

1 TOC

1	TOC.....	1
1.1	DIARY- USE - TENSE PRESENT	1
1.1.1	FROM 220521	1
1.1.2	FROM 220801	7
1.1.3	FROM 220901	10
1.1.4	FROM 221001	16
1.1.5	FROM 221101	20
1.1.6	FROM 221201	23
1.1.7	FROM 230101	26
1.1.8	FROM 230201	32
1.1.9	POST 230301.....	36
1.1.10	TO DO / TO ADD	37

1.1 DIARY- USE - TENSE PRESENT

1.1.1 FROM 220521

Saturday May 21, 2022. CITY 2 Boston 0. Promotion, I can feel a book coming on.

Saturday May 21, 2022. CITY 2 Boston 0. The 2021/2 season is over and planning for the 2022/3 season can start. Who could have imagined the turnaround in the last 3 months when relegation seemed a much more realistic outcome than promotion. The dire performance against Bradford PA made you fear the worse, the departure that night of Sean Newton might just have given you a glimmer of hope. How can the 2022/3 season be more eventful?

Tuesday May 24, 2022. Jason McGill. Buoyed by the Boston win, Jason McGill has committed to stay at York City "for at least another season" following the club's promotion to the Vanarama National League. Given past differences, another season of turmoil is highly likely. Oh for stability.

Thursday May 26. Retained List (Senior Pros). Everyone has their own opinion on the retained list, but at the end of the day, most of those opinions don't count. Turn the clock back a few weeks, say to Easter Monday and after the Alfreton implosion, the retained list might have been a lot briefer than that which was announced. 14 players were released. Veteran (top scorer and possibly highest earner) Clayton Donaldson being the most contentious. Maybe the club is getting serious about balancing the books.

Monday May 30. Pete Jameson departs. The rumour is confirmed, player of the season, Peter Jameson has turned down his contact extension and is signing for Football League Harrogate Town. Whilst every player wants to play as high up the pyramid as possible (and probably make as much money as possible), when it is Harrogate, traditionally City's little brother, it hurts. That said, it probably underlines the gulf in wages when lesser FL sides can readily pluck off the better non league players. If only City could do the same with National League North prospects.

Wednesday June 1. Trish Westland. I'm shocked to learn of the death of Trish Westland at a much too young age. I got to know Trish when we did the Roof Appeal. She was always very helpful and had her hands full running the club's main office for over a decade although she had to put up with the ranks of coaching staff and players alike. One story always worth re-telling is the day that Bobby Robson, then the England manager, rang up unexpectedly in April 1990. At the time, in quiet moments, there was a long running office joke that City's youth team coaching staff (Gary Naylor et al) would ring from the backroom, Tricia would take the call and pass it onto Keith. Gary would pretend to be Bobby Robson (Usher's boyhood hero) and try, usually successfully, to wind up Keith. As England manager, Robson (in his pre Sir days) had taken his England side to Aylesbury for a warm up in advance of Euro 88. With the Shipton Street Roof Appeal in full swing, we wrote to England (unbeknown to Keith and City) asking if he would bring his England team to play a fund raising game at Bootham Crescent in the run up to Italia 90. Tricia took a call from the real Bobby Robson, she passed it on to Usher, insisting it was the real Bobby Robson. Keith took the call, not heeding Trish's stern warning, the usual banter followed, the caller insisted that he was Robson, more insistent than usual, "I really am Bobby Robson, about your request to bring the England team to York for a friendly", Keith's language got riper and riper, "What f&c%in friendly?", his face getting redder and redder. The caller, maintaining his dignity and poise, continued to insist that he was Bobby Robson. With Keith in full expletive tirade mode, in walked Gary Naylor. Keith realised it wasn't a wind up, he really was speaking to the actual Bobby Robson, the England manager. All credit to Bobby Robson for having the decency to call personally to offer his apologies that England had no free dates to bring his Italia 90 squad to Bootham Crescent for a friendly. Bobby, graciously accepted Keith's apology and the pair proceeded to have a good chat.

Monday June 6. Scott Boden arrives. After what seems like an age, our first new signing arrives. Scott Boden, a low scoring striker from Boreham Wood, where despite being bigged up, he didn't score a lot and wasn't a regular. Released one year into a 2 year contract doesn't bode (no pun intended) well.

Friday June 10. John Askey for Notts County? High in the betting markets for their vacant managerial position, social media is a whirl with stories about City's lack of signings and unrest at City.

Tuesday June 14. Season Ticket Prices. Finally season ticket prices are announced. They are held at last season's prices, with 2 extra games, that is effectively a reduction and is coupled with the concession age being dropped to 60. Fair play to City for trying to build on the momentum of last season, but why wasn't it announced 3 weeks earlier. Matchday admission is up a £1 and hospitality access tickets are increased.

Wednesday June 15. Chocolate and cream kit. A day later and the chocolate and cream third kit is announced to universal acclaim, enhancing the feelgood mood. It is a nod to the colours that City wore when arriving at Bootham Crescent in 1932 and specifically the kit that we adopted for the 1933/4 season, although in those pre floodlight days, playing on muddy pitches and at dusk, the, the kit clashed with several sides, including Halifax's blue and white stripes forcing City to change kit at half time.

Friday June 17. Akil Wright. A star of City's midfield across his 2 season, he's another tempted by the bright lights of the Football League, specifically the bright lights of newly promoted Stockport. I suspect this summer, we had no one already contracted for 2022/3, was that a deliberate policy of the board to allow a clearing of the decks?

