



CARDIFF CITY FOOTBALL CLUB

THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF CARDIFF CITY STADIUM

WEDNESDAY 22ND JULY 2009, 7:45PM

GUESTS: CELTIC FC

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CARDIFF CITY FOOTBALL CLUB

Cardiff City Stadium, Leckwith Road, CF11 8AZ

CLUB HONOURS

FA. CUP WINNERS 1927, FA. CUP FINALISTS 1925, 2008, FA. CUP SEMI FINALISTS 1921, FA. CHARITY SHIELD WINNERS 1927, ALGARVE CHALLENGE CUP WINNERS 2008, DIV. 1 RUNNERS UP 1924, DIV. 2 RUNNERS UP 1921, 1952, 1960, DIV. 3 (S) CHAMPIONS 1947, DIV. 3 CHAMPIONS 1993, DIV. 3 RUNNERS UP 1976, 1983, 2001, DIV. 3 THIRD PLACE 1999, DIV. 4 RUNNERS UP 1988, DIV. 2 PLAY-OFF WINNERS 2003, WELSH CUP WINNERS 1912, 1920, 1922, 1923, 1927, 1928, 1930, 1956, 1959, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1988, 1992, 1993

EUROPEAN CUP-WINNERS CUP SEMI-FINALISTS 1968, F.A.W. PREMIER CUP WINNERS 2002, FOOTBALL LEAGUE CUP SEMI-FINALISTS 1965/66, F.A. YOUTH CUP FINALISTS 1970/71

PROGRAMME

Editor: Barrie McAuliffe. Sub Editor: Mark Denham. Contributors: Richard Shepherd, Simon Glanville, Ashley James, Steve Garland, Emily Pugh

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Cardiff City Football Club



WELCOME TO OUR FUTURE

It is with great pleasure that we present this commemorative publication this evening, celebrating the official opening of Cardiff City Stadium and no doubt an evening that will forever live in our memory. I've been working hard with Mark Denham and my team of writers, along with designer Isabel Butcher and Provincial Print to create a publication with style to set the night off with the respect it deserves. I hope you enjoy the results.

Tonight, much like our final game at Ninian Park, is an emotional day. The tears have been shed at leaving our home of ninety-nine years, but we all knew the reasons on why our tenure on Sloper Road had to end. Tonight we officially open Cardiff City Stadium as a statement of intent on where we want to be in the future. It's a fantastic environment to work within, and will no doubt grow in stature with supporters as we continue forward, making the place our own.

As said previously, Ninian Park was only ever as intimidating and vociferous as the fans inside – and now we are all here and

moving forward together. It's our job to continue to play our part in the make-up of the club, especially on a match day when we are at our best. New fans will also come, which is what we all need to become a true force with Premier League aspirations. We need to become more than the 'big club in the making', and the excuses are now gone for us as supporters as we look to increase our numbers on a consistent basis.

So onto the action against Celtic and our opening ceremony. Best of health also to Richard Shepherd, my programme editing predecessor and regular contributor who was taken ill last week. I'm glad he's on the way back to fitness and is here to enjoy the occasion. I'm a proud dad with my boy Michael one of the mascots in his first game. No doubt he won't be the only new supporter going forward.

Come on City

Barrie McAuliffe, Editor

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 04. Peter Ridsdale | 22. CCSC & Supporters Trust | 53. Tour Reports |
| 06. Dave Jones | 24. Celtic | 56. Cardiff City Superstore |
| 08. Welcome Home | 34. City & Celtic | 58. Interactive City |
| 11. Guests | 36. Academy Review | 60. The Championship 2009/10 |
| 12. CCS Press | 38. Moving Home | 69. Ticket News |
| 14. Farewell to Ninian | 44. Championship Movers | 71. Next Up |
| 16. City Kids | 46. Pre-Season: Chasetown | 72. Stats 2008/09 |
| 18. Joe Ledley | 48. Portugal 2009 | 74. Squads |

Peter Ridsdale

I would like to welcome everyone to tonight's historic 'Official Opening Ceremony' for our wonderful new stadium.

Cardiff City Stadium has been talked about for many years, indeed it had become the scheme that was talked about but that no one actually believed would happen. Tonight the doubters have been well and truly put in their place as we hold our 'Official Opening Ceremony' followed by the prestigious opening football match against Celtic Football Club. I would like to welcome the Directors, Tony Mowbray and his staff, players and supporters from Celtic and to say a big thank you for agreeing to play your part in such a historic occasion.

