

## **31 July 2009, Hampden Park**

Present: Rob Shorthouse, Colin Banks and Alison Jack (SFA)

Tam Ferry (EASTA), Hamish Husband (WESTA), Scot Rae (WEBATA), Peter Morton (KTA), Stevie Morris (TSTA) John Callaghan (KoFTA)

### **1. Away Points System**

There were 2 options considered:

- a) Collection in country
- b) Proof of travel

CB and AJ went through the failings of each system.

Both options provided an administrative headache for the SSC and for fans it was inconvenient. ATAC reps pointed out our concerns were around the practice of "point harvesting" where fans with no intention of traveling could buy tickets to obtain points.

Some issues raised by the SSC were:

- The present system was an unfair burden on the fans who are doing nothing wrong and they are firmly in the majority
- Fans like to know they have the ticket in their pocket before travelling
- Only 60% of SSC members sent in proof of travel details following the Holland match
- A small number of the 300 who picked up tickets in Holland were abusive to SSC staff
- Some cities have poor environmental office conditions for mass pick-ups and often nothing is available in a location that suits everyone
- The SFA are aware at the number of potential points harvesters as evidenced in Ukraine and Georgia

To protect the integrity and honesty of the SSC, a percentage of members will be asked to pick up their ticket in Norway.

ATAC's position has been consistent in requesting 100% in country pick up, however the backup position was 25% in country pickup, and a random percentage pickup in country has now been adopted by the SSC. Failure to pick up will be met with a termination in membership.

This new system will be communicated by RS by e-mail and was unanimously agreed as a satisfactory solution.

Action: RS

### **2. Newsletter**

All agreed they liked the friendly style of the Newsletter. TF asked that RS included suitable wording though in his forthcoming e-mail mentioned in 1. above, to state that ATAC's position at the time of the issue of the newsletter on away tickets was pick up in country whereas the newsletter didn't mention this.

It was acknowledged by ATAC that there are SSC members other than ATAC members and the overriding mandate for some kind of change from the SSC was based on the fact that only 4,500 out of 8,000 fans sent in evidence from the Holland game.

Action: RS

### **3. Kids awarded tickets in ballot but travelling parent not**

Whilst there was general sympathy all round AJ made the point that if something different were done then there would be less tickets available for those traveling without kids. AJ also said when e-mails were sent to successful applicants (i.e. the kids) they more or less exclusively went to the parents' e-mail addresses and said 'you have a ticket' thereby fuelling the fire which AJ apologised for.

TF stated that the kids were being unfairly disadvantaged in ballots for away tickets. In order for kids to attend the away game, in a ballot, BOTH the kids and adult must be lucky in a draw, which gave them odds of 100,000 to one instead of 1000 to one for a normal member.

ATAC suggested a percentage of tickets be set aside for 'family section' type draw.

RS suggested it would be worth looking at the numbers of cases involved and AJ also pointed out that if this warranted any future change it would have to be voted on by the whole membership.

Action: RS

#### **4. Special Delivery Charges**

Some members felt they were almost forced to use this service. CB said there is no compulsion to use this service but with normal post some things can go astray. It's a personal choice based on the value of the ticket to the individual both in monetary and emotional terms should it be lost in the post which can and does happen. In short no one is forced to pay for Special Delivery but the SSC recommend it.

CB also said there are no booking fees and AJ presented the facts from the Post Office in terms of costs per envelope, maximum number of tickets per each type etc.

Note if clubs are applying for more than 20 tickets then a phone call to AJ's team will ensure the minimum charges can be applied.

For Information

#### **5. Norway Ticket Price Variance**

We queried why the face value of the tickets divided by the exchange rate for Norwegian Kroner resulted in a big gap, of at one point, as much as £6.

The price was fixed and paid by the SFA in Euros on 28 April 2009 but in the intervening period between then and the payment cut-off time for fans the pound fluctuated against both the Kroner and the Euro. The fluctuations were fairly big but it is not possible for the SFA to legislate for this and as such fans will lose and some win some.

#### **6. SSC Membership**

TF asked what the new membership fees are likely to be. CB said broadly the same as the existing fees. There is no waiting list and any decision on opening the SSC up again will be left until after the renewal period for existing members. Ticket sales for Macedonia have already reached 22,500.

CB understands that the last membership gift wasn't well received and the SSC have carried out some surveys about what to do this time around and would welcome ATAC's ideas.

Action: ALL

TF mentioned identity barcodes used by England fans on their membership cards. RS asked if TF could send more details from his England contacts.

Action: TF

TF also asked to clarify what members get for their fee, especially as the membership numbers have risen. CB said the biggest benefit was the ability to secure tickets. It carries value for money in terms of services to be a member and has emotional value.

The new improved website and video guides have to be paid for and the mini travel guides no longer are paid for by ex-sponsor Whyte & Mackay. SSC members like the guides and the SSC will continue with them.

Expenses accrue with a bigger membership as well as bigger income and costs such as sub-contracting ticketing to the SECC must be passed on. The club is not set up to make a profit or a loss. If a profit does occur it is small and is ploughed back into grass roots football.

CB/RS agreed to include a bit about the club finances along with the renewal invites at the end of this year.

Action: CB/RS

The SSC aside the SFA works more and more in business terms. For example when flights are chartered often 60 sets are sold at premium rates to members of The Press.

## **7. SSC Duties/Working with the Fans Embassy**

TF asked for a more coordinated approach with the SFA/ATAC when the Fans Embassy is ongoing. The SSC recognize its more than just AJ's that assists in case of major problems. CB said Siobhan's number has been added to the Norway guide and CB/RS/AJ and Derek Kirkwood will assign at least one more contact number to the Fans Embassy.

Action: ALL SFA

## **8. Football Supporters Europe (FSE)**

TF advised he has been elected onto the Executive Committee of this group. The set up of the group took place in HSV Hamburg's stadium featuring a day's voting involving 350 fans from 28 different countries.

Its a big responsibility for TF so he is stepping down as SFA Fans' Liaison Officer and ATAC will appoint someone new soon.

TF will send some of the information gathered by WESTA member Dave Webster on how European countries handle tickets and fans.

Action: TF

The SSC said they are doing a presentation to the Norwegian FA on the SSC and TF offered to help if need be.

INFO

RS asked if Tam would do a piece on the FSE for the Macedonian programme. (Target date 3 weeks before match)

Action: TF

## **9. Player of the Year**

TF asked about progress. CB confirmed this idea will be taken forward at the end of the year.

Action: CB

## **10. AOB**

Diadora going bust was sad news as they had been a good supplier and had a good relationship with the SFA. They are now negotiating with 4 or 5 companies and will be in a position to say more at the end of August. A new World Cup Finals shirt is on the cards!

Sky and BBC match coverage is for the next 4 years

March 2010 should see a home friendly then there is a three week window for friendlies from 15 May.