Friday June 17. Pomanda. “UK’s Best source of company information”, their own words, have valued City at £101.7 million, especially when City’s accounts released 6 weeks earlier had stated nett assets of £3.5m. I bet Jason McGill would take £101m (even a tenth of it) if it was on offer. Apparently, the valuation is based on an “industry standard” valuing York City in the same way as Manchester City.

Tuesday June 28. Sam Sanders. A contract for one of last season’s loanees who grew into the team after a shaky start. Hope he can kick on and become a star of the side.

Wednesday June 29. Lenell John-Lewis. Repeat, a contract for one of last season’s loanees. Is this a new recruitment model, try before you buy?

Friday July 1. Pre Season Training Starts. After a slow start to recruitment, we start pre season as the signings of Gus Mafuta, Fraser Kerr, AJ Greaves are announced along with a season long loan for Ethan Ross. I wonder how Ryan Whitley is feeling? I make it 15 new signings (including loanees turning permanent), one loanee, 8 players signing extensions and 5 youth players signing first professional contracts. In terms of numbers, it is a decent size, in terms quality, not a lot of stand outs. Many non league players doing the rounds and just a couple of youngsters dropping out of the Football League. At least Maz Kouyhar has signed for another season, maybe it should have been more but again is the McGill regime not wanting to over commit to finances. John Askey will have his work cut out in putting a side together with so many new players and given a fit squad, plenty of players not getting a game, every week. Is that good for morale?

Friday July 1. First Year Professionals. As ever City made a big song and dance about first professional contracts for 5 scholars, which I believe is the most of one crop we’ve ever signed, often the number is as low as 2, sometimes less. The news must be tempered by the earlier announcement that all 4 scholars who’d signed their first professional contracts a year earlier had all been released without a first team appearance between them.

Saturday July 2. 5 In / 5 Out Including Another Returnee. Alex Whittle is back, Chesterfield’s player of the season but since released. With professional contracts for 5 18 year olds (Jonny Haase (a second season as a pro), Ben Dale, Elliot Owen, Kyle Lancaster and Jonny Shepherd) already confirmed, City re-confirm that 4 of last year’s 18 year old intake (Maison Campbell, Lewis Cunningham, Jack Degruchy and Luke Jones) are released alongside Josh Knowles at the end of his scholarship. On one hand, have we ever signed so many of our youth side on professional terms in the past? On the other hand, it is to be hoped that they don’t suffer the same fate as the 4 who have just been released.

Monday July 4. More Strike Power. Luke James and Manny Duku sign up. James never quite had the career that beckoned when he was a teenage sensation. Having signed a 2 year deal at Barrow in 2020 (it would have just expired), some reports suggest that he ripped up his Barrow contract to sign for City. If he ripped it up, it suggests City must be paying well although I might be suspicious of someone ripping up a contract to drop a division, unless he’s called Paul Mullin. Duku, if you take out a successful season at Hayes & Yeading, has had almost had as many clubs as he has scored goals. I make that 20 senior pros and 5 18 year olds.

Tuesday July 5. A New City? Rumours that started circulating yesterday are confirmed. In a series of deals, the York City Supporters Trust buys Jason McGill’s 75% shareholding and later in the day, they sell 51% to Glen Henderson. Henderson is our new chairman and Alastair Smith is our new Chief Executive. Some might say, what’s the difference? A chairman with YCST as a minority shareholder. The release of this season’s fixture was completely overshadowed.

Friday July 8. City 2 Middlesbrough 3. First pre season game of the season, the usual fayre, most players got just half a game and there was a distinct lack of traillists which has become commonplace in recent seasons.

Sunday July 10. Vadaine Oliver. He's joined Bradford after his Gillingham release. With the form he'd shown in his last few months with City in 2016/7, he would have been welcomed back.

Tuesday July 12. Dan. Dan. Dan Simmonite announces his departure from City. He did so much to bring City's media team into the modern era. As well as the routine work, he produced some top videos, his Banksy lock down spoof and subsequent charity fundraising work will be long remembered. What more could he have done with the new regime?

Wednesday July 13. Kurt Willoughy. Maybe we didn't see the best of him in a City shirt, that can be said of many of our former strikers, Jack Redshaw, Macauley Langstaff, Jake Wright and Carlton Morris included from just the past 10 years. Perhaps his release was the one that caused the most anguish in May. He's joined Chester in National League North, so that is maybe his true level.

Saturday July 16. City 1 Bradford City 4. Another pre season friendly, another defeat.

Sunday July 17. Its Not Cricket. If City can't win at football, new tactics are required resulting in a change of sport as City take on Bishopthorpe at their Ferry Lane ground in a 20 overs a side limited cricket game. City went down narrowly, Ryan Whitley proving to be a big hit with the bat with a century. On the touchline, players, fans, and chairman mingled, to the chagrin of the manager. That was the venue when I first watched a cricket game. My bewhiskered uncle, Des Forth, being a stalwart opening bat for Bish for many years, certainly 3, if not 4, decades. I barely remembered watching them, but it will have been as a very small boy with my older cousin. I suspect my younger brother was too young to attend although no doubt, we all met up after the games at my grandparents' house for a late tea and play in the garden. My slightly stronger memories of Ferry Lane are it being the end of the line for the ferry that ran from King's Staith to Bishopthorpe, it was a summer treat to catch the ferry, rather than the bus, home from an afternoon's shopping in York.