I was asked at the end of last season if I felt nostalgic about leaving Ninian Park. I know many people were, but I make no apology for saying that I just felt a huge sigh of relief and an immense sense of achievement. Ninian Park had many happy memories for so many of you but it had no part in the future of either a Championship or hopefully one day soon, a Premier League Football Club. When I arrived in Cardiff in the summer of 2005 I was overwhelmed by the problems that we faced as a football club. The debts were strangling the club and the stadium scheme was at best dormant. Radical action was required and was taken. We brought in a new manager, Dave Jones, who with his backroom staff has done an outstanding job. We sold every player of value and then started the rebuilding programme.

I can never adequately put in words the size of the challenge that we all faced and the fact that we have succeeded should in no way diminish the hurdles that we had to overcome. There were many people who have been a part of this success story both on and off the field and as always it is impossible to name them all without upsetting those that I inadvertently fail to mention. Two individuals who must be at the forefront of my thanks are Paul Guy and Mike Hall. The three of us agreed at the end of December 2005 that unless we stuck together and focused on the stadium development no matter what was thrown at us, this Club would not survive and the stadium would never happen. Today is a testimony to that co-operation. Obviously the assistance of Cardiff City Council was also a prerequisite to our succeeding. Given the public contribution that was being offered to us no one at the Council gave us an easy ride but they balanced their public responsibility with the acknowledgement that the stadium development would put millions of pounds of public benefit back into the community. The fact we have succeeded means that both parties appropriately worked together for the public good and the City of Cardiff is now well served by our new stadium, the athletics stadium, improved highways, the new retail park and from next year the House of Sport.

Many others assisted by showing their faith in our ability to succeed at a time where they had seen many false dawns and were owed millions of pounds in unpaid fees. HMA, Arup Sport and DLA showed a patience that we little deserved but in the end they must share in the success that has been achieved. Redrow Homes who will become the new owners of Ninian Park and Barclays Bank have also been extremely supportive professional 'friends' during some very difficult times.

The stadium itself is magnificent and has been built by Laing O'Rourke at a time when many companies were fighting shy of getting involved in football stadiums. To Mike Lewis, Paul Norman and their team, many many thanks, the stadium will be a lasting monument to your skills and professionalism.

When I arrived in Cardiff in 2005, I inherited a disillusioned

management team who were proud of being associated with the Club but had been stifled from using their talents and initiative. Once unleashed, their contribution became invaluable and without their hard work and dedication we would never have got this far.

One of the first additions to the existing management team when I arrived was Tony Brown who joined as Finance Director. He and I lived through stress that I am sure he will never have to put up with again in his professional life. Tony's contribution to balancing the Club's finances and to our successful stadium business plan was invaluable. Tony left us in August 2008 but tonight he will feel as much a part of the success as the rest of us and deservedly so. Last Autumn, Tony was replaced by Alan Flitcroft who alongside the original management team of Julian Jenkins, Suzanne Twamley, Wayne Nash, Dennis Tabbot and Jason Turner has ensured that the momentum of progress continued to today's celebration. David Spencer was brought in a year ago, initially as a consultant, to help oversee the stadium fit out and then to join the team as General Manager for Cardiff City Stadium. We really have now got a team off the field to be as proud of as the football team who ordinarily are the ones who get all the plaudits.

In football, Boards of Directors are often ridiculed without anyone knowing just what role they play. I was lucky. During the last four years I have had two individuals who I could turn to when I needed support, advice or direct assistance. Alan Whiteley and Steve Borley have lived through every twist and turn of this stadium development. Alan's input into all the work on the legal documents, endless meetings with the Council and of course the financial decisions that we have to take from week to week has been a constant help and reassurance. Similarly, apart from Steve's lifelong commitment as a Cardiff City fan, he has lived eaten and breathed the construction of our stadium. Without someone of Steve's skills, knowledge and dedication, the stadium would have been much harder to deliver. He has been inside the stadium on an almost daily basis and his company have made a significant contribution to almost all of the M+E works throughout the stadium.

