

Who Cares What The Question is?

Put it on (Dub)

☞ It was Raoul Vaneigem who wrote "People who talk about revolution and class struggle without referring explicitly to classic and contemporary men's coats and jackets – such people have a corpse in their mouth". As Mancunians we ought to be free from any such oral cadavers. This stage of the season is always one of the most exciting as the weather necessitates the terrace transition from jacket to coat. Following FC we have many proud traditions to hold-up and one of the most vital is the wearing of fine winter coats, particularly on aways.

Wearing coats the Mancunian way is an oft-neglected art form that when carried off expertly is perhaps this cities single greatest achievement since the computer. And maybe some other things.

There are some superb classic and new winter coats to be had from the right shops this season and some shite ones to be had from the wrong shops. Many people criticising Margy's 'choices' this season should think on when they go shopping. (For any newer members the information regarding coats and the wearing of is contained in the clubs constitution and available on the website).

Chant down Babylon

☞ I know attendances have dipped a bit at away games but the amount of members of the local constabulary turning up to boost the crowd is above and beyond the call of duty. They can't all be on duty, that would just be unnecessary, yet all of them turn-up wearing full uniform. I know people join the police because they like dress-up but surely everyone needs casual-time. I'd love to believe it was the allure of watching Margy's



mid-table marvels that was attracting em in such numbers but it's probably more to do with em being able to tuck their trousers into their boots for the day (That and filling said trouser pockets with overtime dough for doing nowt all day 'cept mither).

Several of the aways this season have had an unusually large and provocative police presence, both inside and outside the ground. Fleetwood away felt like United away such were the high number of high-viz dibble handy-camming every face within a 2 mile radius. Chorley saw a whole stand full of em holding firm against 3 kids, 2 fat lads, an old man and a dog. (There was no dog sadly. Still not seen one). At this rate Garforth away will resemble Gaza. (Insert your own joke).

Words gone round the Babylon bush-drums that FCUM coming to town spells 'major policing operation' and they get to play games they don't usually get to play and with toys they're not normally allowed to use. The chief gets to impress all the other chiefs who make a note to do the same when FCUM roll into their town. If no-ones arrested the operation has succeeded. If arrests are made, the operation is justified. I wish I had a licence to print like that.

Stir it up

☞ Maybe the large police presence demonstrates effective intelligence on their part and is there to stop disgruntled defenders of the shirt from wading into the emergent boo-boys, following FCUM's start to this season and the form of the team. (The boo-boys aren't actually all booing to be fair...it's mostly "oh for fucks sake-ing" rather than booing, though there are some boos emerging. Booing your own has never been United, though I may have booed Colin Gibson once-or-twice. I would've booed Andy Goram but I was too busy shaking me head. Wouldn't have known which one to boo anyway. Neither of em were United either so they don't count).

There have been some quick to criticise the players this season simply for the reason that they are losing games. There are others just as quick to defend any of the players on the grounds that they are above such criticism because they wear the shirt. A bit of perspective is needed in both sets of glasses. The players are part-time, the clubs 5 minutes old and teams do lose matches (Especially in the league with the worlds wankest refs). Even Marginson is now beginning to feel the negative pressure for the first time with criticism of his ability from some supporters. He's a novice but very successful non-league manager who was a van-driver till last year. Who do people want? Gus Hiddink? The 606 mentality is alive and well at FCUM.

Burnin' and lootin'

☞ The end of FCUM's FA cup dream on the Fylde coast will no-doubt be covered elsewhere in this issue so I won't go on but it requires a mention. There were unfortunately some sad and disturbing situations at Fleetwood, not just confined to the actions of locals dressed as extras from Green Street, plod giving it Scorsese and De Niro and the behaviour of some of FCUMs younger, polyester clad, bubble-soled support. The North Euston's Wilfred Owen exhibition was a shocking let-down and while my fish from the chippy should've been a tasty treat the batter was

terribly soggy. Still, the sun shone and you could see a wind farm from the front. Apart from the result and not having time to find an arcade for a go on the slots it was a top day. The magic of the cup. There's always next year.