Monday July 18. Another Returnee. Michael Duckworth signs on for another year after a successful trial. Give the good reports about Ryan Fallowfield, he might have his work cut out to be a first team regular.

Tuesday July 19. White Knickers. A TOOAB correspondent notes that in 1924 City wore "white knickers", that was a common description for shorts until the early 1960s. I've often regaled non City friends with the days that City were so poor we had to play in Y fronts and in the 1920s supporters knitted socks for the team.

Wednesday July 20. Heatwave. In a game put back 24 hours after The Met Office issued red weather warnings for extreme heat as the prolonged heatwave continued, City went down to a 1-0 defeat, John Askey saying that the performance was "not good enough". When is the time to get start getting worried about successive pre- season friendly defeats? Especially as Guiseley started Jake Cassidy and Jameel Ible, neither had a City career to get excited about.

Wednesday July 20. Josh King. He's joined Morperth Town in the Northern Premier League, 2 tiers below where City will play this season. I was sorry to see him go, on the pitch he rarely let City down. He was one of our youngsters you felt had a real chance of making the grade. When he came back into the side last December (at the time, I wonder

how many at the club thought, he never play for us again), he quickly impressed only to break his leg within 2 weeks. I don't think he ever got back to full fitness after that.

Thursday July 21. 2,000 Season Tickets Sold. Just shows the appeal of the club and potentially an all time record for season tickets sold. I've never seen any official stats for the record number of season tickets sold. From what I've seen, numbers included "almost 500" for 1971/2, 1,899 in 1974/5 (our first season in Division 2, at an average price of about £12.50 (happy days, both price and football wise), 930 in 1994/5), 1,600 in 1996/7 (no doubt boosted by a very a Junior Reds club and family season tickets), "over 1,600" by the end of September 2002 when John Batchelor offered half price season tickets for the following season. Recent numbers have been creeping up to about 1,500. Come December, we'd sold 2,219 season tickets before the mini season ticket was launched. Just how many supporters could City attract? The answer is 8,500, unless the club can extend the LNER, it could possibly be done by filling in the corners or extending the North Stand. Back in the 1920s, Fulfordgate could have been expanded to cater for 30,000 fans. We fitted 28,123 into Bootham Crescent for a 1938 FA Cup tie but by the end our capacity had been reduced to around 8,000, health and safety concerns saw numbers gradually reduced. It makes you wonder where City might be now if we'd bitten the bullet and extended Botham Crescent. Between the 1970s and as late as 1995, there was talk. Turn the ground pitch through 90 degrees; buy the barracks behind the Pop Stand, buy the Shipton Street school and as late as 1995, Douglas Craig had plans drawn up to re-develop the Grosvenor Road end of the ground as its poor condition became apparent.

Saturday July 23. Macclesfield 4 City 0. What must John Askey think, taking his new club back to where he is still revered? I can't believe it and neither can TOOAB who headlined today issue with "Macclesfield 0 York City 4".

Monday July 25. Squad Numbers. Do City break with tradition and not allocate squad numbers to all our professionals? 22 players get a shirt number, including Ben Dale, one of our 5 contracted 18 years olds, The others miss out, including Johnny Haase who had signed pro a year earlier at 17 when he had the number 23 shirt. Are they to be cast away before their professional careers have started.

Tuesday July 26. Finally. A win for City bearing Tier 10 Selby Town 4 -0, although I spent a couple of hours anxiously checking my inbox for an updated TOOAB "Selby Town 4 York City 0" email, it never came. I'd like to think it might be the start of a closer relationship between the clubs, you never know when such an arrangement might benefit City whilst regular contact might make a few of the home fans more interested in coming to watch City play. Oh for the days when York's outlying towns and villages had supporters' buses coming to home games.

Wednesday July 27. Online Sponsorship Well done to Mike Brown and all those who've put together an online sponsorship portal for City.

Thursday July 28. Jack Degruchy. Released by City, aged 18 (nearly 19) after just one year as a professional, down the road he spends 4 weeks on trial at Doncaster and earns a 2 year contract with a one year option. Earmarked for their development squad (aka reserve team), he's got time to physically develop and grow his footballing skills. It just shows the gap between Football League and non league when he gets at least 2 years to develop whereas at City, out of the scholarship system, he didn't get a sniff of first team football but had to try to push himself as a senior with kids 2 years his junior. Where would John Byrne and Richard Cresswell be if they'd grown up with City as non league footballers? Both were 21 before their break through season, both having been around the first team squad and

playing reserve team football since ending their “scholarship”. Cresswell came back for his final season with City a man, his body considerably bulked up from the previous season. Likewise, Byrne filled out physically but more importantly, his confidence was boosted and he could do in Division 4 what came naturally on the training ground.

Thursday July 28. Cyril Nutbrown. Cyril’s death is announced. I first got to know him during the Roof Appeal. He was a lifelong City supporter, always ready to offer encouragement. When not watching City, for many years I would see him and his wife around the city and in his later years, we would often have a chat whilst I was selling new frontiers. A true gent, City could do with many more supporters like Cyril.

