



Rovers



v Chesterfield

Coca-Cola League One Friday 2nd March 2007 Kick Off 7.45pm



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Scandinavian Invasion



On Friday nights at Prenton Park you may have come across groups of fans speaking in strange unfamiliar tones, particularly if you enjoy your football from the Johnny King or Kop stands where many of these invaders congregate.

These are our growing band of Scandinavian supporters, largely Norwegian and largely taking advantage of the quick and cheap daily air connection that now exists between Oslo and John Lennon Airport.

Two of these supporters are Eirik and Rakel Fjeld from Oslo (pictured right top). Eirik says the following: "I'm Eirik Fjeld (25) from Skien, near Oslo in Norway, and I have supported Rovers since 1994. I started to support them because of the one and only John Aldridge.

"First I only followed the results via teletext in Norway, but after I became the leader of the Norwegian Rovers Supporters Club, I soon dragged my Dad and brother over to Prenton to see them live for the first time in 1997 in the 2-2 home draw against Charlton.

"After that I have travelled over on average twice a season, with the real highlight watching them come out of the Wembley tunnel for the Worthington Cup final. And the four minutes we had then (at 1-1) was probably the proudest moment as a Rovers-supporter for me. This season I have a season-ticket in the Kop and I am enjoying it very much to see my team on a regular basis."

And, together with Rovers supporter Tom Roger from Bergen, Eirik has started this brand new "blog style" Norwegian Supporters web site for the Rovers: <http://trsn.blogspot.com> which will hopefully help snowball the Norwegian support, as the promise is for links with other Scandinavian cities to John Lennon airport.

Many of the supporters come over and watch Tranmere on the Friday and then watch one of the Premiership Clubs on Saturday / Sunday but the hope is they will make Tranmere as "their" team, especially as the connection goes even deeper as Wirral's own Viking expert and lifelong Tranmere fan Professor Steve Harding (pictured right bottom) at Nottingham University explains: "I think many Tranmere fans are now aware of the club's wonderful uniqueness in being the only club in the English league with a Norwegian Viking name, and this is something the club can take a advantage of in a very good way.

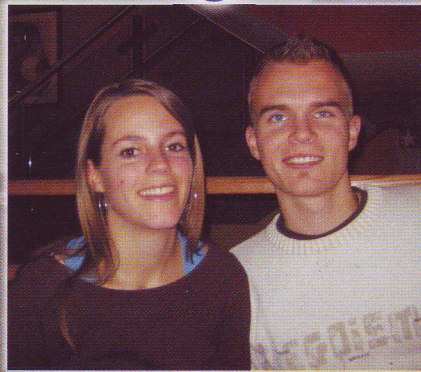
"Norwegians - who love English football - are starting to realise that too. Indeed I tell all my Norwegian friends that all Norwegians should support Tranmere, maybe the penny is starting to drop!"

One of Steve's friends is Gerhard Dalen, Director of Cultural Affairs at the Municipality of Trondheim and one of the main instigators behind Champions League Rosenborg FC's impressive Lerkendal Stadium, and he has said Norwegians are very proud that there is an English league team in Wirral with a Norwegian Viking name.

Steve's "Viking" website gives regular updates on Rovers games, and travel details for visiting Scandinavian fans:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve/>.

Fingers crossed the numbers of visitors will continue to increase over the coming months and years as the name Tranmere Rovers spreads throughout Scandinavia.



Fan Base

Armed with a calculator, and an abundance of Rothmans books, Justin Williams works out the pros and cons of the current Football League positions - and what might happen next...

"I don't think I'm counting my chickens too much by saying that with 53 points on the board at least we are safe!"

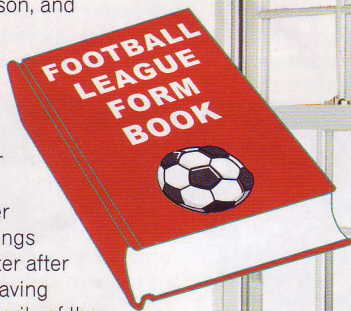
"Only once in the last 10 years has a side been relegated with more than 50 points, Torquay a couple of seasons ago on 51. Mind you, look where they are now - virtual certainties to drop out of League 2 and into the Conference. Our current total is just one point short of our total points tally of 54 last season, and with 11 games to go and 33 points to play for we can confidently look up the table rather than down. Not that it was ever really in doubt. Things could only get better after last season, and having spent the vast majority of the season in or around the play-off places promotion is still very much a possibility. If we didn't improve on last season's effort we were going to be in big trouble - but at the start of the season the consensus was that a top 10 finish would be a pretty reasonable achievement. Surely, this must be more

than likely as things stand. However, many supporters, especially those with short memories, will probably see anything less than a play-off spot as a failure now - even though it hasn't been the most memorable of seasons. Still, there's the run in to look forward to now. I always remember in 2000 when Burnley had a great run in winning 8 and drawing 2 of their last 11 games in this division to burn a path straight through the play-off zone and finish with an automatic promotion spot after a final day

victory away at Scunthorpe. Ironically, Burnley are currently on a disastrous run in the Championship, not having won for fourteen games and have

the look of a club in free fall. One way or another I wouldn't be at all surprised if we end up playing them next season. Scunthorpe on the other hand have continued to impress and - have opened up a seven point gap now at the top, losing only five league games all season. They are looking certainties for one of the automatic spots now after everyone was convinced they would eventually "blow up".

And of course there was always the season when we went up from this division via the play-offs in 1991, finishing fifth with a run of 7 wins and four defeats in the last 11 league games. A better outcome than the previous season when we had played really well on the back of promotion from the old Division Four the year before, and finished fourth. It usually takes around 74 points or so to make the play-offs although teams have snuck in with 70 or 71 points occasionally, and of course in 2003 we were the exception that proves the rule missing out to Cardiff for the final play-off spot with a total of 80 points. I can't see that happening in this campaign - it's such a tight division. Seven wins from the last eleven games would definitely be enough this season. Get behind the lads and enjoy the game."



It's Your Page...

...So share it with us - and send in your snippets

Get Well Soon

...Tranmere supporter Jack Canner, who was injured in a car crash while making his way home from our match at Leyton Orient last weekend.

Welcome To...

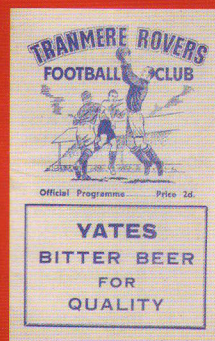
...Our Norwegian Branch, of which you can read more about on Page 21 of tonight's programme. Incidentally, while we're on the subject, it's worth noting that in recent years we certainly seem to have attracted a good number of foreign visitors whenever Liverpool are at home the day after. No doubt tonight there will be no exception in the

event of the Reds home game with Manchester United tomorrow - so a warm welcome to you all!

Can You Help Once Again?...

...Our programme production assistant Tony Coombes, who is looking to obtain the following Tranmere home programmes: Mansfield Town 50/1, Rochdale 53/4, Workington 53/4, Scunthorpe United 53/4, Mansfield Town 55/6, Scunthorpe United 55/6, Scunthorpe United 56/7.

If you can, please contact Tony - who would be very interested in purchasing them from you - here at the Club or e-mail tonyc@tranmererovers.co.uk



www.tranmererovers.co.uk