on loan to teams higher in the pyramid. The problem is however you can't have it both ways, you can't have a strong reserve team with players pushing for the first team, and then decide to place the better players in other clubs because the level of football is not good enough. Therefore, decisions on whether the club continue to run with a reserve team in the Kent league next year will be taken once the season is over, but with the club now in the BSS and the gap even wider, I think the argument for friendlies against a higher standard of opposition, without the worry of suspensions, is personally the course of action the club should take.

Great credit must be given however to the remaining players who have managed to compete on all four fronts of competition this season. It would appear that we have unfortunately missed out on the league due to our last two results, when we drew at home and then lost away, having gone down to ten men for the sixth time this season! The most frustrating thing about our league is you can kick someone as many times as you like but if you swear or retaliate you are shown a red. Inexperience is a factor and a couple of older wiser heads in the team are needed, but it is hard to contain yourself sometimes as I have found personally, having been sent off twice myself trying to either protect my players from the opposition or the incompetence of the officials.

In the midweek floodlit competition we have two games remaining from which we need four points to guarantee a place in the final, a competition we won last season.

Next Tuesday we play Tonbridge Angels in the final of the Kent Intermediate cup followed by a trip to Welling next Saturday to play against VCD in the final of the League Cup. It is a fantastic achievement for the players to have reached two finals, with still a possibility of a third, and it would be great if as many as possible could come along to the games and support the players next week to recognise their efforts and cheer them on.

I hope to see a number of you over the coming weeks and would like to thank you for your continued support.

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