Time will tell

☞ The games so far have shown that FCUM are more than comfortable in this league but far from the class above they were in the NWCL. It wasn't unexpected and the critics are having a go a bit too early. Many of the sponsorless shirted heroes have spent the past two seasons playing below their station. In the giddy heights of the Unibond the playing field looks a lot more level. (It might've been a bit less level if some of the better players hadn't swanned (or been 'swanned') off to join local league rivals who now sit above FCUM with those players playing a large part, but that must be another one for Margy's memoirs).

On its day, the squad looks like it has enough quality to challenge at this level, even if that means they're gonna have to have their day more often than they've needed to in the past.

Players are being criticised for a lack of effort but I haven't noted a lack of effort this season apart from the usual from them who don't put much in anyway. (Chief culprit Mr Mystery remains the star-performer despite the step-up in class and lack of 'effort'). People have bemoaned a lack of Passion (with a capital P) but they don't really know what they mean when they say that and it all sounds a bit too psycho Pearce/3 lions/'footie' and that makes me teeth itch. With a passion.

This season may need to be one of consolidation, taking stock and planning for the near future. It may yet see FCUM mount a promotion challenge. It might finish up with an amazing late run ending in relegation back into the glory of the NWCL (Fingers crossed). Criticism's fine when it's due but there's no need to get all Ingerland about it.



Birmingham,
yesterday

Them belly full:

☞ I wanted to go and watch United the other month. Me lad's 3 and he really wants to watch Wayne Rooney. He's been to FC but he's cottoned on now that Rooney doesn't play for them. He's mainly noticed coz FC don't have 'Ticks on their shirts'. (He can't wipe his own arse but thanks to Nike and their brandalism he's a targeted consumer who can spot a swoosh at 300 yards). The ticket for Birmingham was there, I just had to pick it up. I really wanted to go but I didn't. Nowt to do with Glazer, the difficulties in our relationship or FCUM or whatever (but of course it was about all of em) and everything to do with justifying £45 to watch the match. Or not. I know it's the going rate but it takes the piss...and it shouldn't be, and I'm not having it, so I didn't...even though I really wanted to. I'm claiming it as a boycott but it was really just sense. (It was also a little bit because I'd always imagined his first United game would be at Old Trafford. Maybe it still will be. Be a bit snide his first being St Andrews)

There wasn't an alternative live football reality before but there is now. I've never paid really silly money for a match and I'm not about to start paying a club touts rates for a televised game in a shit city.

Two seasons of experiencing FCUM home and away has put the premiership product into perspective. Apart from the actual football I find the FCUM 'product' far more enjoyable and rewarding. Aside from any feelings about issues at United, top-level football has become an even more ridiculous soap opera of hype, greed and wankerization. The premiers league (And I mean the 'product'...Sky, TV and all it entails) is one of the 4 pillars of

modern English society alongside Tesco, Coldplay and unlimited broadband, upon which, apathy rests its weary arse and reigns supreme.

My 45 would have been a further contribution to an industry that allows Peter Crouch to earn 85 grand a week. Fair do's, the absence of my 45 wont make much of a dent in the scouse freak's wage packet but better a pinprick of light than absolute darkness.

I still watched the Birmingham game. Haven't missed a match all season thanks to Sky / Setanta / Al Jazhira / Sopcast. I think during one of the matches there was a Coldplay tune on and for one match I got me cans from Tesco. If I chucked stones they'd hit me in the face.

So, post-casual Mancunia, strap on your armour (I'd recommend a cotton mix with PU coating for durability or a composition of metal filament and nylon for warmth and breathe-ability. Maybe from OTS, Woolrich, Fjallraven or Filson), pay no heed to naysayers and keep your eye on Babylon.