Friday July 29, 2022. John Mackin. John’s death is announced. He was the first City right back I can remember with any clarity in the days when right backs defended. A few years earlier my primary school PE teacher would go mental if his full backs ventured over the half way line.. A member of our 1971 promotion side, Mackin was discarded by the time went up in 1974 despite being a regular for most of his 4 seasons with City. In his book, "The Tale Of Two Great Cities", Chris Jones recalled a game when he was playing for Walsall against City in early 1973 when Jones’ fellow striker was the bearded Bobby Shinton who later played for Manchester City and Newcastle United. "'Send Jesus over here and I'll crucify him,' said John Mackin. Jones went onto portray the whole of City’s back 4 as being thugs and assassins. "As I (Jones) pulled myself up off the ground from yet another scything tackle, I looked up to see who hammered me and there was Barry Swallow, saying 'Great tackle, send him over here if he gets up and I will have a piece of him'. Then another piped up and said, 'If he comes over here he will get even worse treatment'. That turned out to be John Mackin, and I thought what a vicious bunch of thugs York had for a defence". Myself, being very young at the time, I was surprised about that, he describes Chris Topping as having the most vicious slide / scissor tackle he ever came across. My recollections of a mild and meek Phil Burrows were blown apart. Incidentally, as a school, Mackin nearly caused an international incident when he was considered for England youth honours as a goalkeeper before the FA realised he was Scottish in the days where place of birth was all important in determining eligibility.

Saturday July 30. City 0 Notts County 1. City’s pre season games finish with another defeat. Press reports from Nottingham suggested County gave a “controlled performance” whilst it is to be hoped that City’s 15 summer signings are starting to bed in. It all seemed a far cry away from each of the last 2 Julys when City went to Meadow Lane and came back with victory in pre season friendlies against a team in a higher division. The club celebrated its 100th birthday in May 2022 and celebrated the end of the 2021/2 season with promotion back to National League. Given coronavirus and the impending change of ownership, City’s 100th birthday had been marked by a series of rather low key events. A re-branding exercise in autumn 2021 resulted in a popular 2022/3 chocolate and cream change kit and centenary logo. The Notts County centenary friendly (our first ever opponents in 1922) was only confirmed once the league fixtures had been released less than 4 weeks earlier. The occasion was marked by a special golden matchday programme, featuring an insight into the formation of the club using the long lost minute books from 1922 which have been retrieved and transcribed by club historian Paul Bowser. The programme was sold at £2 and came with a certificate of authenticity, hand signed by Chairman Glen Henderson. Each individual copy was individually numbered and only 1,000 were printed.

Sunday July 31. Excitement Or Trepidation? Given promotion and the change of ownership, everything seems to be low key, no doubt not helped by pre season form and the lack of a goalscorer. That said, we go into the season with a manager we trust and some exciting players. Rather than hoping for survival, we need to be pushing on. The Conference

gets harder every year. PS I still haven't forgiven all those people in May 1999 who said relegation to Division 2 was a good thing, it would give us time to re-group. 23 years later, we still haven't re-grouped.

1.1.2 FROM 220801

Tuesday August 2. Dan Pybus. It later transpired that City's new signing is the son of Andy Pybus, a 1980s City intermediate player and had a trial at Leyton Orient curtailed by appendicitis.

Wednesday August 3. Fan Update Good to see an informative "Fan Update" posted on the club website, highlighting some of the behind the scenes activities and challenges facing the club.

Friday August 5. Captain Lenell. Lenell John-Lewis is named club captain, so that's his place in the starting line up inked in. The striker scored six goals in our final seven matches of last season to help us clinch promotion. In my era, for me, only 2 City captains stand out as being true leaders, John MacPhail and, say it quietly, Barry Swallow. Both were great leaders of men who commanded their troops. Whilst MacPhail might have been a "jack the lad" character, I often what might have happened if he'd been appointed City manager when he applied for the post in the late 1970s. In his book, "The Tale Of Two Great Cities", Chris Jones spoke highly of his leadership skills, describing him as "a great motivator with similar characteristics to Malcolm Allison" and noting similar traits of confidence, aggression and arrogance between the 2.

Saturday August 6. City 2 Woking 0. City left their pre season form behind, playing some good football, to record a comfortable 2-0 win over Woking. Maz Kouhyar opened the scoring and a well worked goal from Michael Duckworth sealed the win. A fitting reward for Duckworth. His City career might have been over a few months earlier when he was released and then finding himself behind Ryan Fallowfield when squad numbers were announced. Whilst working in the garden, I caught updates via Talksport where it was a joy to hear City mentioned and where there presenter, Adrian Durham knew how to pronounce Maz's name and his back story. A proper presenter. Pity the crowd was "only" 3,978, I wonder what City's breakeven is.

