

BRISA Committee Meeting 007 ~ Waters Edge

Date: 17th November 2005

Present:	Scott Thornton (in the chair)	Apologies:	Mike Graham
	Dennis Gasgarth		Stuart Wilkinson
	Clare Nolan		Ste Birtwell
	Mark Whalley		Jill Pegden
	Matt Howard		Neil Thornton
	Paul Brooking		Alan Griffiths
			John Merrill
			Carole Billouin

Also present as BRISA members: Mandy Oxtoby, Jessica Alcock, Kimberley White, Simon Leigh, Pauline Kelly, Pete Armit, Andrew Neil, Mark Kennedy, three guests – to whom I apologise for failing to note your names. (Sorry – please let me know. Paul)

1. Introduction and Apologies

Scott Thornton took the chair in Mike Graham's absence and introduced the committee members to those who had not attended a previous meeting. In particular it is excellent to note 10 members took the trouble to attend the committee meeting on a freezing cold night.

2. Membership

Paul reported BRISA currently has 176 members consisting of 117 full members and 59 family members. In some cases the £5 subscription has not yet been received. Paul checks the PO Box weekly and it was agreed these members should be chased for payment after 26th November.

3. Financial Summary

The Treasurer could not attend the meeting but had sent details of the current position, showing BRISA has a positive balance of £585.32. Paul reported he had a further £40 in membership fees to bank.

4. Review of Meeting with BRFC – 3rd November 2005

- 4.1 Overall the committee felt the meeting had been positive and John Williams and Tom Finn seemed to have a genuine desire to work with BRISA. Matt Howard added Williams had spoken about BRISA at the Ewood Blues event saying how he was looking forward to working with our group.
- 4.2 The committee will meet bi-monthly with the club to discuss a range of topics. Each meeting to focus on a single issue. The committee emphasised the importance of providing the club with properly researched and prepared proposals. This document to be ready two weeks in advance of the meeting and to be published to the BRISA membership for comment. One week prior to the meeting the finalised

document to be forwarded to the club. The committee emphasised the importance of gaining views from all fans whether BRISA members or not. A number of options were discussed as to how to canvas the supporters' views on any subject including: (these methods would usually focus around the main topic for the next club meeting)

- Weekly poll on a single question on the BRISA website.
- E-mail a single question to all BRISA members on a weekly basis asking for their opinions
- Include the same questions in a regular mail out to non-internet members
- Publicise same questions via the LET
- Publicise via the club programme
- Ask each member to question at least one friend on their opinions
- Prepare case studies – e.g. lapsed ST holders (long term project)

ACTION ON THESE POINTS

Scott to prepare the formal document. Mark, Clare and Matt to assist

Weekly poll – Clare

Weekly e-mail – Paul

LET/Club programme - Neil

- 4.3 Den will continue to be the main contact between BRISA and the club. Paul will act as back-up
- 4.4 The next topic for discussion with the club to be – Attendances
- 4.5 How to achieve maximum input from the membership and general support – see point 4.2 above. The meeting agreed continuing to canvas opinion from the membership and NON-members was vital. To some extent the membership are the committed support and the views of the more casual fan must be sort in all areas
- 4.6 Co-ordinate member responses. Paul explained Dave Hart had contacted him to offer assistance. Paul to discuss this area and a number of others with Dave.

5. Membership Communication

- 5.1 The membership packs to be mailed within ten days and would contain the first newsletter, key ring and membership card. Paul to discuss mailing the packs with Dave Hart. Packs to be mailed 30th November
- 5.2 Newsletter to be published on a quarterly basis and mirroring the football season. August, winter, spring, end of season. Newsletter content to include: Minutes of meetings, topics for future meetings asking for views, information on the FSF, a questionnaire – why did you join BRISA?
- 5.3 Alan Griffiths has volunteered to be News Editor

Printing: the first edition to be produced on good quality (130gsm) paper. Scott outlined his long-term vision for the Newsletter, which would allow BRISA to sell the newsletter as a fundraiser while remaining free to members. Clearly this would be a high quality item in both print and content.

ACTION: Alan to prepare newsletter. Scott to investigate printing costs. Alan to press-gang (!) others to assist him if he wishes to do so.

- 5.3 Website – the main discussion centred on the suggestion the BRISA and brfcs.com websites be merged. This might be achieved by creating separate forums on brfcs.com that focused entirely on BRISA issues. It was felt a merger would expose BRISA to the widest possible audience, increase awareness, interest and help to gain wider understanding of fans views.

Clare, Paul and Glenn outlined the technical and practical difficulties associated with this idea. After discussion the meeting concluded the idea was not feasible. However with +/- 3600 members brfcs.com and +/- 15000 unique visitors per month has a role to play in publicising BRISA. Brfcs.com admin will look at ways to drive its traffic to the BRISA website.

ACTION: Glenn/Clare

After a vote it was unanimously decided, bar one, that the current members area on the BRISA forum should be made public.

- 5.4 Updating Non-internet members

Members without web access to be mailed on a regular basis with all information sent out by e-mail, on the web etc.

ACTION: Paul to discuss with Dave Hart

Local Regular Meeting Point

The meeting felt BRISA should have a known match-day point of contact. This would be important in many ways but especially for those who did not have Internet access. The Waters Edge manager to be approached to discuss this idea. In pub advertising, a more Rovers orientated feel etc.

ACTION: Paul

6.0 Supporters Groups

6.1 Developing links with Ewood Blues in particular and other supporters groups, ex OSAs should continue. The meeting was disappointed Ewood Blues had been unable to attend. It was concluded

the best way forward was for committee members to meet with Ewood Blues informally for further discussion.

ACTION: Glenn, Ste B, Matt, Andrew Neil, Scott

6.2 Other existing groups should be contacted again to demonstrate the progress made by BRISA to date and again explain BRISA's vision

ACTION: Glenn, Scott, Ste B

7. Football Supporters Federation (FSF)

Considerable discussion took place on this subject before the meeting agreed BRISA should join the FSF and Scott Thornton, who has researched the subject considerably, would be the BRISA representative to FSF. The meeting expressed two concerns main in its discussion a) should BRISA join without consulting the membership and b) should the committee nominate an individual to represent BRISA.

The meeting concluded the current committee was in place until the first AGM, to be held end of season. If BRISA is to progress the committee must make decisions and stand by those till the AGM. As the whole committee will stand down at the AGM the membership will have the opportunity to make changes to the committee by member votes. If the membership disapproves of any decision the AGM presents the opportunity to reverse previous committee decisions.

ACTION: Scott Thornton

8. Fund Raising

The meeting agreed BRISA should look for sponsorship of areas such as the website, newsletter, membership cards. Local companies, especially those advertising at Ewood, to be approached. Several present offered to contact local businesses and report back to the committee.

ACTION: Kimberley White, Pauline Kelly, Mark Kennedy and others

9. Any Other Business

Member John Merrill had written to BRISA expressing his desire to see an increase in ethnic support at Ewood. Increasing the Asian support is essential for the club and BRISA is keen to move forward in this area. The meeting agreed this is a long-term project and needs developing. An initial working party to be formed.

ACTION: Den, Scot, Kimberley White and John Merrill (to be approached)

Christmas Party! BRISA event to take place at the Waters Edge, 10th December after the West Ham United game.

ACTION: Paul Brooking to speak to Waters Edge manager. The upper room would be an ideal venue.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the Waters Edge 8th December, 8.00pm. From the New Year committee meetings will always be held on the LAST Thursday of the month