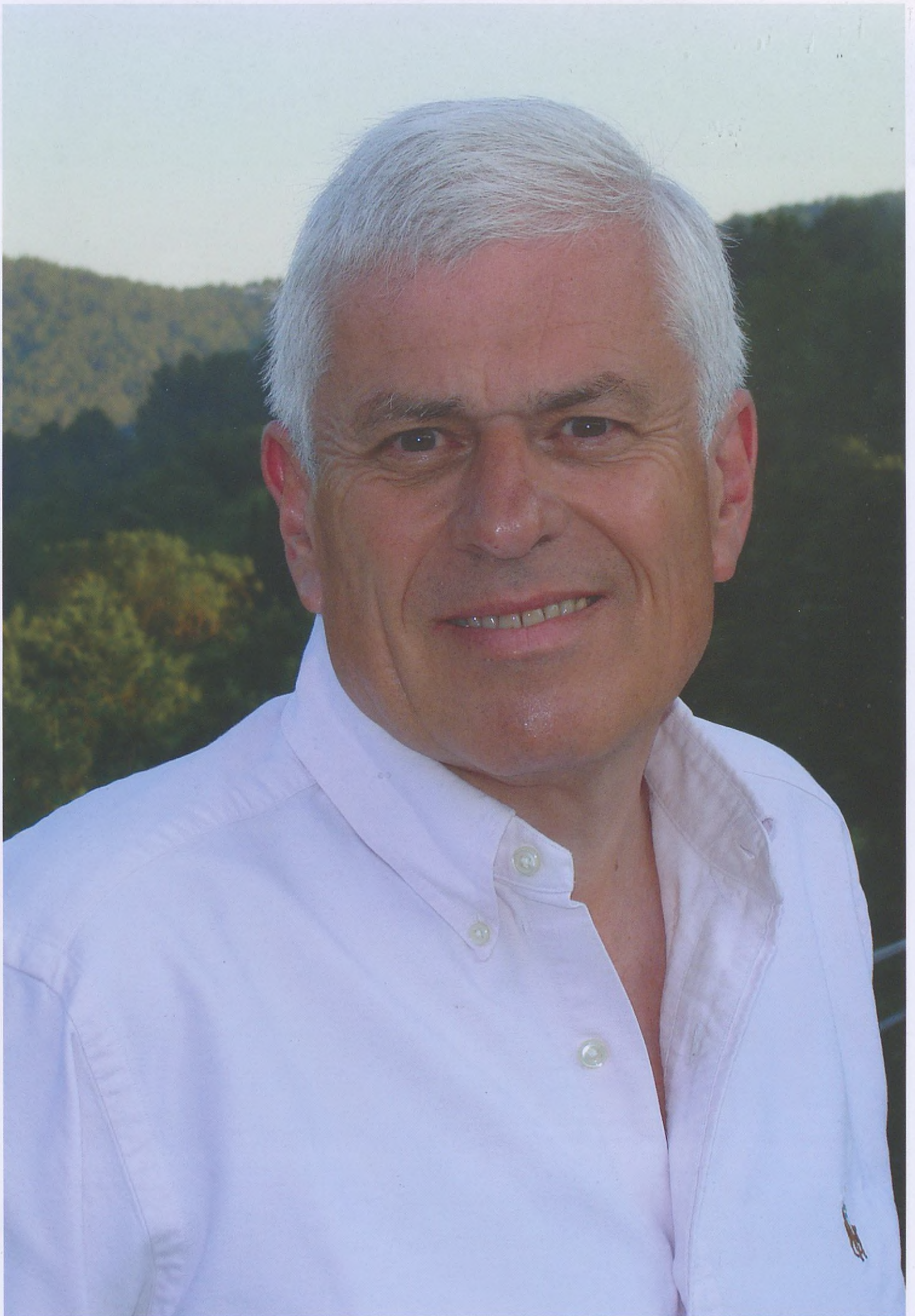
As Rhodri Morgan, First Minister for Wales, cuts the ribbon and unveils the plaque tonight, accompanied by Rodney Berman, Leader of Cardiff City Council and Peter Hain, Secretary of State for Wales, I will spend a few minutes reflecting on the past few years. The threat of closure, the near collapse of the stadium scheme, having to find the funds to buy the Club from the previous owner, the three court cases in 2008 and the constant need to balance the finances. I will also think of the F.A. Cup Final (the first in 81 years), the near miss for the play-offs (and yet the highest league finish since 1971), the state of the art training ground and our hopes and aspirations of delivering Premier League Football to go along with our Premier League Stadium.

In finishing writing these notes one could be forgiven for believing that they are a work of fiction. They are not, they are real. This is what we have achieved. I am proud to be your Chairman and being able to write these notes and confirm the 'work in progress' to date.

These are proud times to be associated with Cardiff City Football Club and that pride is only enhanced with the knowledge that everything has been delivered for the best supporters that anyone could have.

Thank you.

Peter



Dave Jones

I would like to welcome you all here this evening for an important milestone in the history of the football club. It's the official opening of Cardiff City Stadium tonight, and it's important that the evening and celebrations go well for everyone involved in the occasion. As a squad and coaching staff, we'll be underneath preparing to do what we are all here to do on the field, but above there are people who have spent a lot of time preparing things and making the stadium look the part for our own supporters, guests from Celtic and various dignitaries present.