Monday August 8. Fans' Forum. Watching the broadcast on the livestream, it appeared to be a smaller than expected audience and a slightly scatter gun approach to the questioning with the big issues being demoted behind the price of a pint. John Askey spoke well on footballing matters and noted the challenges of clubs with much bigger budgets in our division before he gave way to Glen Henderson and Alastair Smith who spoken about the business challenges and concerns facing the club. The biggest seemed to be the small window that they'd had to do their due diligence before the takeover and the number of anomalies and holes they'd since unearthed, including accusations that Jason McGill had taken money out of the club that he shouldn't have done. Cue a lot of talk, but it has all died down, so maybe he didn't. A recurring theme was Henderson's explanation of the multiple parties involved in the running of the stadium, including the Council, York City, York City Knights, GLL, the SMC and a separate catering company noting "One of the biggest problems we have is the number of contracts that are linked together. As this process has gone on to build this stadium, everything has been intertwined". Contracts meant that City get only a small portion of the income from bar sales whilst non matchday opportunities are

much more limited than originally perceived. On the night, the ticketing system, poor design of the ground and bar facilities were highlighted. From the floor, Mike Brown, YCST Chairman, noted, "When the Council laid out plans to build this place, they actively pushed out the Trust and didn't have a proper public consultation at all. It was somewhat inevitable that fans weren't going to get the experience that they wanted. That's of no surprise". Addressing the lack of a social club-style venue for fans, Henderson said: "The (Supporters') Trust does potentially have the opportunity of looking at something outside the stadium on that", personally, my own view is that it would be very difficult to make it work given less than 30 match days a year and its out of town location unless it was themed very differently to a football club's social club.

Tuesday August 9. Maidstone Tickets. City announce we've been given 500 tickets for our first away game of the season and our season ticket holders have a 24 hour priority window. Come mid Friday afternoon, I get a phone call from Alastair Smith asking me to remind our York City South members to buy tickets in advance. It seems that due to league / club / police requirements (delete as applicable) that no tickets will be available on the day. I'd imagine ticket restrictions were behind us now that we're back in the big league, more later.

Wednesday August 10. Safe Standing. On the back on Monday's fans Forum, Yorkpress runs a story, apparently, the cost to convert the South Stand would be £250,000 and City would need City being released from a covenant in the 2003 Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF) agreement. Given the perilous state of our finances, unless a wealthy benefactor covers the cost, I'm sure there are more pressing bills to pay. The safe standing way forward involves rail seating and means a one for one swap out, so capacity isn't increased and to maintain income, don't expect safe standing to be any cheaper than any other ticket price. At any game, look across the South Stand and you'll generally see lots of supporters standing.

Thursday August 11. Dave Penney. Has left the club, not unexpected but it leaves the club with one less "football insider". I wonder where Glen Henderson and Alastair Smith get their inside information from and at this stage their contacts books must be much slimmer than his. Like many, I don't exactly know what his role was, but I recall when Nigel Worthington left, thinking that he would have been perfect for a Director Of Football / Technical Director type role, overseeing all aspects of the club and setting a vision, rather than what happened over the next few seasons. *Footnote, within a month of his arrival, people were touting David Webb for such a role.*

Thursday August 11. Ben Dale. Has joined Redcar Athletic (Tier 9). Let's hope the young centre back gets some first team football. *Footnote, the loan was extended into December, a regular he won several man of the match awards.*

Saturday August 13. Maidstone 2 City 1. Disappointing to lose such a game to 2 late goals to a very average side (promoted as NLS Champions) on a blisteringly hot day, possibly the hottest of the year.. If we want to avoid relegation, wins at places like this will help, if we want to be challenging for the play offs, wins at places like this will help. Meanwhile up in Harrogate, Peter Jameson kept a clean sheet in Harrogate's goalless draw with Crawley but missed the next game through sunstroke after having been on a drip after the game.

Sunday August 14. Spinning. My head is spinning, my brain is numb with membership numbers and finances after a few days of TOOAB postings on the role of YCST following last week's Fans' Forum. Without being privy to the deal struck between them and Glen Henderson, I can only speculate on who does what. What is absolutely clear to me is that a

majority shareholder has no more or no less responsibility to fund a business than any other shareholder, equally all shareholders have the same vested interest in ensuring the success of the business.

Monday August 15. Jacob Bulmer. Welcome keeper Jacob, signed on a one year contract following the end of his 2 year scholarship with a Football League club. Eligible for youth team league games, will he see any more first team action than Maison Campbell and Harry Flatters who took the same route over the previous 2 seasons (into City after a scholarship elsewhere and onwards out of professional football).

Wednesday August 17. Solihull Moors 1 City 1. A solid point away to a team strongly fancied for a play off spot. A welcome point after Saturday's defeat and it just shows that we can be competitive at this level.

Saturday August 20. City 0 Eastleigh 1. What many, me included, considered to be an easy game results in a loss. It was a lacklustre performance (John Askey noted low energy levels) and just shows there are no easy games at this level. 4 games in, and the 2 teams within walking distance of me, Barnet and Wealdstone fill the top 2 spots in the table.

Monday 22. 5 Years. Alastair Smith enthuses that "in five years time, it would be great if (York) could be in the Football League". To me, every year is a year too long and given the way football is going, every year will be a bigger struggle than the last one.

Tuesday August 23. Rochdale. With Rochdale paring company with their manager, Robbie Stockdale last week, some bookies have John Askey down as a strong odds on favourite to succeed him. Askey admitted that Rochdale did make an approach, but that he was happy at York. Everyone denies it, but it makes a change when our manager is being linked with other clubs. There were Watson / Chesterfield rumours 2 years ago, Askey / Notts County earlier in the summer and now this. We must be doing something right.

Tuesday August 23. Rest Week. A third Tuesday of the season and again no mid week game. Surely it is better to front load the calendar with midweek games in the warmer months rather than scheduling Tuesday game in December (Solihull Moors), January (Oldham), February (Boreham Wood) and March (Bromley).