The stadium has been a long time coming, and I'm pleased for everyone. I'm pleased for the fans, as they've got a brand new stadium to walk into. The staff as well – they have worked very hard to get to this stage and hopefully we'll all look after the place now.

Taking in the build, Laing O'Rourke under the stewardship of Mike Lewis and Paul Norman have done a fantastic job – in fact, everyone who has had a part to play in the stadium, ranging from individuals to contractors. You only have to walk into the place to see the care, time and attention to detail that has been very important in the whole process. Talking to a lot of the Laing O'Rourke people, I think that ninety-nine percent of the people on the project for them are Cardiff City fans. Everyone has put a lot of hard work and time into the project, and as said it's been coming together for a long time. We today all have a stadium to be proud of.

We now have to try and use this as a means to reach the next stage of our development, to reach where we all want to go. Everyone involved with the football club, at all levels, can be proud of what's been achieved. I was at the stadium on Monday, popping into the stadium superstore and could see how great that's looking now. It's looking like the home of a proper football club. Yes, it's a bit 'clean' at the moment – and by that I mean slightly clinical in places as there are no photographs and branding in certain areas. But eventually we'll make it our own – the fans will make it their own, while everything has been done to a high standard. There'll no doubt be a few snags along the way, which you can correct as you go along. You go into a new house and you always find small things to correct to make it how you need and want. But they are only minor things and everyone will be pleased, especially with a great game to officially kick things off as we open the stadium tonight.

Talking of building work, we as coaching staff are in a similar line of work, though with players rather than concrete. We are trying to get people in here all the time and it's not been easy. On one hand we're trying to keep a hold on our players, while also trying to bring players in. We've had a good pre-season so far, in terms of fitness levels, the boys have worked hard and are looking better each day. We had a good seven days in Portugal and everyone worked their socks off, taking in two really tough games. Tonight we continue our preparations with another pre-season game as we aim to get ready for August 8th for the opening Championship game.

The new players coming in have been well received. The lads here, ever since I've been at the club, always make an effort, as a good bunch of players should, embracing new signings into

the squad. We don't have any cliques, we don't have any bad apples, and it's easy to settle in when it's like that. Anyone who walks onto the training ground, I guarantee you that the whole squad will go over and shake their hand. That's important for someone new, and when you get young players, say for example Anthony Gerrard coming in a little weary coming from Walsall, the facilities here makes it a case of chalk and cheese. Everyone has also made Anthony and the other new faces very welcome, and I think that us going away together helps also as you are around each other twenty-four seven for a whole week. The lads room together and talk together – we try to place the new lads with the established players to help the process, which helps the new player gain an insight into how the place is put together and run, letting them know what's expected of them. That works, and has done for as long as I've been here.

Along with building the squad, there are other developments happening at the club, things that will be made known to everyone over the next few weeks. There are things happening all the time at our training base at the Vale of Glamorgan, which will only enhance us and the project that we are running as coaches. Everyone is really looking forward to what we've got coming together.

If you go down to Treforest now, you can see where the kids are training and what Neal Ardley has done down there. They've now put offices in, a proper dining room and more. Two years ago we were all down there off polystyrene boxes and food boxes in the corridors. Both with the first team and the Academy, after a long, long initial wait we've come a long way in a short space of time. Neal has now taken the Academy to the next level, after we left to move here. We're all working hard to make it the best facilities possible.

Former Academy Manager John Kerr was the one who started it all – moving it all forward before he sadly passed on. We had a plan when we arrived here, saying that we were going to try and get the best kids coming through in the South Wales area. We didn't want anyone leaving and going to other parts of the country, when we should have first shout on them. Through John we put together a blueprint for the Academy. Now Neal is set up and running things. He knows the place and knows what's expected of him. He also knows the standards I have set for him and he's continued them on, with the help of some excellent staff working with him.

Looking at Celtic tonight, I'm sure that Tony Mowbray will take the game exactly the same way that we will – as a chance to continue preparations for the new season and evaluate his new squad. We welcome the squad, staff and visiting Celtic fans to our stadium, and are pleased that they have agreed to play a part in our official opening ceremony.

Finally, we are glad to hear that Richard Shepherd, the club historian and programme contributor is on the mend after being taken ill last week. Richard has a great deal of knowledge on the history of Cardiff City and we are pleased that he is recovering after his hospital trip. He's here tonight in a non-working capacity and I'm sure he will enjoy the night, as will we all as the club ushers in a new era.