Friday August 26. Jon Askey. Says "(Rochdale) made an approach and it's tempting to go into League football, but we've started something here and we want to try and see it through." Well said, whilst it is tempting to take the leap (no doubt, non league to league is a big leap), everything is rosy here and he has his team playing well. Like City, Rochdale are perennial strugglers, although more rooted to one division than City, Division 2 (as is) with recent forays into Division 1. Who knows, given a fair wind, the 2 clubs could even pass each other next May.

Saturday August 27. Maidenhead 0 City 1. Another blistering hot day and another comfortable win for City. With assured passing throughout the side, we never looked in danger. Over the years, how often have we been holding on for dear life when a goal up? Pre match Glen Henderson is seen chatting and drinking with City fans around the town and later strolling across terraces before the game. Meanwhile, David Ward has to make do with a concrete perch on the top step of one of the stands. I suppose it beats a muddy bank at Chorley on a wet day.

Saturday August 27. Doctor's Orders. Another first. James Daniels is on crutches at the game following an operation to removal his appendix. Defying doctor's orders, the crutches were his doctor's way to avoid people barging into him and splitting his stitches.

Monday August 29. City 1 Oldham 1. If only Maz Kouhyar's late chance had gone in we'd be celebrating a win over one of the promotion favourites. It wasn't to be, but still a record (6,833) crowd for a league game and record (1,660) for the number of away fans. 2 leagues apart last season, despite a strong start from City, I just wondered at times did we really believe we could win.

Tuesday August 30. University Challenge. In a TOOAB interview (first posted on the YCFC website), Max Kouogun recalls how he studied Applied Economics at university. With Maz Kouhyar's accountancy and Paddy McLaughlin's sports nutrition studies, does this mean City are looking to recruit a different type of footballer. Those who can apply their intelligence into game situations.

Wednesday August 31. £5 Hospitality. City reduce LNER Lounge hospitality to £5 (last season's price) following feedback (and no doubt reduced sales). The more we can get into hospitality, the better.

Wednesday August 31. That Time Of Month. A time for reflection. 6 games in, 2 wins, 2 draws and 2 defeats leave us in 13th place. Perhaps the 2 defeats were achieved against the worst 2 sides we've played so far. To date, no one has dominated us. 8 points is a good start, but it could easily have been 14 and challenging Chesterfield for top spot on goal difference. The defence is looking strong, Ethan Ross has proved to be a capable number one, if only we could be a bit more prolific up front.

1.1.3 FROM 220901

Thursday September 1. Match Of The Day Derby. With the increasing vogue for irrelevant games to be designated "derby" games, how long before we have a Match Of The Day Derby. Mark Chapman has today joined the Altrincham board, how long before Guy Mowbray joins the City board? Favourite derby? How about the Fleet Derby, Ebbsfleet v Fleetwood in the FA Cup.

Saturday September 3. Yeovil 0 City 1. Out all day got back home to find the highlights online. Without knowing anything, I was surprised to not see Lenell's penalty kick in Yeovil's immediate post match package. Pity they couldn't be so quick and positive in identifying the "discriminatory chanting" miscreants. Once again, City look at home at this level.

Wednesday September 7. Richard Brodie. He's taken his first steps into management at Skemersdale.

Thursday September 7. Slow News Week. You can tell it is been a slow news week by the various TOOAB rumblings re Glen Henderson and The Supporters Trust. Note to self, re – read TOOAB and see if history has been re-written.

Thursday September 8. John Askey. He has signed a one year contract extension keeping him with until the end of next season. A reward for promotion and a solid start to this season. Long may it continue. Or perhaps it was to ward off Chelsea's interest...

Thursday September 8. Graham Potter. Today he's named as Chelsea's new manager. One of a few former City players to later manage in the top flight. Denis Smith, Neil Warnock and Ricky Sbragia are others that spring to mind.

Saturday September 10. Game Off. Football is written off due to the death of The Queen. A couple of lower teams arrange behind closed door friendlies to keep their players match fit and get pilloried for doing it. Some sports went ahead, horseracing delayed its big Saturday by a day.

Monday September 12. Matty Blair. Today he's announced his retirement due to injury. He was one of the lucky ones at City, plucked from a "lesser" club, with the help of full time training and, presumably better preparation, he was able to flourish, first with City and later moving up the Football League. Not the first to take that route and (accepting that others have taken the same route and failed), there must be lots of hungry young "men's football" ready players in the lower leagues. However, with City not running a reserve / Under 23 side, there is limited opportunity for young players to make that step up. Recently, Kieran Green did, but teammate Dan Maguire didn't. Age is an obvious difference between the 2. A favourite subject of mine, I'm sure I'll come back to it.

Tuesday September 13. City 2 Bromley 1. A last gasp injury time Manny Duku goal completes a 10 men City comeback, leap frogging Bromley into a play off place to exceed my early season expectations. A rousing atmosphere saw City overcome Maxim Kouogun's red card (2 yellows) after low cards in the 88th minute, there was a feeling that a point would be a good result. Despite City's recent winning form, there a disappointing 3,492 crowd, presumably its below the break even figure and probably less than the Saturday norm. Question, would what would have been the crowd at Bootham Crescent, I can't help but think with the poor transport links, a City centre ground might have attracted a bigger midweek attendance. Back in the 1960s, City generally got better crowds for night matches, not any more.

Thursday September 15. Scott Boden (1). It didn't take long for his paper record to be confirmed by his on pitch performances. For the record, he failed to score in 4 City appearances (one as a starter and 3 as a sub). For him, at least he's swapped a one year City contract for an extra year at Buxton. Contracts can work in a funny way. With no knowledge of the numbers, it is safe to assume that Boden will be financially better off. I'll posit his wage at Buxton is less than at City, however, he's got an extra year's contract. Over the years, there have been numerous contracts that have been ripped by club / player agreement with a financial consideration going to the player, indeed employment law means anyone who is sacked can receive a tax free redundancy pay off. Example (in round terms): A player on £500 for 6 months earns £12,000 (after tax / deductions, he will get £8,000 with the club shelling out £14,000 after employers national insurance and other benefit)). Sack him and he's in entitled to a £12,000 tax free redundancy package. If a player is sacked and has no club to go to, a redundancy pay off between £8,000 and £12,000 is win / win for both player and club. If a player has a club to go to, a much lower figure might suit to cover the difference between the player's current and new wage.

Thursday September 15. Scott Boden (2). He's the latest in a long line of non scoring strikers. City's 1955 Happy Wanderer George Howe holds the City record of 338 games without a goal for an outfield player. Sean Haslegrave holds the honour from midfield with 172 goalless games. Upfront, wide man Anthony Straker played 27 games without a goal whilst of the pure strikers Bob Greener (25 games in the early 1930s) and Darren Tilley (22 appearances) are our most prolific "pure" strikers, maybe "flawed" is a better adjective for those non scoring strikers (and strikers in the sense of not doing the job they were employed to do).

Thursday September 15. Division 2 North? A good post from Andy Naylor in TOOAB tonight. He points out that Division 2 clubs like Harrogate, Sutton, Crawley and Salford

don't even average 2,500 crowds whilst many National League clubs easily beat those numbers, City included. You could say that in terms of attendance, the National League is the new Division 2. Indeed, Division 2 used to be populated by the northern outposts, nowadays, there are almost as many southern based teams in the division. Clubs like Colchester, Leyton Orient, Gillingham and Swindon along with the newcomers from Sutton, Crawley and Stevenage. It is about time to expand the Football League, amalgamate Division 2 with the National League and have a regional Division 2. After all, most of the clubs impacted are already fully professional and regionalisation would inevitably lead to increased attendances and reduced costs.

Thursday September 15. Trevor Sinclair. He is suspended by Talksport after inflammatory remarks following The Queen's death. Speaking on Talksport after the Lenell John-Lewis Yeovil incident, he said, "This vile and abhorrent behaviour should stop. In football, we can manage this situation ourselves. We can ban him (the perpetrator), we can tell his workplace what he's been up to or we can report him to the police". It works two ways.

Friday September 16. 3pm. The traditional 3pm kick off is under threat from all sides. The energy crisis and soaring electricity prices are making clubs consider earlier kick off times and to avoid using lights. Given many floodlights are already before 2pm, not sure how much electricity will be saved. Equally, early kick offs probably mean hospitality / beer sales per match with some people dashing straight from bed to ground whilst more away clubs will need a £5,000 overnight stay. Meanwhile talk of doing away with the 3pm TV blackout rumble on. Got my ticket for tomorrow's game, probably the most I've paid for a City game but with 10 points from the last 4 games what can go wrong at lowly Scunthorpe?

Saturday September 17. Scunthorpe 1 City 1. Hoped for (even expected) all 3 points but had to settle for one, that's about all we deserved as we let in a late equaliser. Can't say I was impressed with Joe Nuttall, Scunthorpe's £50,000 rated striker, who'd want him at that price?

Sunday September 18. The First Time City Played At Arsenal. Those around at the time will immediately say "1975, a 1-1 FA Cup draw thanks to a Jimmy Seal goal". You'd all be wrong. In his excellent Facebook postings Craig Brebner recalls a 1972 City programme when our team featured Jimmy Crangle, a young winger that City had recently signed from Scottish junior (aka non league) football. Craig recalled, "*Today I'm going back 50 years to 1972 and, in a break from the usual, I'm featuring a programme from a game that I didn't attend (I wasn't permitted to go to football until I was 14 years old). This game is a special one for at least one person however as it represented the Football League debut of a man whom I have been lucky enough to get to know as a result of producing my Football Programme Memoirs blog. I wonder how many York City fans that are reading this will remember one Jimmy Crangle? Not many I'd wager. Jimmy made just four Football League appearances, all for York City. Nevertheless that's nothing to be scoffed at and is surely four more than almost everybody who will read this article. This is Jimmy's story. Jimmy was born in Glasgow in 1953 and he grew up in the tenements of Glasgow's south side kicking a football around from an early age. It was the classic "jumpers for goalposts" scenario, playing until it got dark. The streets were tough and the football was tough too: the original school of hard knocks. At twelve years of age, Jimmy moved from Junior to Senior school and, during his first break time, he was spotted running rings with a football around the other kids and quickly came to the attention of the Sports Master (one Harry Morgan) who was responsible for the school team. Jimmy then found himself pitched into the school's reserve side that very Saturday and scored all seven (!) in his side's 7-0 victory. Little wonder that Jimmy never played for the school reserve team again! Mr Morgan correctly*

predicted that Jimmy would become a professional footballer one day and stoked Jimmy's ambitions accordingly. It's fair to say that Jimmy ate, drank and slept football as a schoolboy and he was playing two games each Saturday: a morning appearance for his school followed by one in the afternoon for his local Boys Guild side. It was during this period that he was spotted by the most successful Juvenile (under-21) club in the history of Scottish football: Campsie Black Watch FC. Jimmy joined Campsie in 1970 and played for them for over two years, finding himself in the shop window as scouts from professional clubs flocked to watch Scotland's top Juvenile side. Whilst at Campsie, Jimmy appeared in the Scottish Juvenile FA Cup Final winning the game 3-2 and getting two of the goals. Around the same time, Jimmy was picked for trials for the Scotland Juvenile squad although he didn't make the final cut. Scouts from Everton, Ipswich Town and York City were all interested in Jimmy however and he also had a brief trial with Sheffield United. In May 1972, Jimmy was invited to come down to England to spend a week on trial with York City followed by another week with Ipswich Town. The Town manager at the time, the late great Bobby Robson, had made the trip up to Scotland to watch Campsie personally. Robson was initially wanting to see one of Jimmy's team mates but couldn't fail to also be impressed by the boy on the other wing. It was Jimmy of course. Even before travelling down South for his two trials, Jimmy took calls from Everton manager Harry Catterick who attempted to persuade him to go to Everton instead. Thankfully Jimmy was a man of his word and he chose to honour his commitment to visit York City and Ipswich first. York's manager at the time was Tom Johnston and, astonishingly, only three days into Jimmy's trial, he had already seen enough to offer the youngster a two year full-time professional contract! Mindful of his promise to spend the following week with Ipswich Town, Jimmy was reluctant to accept Johnson's offer on the spot. However, as a young man, desperate to fulfil his dream of becoming a professional footballer and, crucially, without an advisor or any kind of representation, Jimmy eventually signed his two year professional deal with York City FC. Jimmy recalls his experience of City's seasoned professionals at York's first day of pre-season training, where hard work was the order of the day. Trainer Walt Wilkinson took the squad to Clifton Ings for a 10K running session and, eager to please, young Jimmy led from the front. That is, until he received some "advice" from senior pros including Barry Swallow and Jimmy Seal along the lines of "Hey Scotty! Slow down! We all finish this together otherwise they'll make us do it again tomorrow". Jimmy was learning fast. Jimmy's first appearance for the York City first team came in a pre-season friendly against the Doonhamers (Scotland's Queen of the South) on 29th July 1972. The game resulted in a 3-1 win for York and, to Jimmy's surprise, his father and uncle made the trip down from Scotland to watch the game. It was one of only two occasions in senior football in which Jimmy played with his father watching. Jimmy's Football League debut came early in the new season in the goalless draw with Watford at Bootham Crescent. As well as making a total of four appearances for the first team, Jimmy was banging in the goals for the City Reserve side and he fondly remembers appearing for the Reserves at Arsenal's Highbury stadium and being put clean through by City's John Woodward before chipping the keeper from 30 yards. Crangle recalls an overnight hotel stay for the game which he believes was something to do with John Woodward's transfer (given it was a free transfer, he was released by Arsenal, that seems unlikely, I wonder if it was arranged to allow Arsenal a chance to scout City's young talent, 3 youth internationals and Crangle included - Ed). It is therefore not difficult to imagine the shock and disappointment that Jimmy felt when he was told that he was being released at the end of his contract, all the more so when he later discovered that eleven of City's 12 directors involved in making the decision had voted to keep him on. Nevertheless, Jimmy has fond memories of his playing days with York City. The City squad was a tight knit group and Jimmy was a popular part of it. When the players had a short break around Christmas time,

Graeme Crawford gave Jimmy a lift home to Glasgow and later picked him up for the return journey to York. Jimmy remembers going out for "social evenings" with Brian Pollard, Gordon Hunter and Mike de Placido to name but a few after City midweek home games and both Gordon and Mike lunched with Jimmy at his digs before heading back for the occasional afternoon training session. Following Jimmy's departure from Bootham Crescent, he had a two-month trial with Charlton Athletic but they were hesitant to sign him due to concerns about his height and physique. Jimmy, by now seeing a local York girl who would eventually become his wife, pulled out of the possible move. Following Charlton, Jimmy had trials with both Chesterfield and Bradford City but they too had similar concerns and the trials didn't result in a contract. By 1975 Jimmy decided to make a return to the semi-professional ranks and signed for Selby Town where he felt immediately at home and began to enjoy his football once again. After Selby, Jimmy joined local York side Osbaldwick FC for whom he played throughout the 1980s and where he would meet up with former York City players John Harrison and Andy Leaf. Osbaldwick were something of a powerhouse and enjoyed considerable success in the York & District League (ten successive titles no less!). Jimmy's career as a player was coming to an end although he did make a few appearances for Copmanthorpe (alongside Graeme Crawford once again) before hanging up his boots in 1991. Simultaneously Jimmy made the move into youth coaching with both Osbaldwick and Dunnington before he was approached by York City to work with their Centre of Excellence (under-14s) players. It was a strange time for Jimmy, working back at the club that he had left a generation earlier but the move enabled him to work on obtaining his coaching badges and Jimmy found youth coaching to be a very rewarding experience. Like so many people who come and make their home in North Yorkshire, Jimmy has remained there to this day living in the west of York with his wife of 32 years, Carol. Jimmy retired in 2020 but still retains an active interest in football and is considering buying a season ticket for City's National League season at the LNER Community Stadium. If you see him, shake his hand and thank him for his service to York City and football in the area". Thanks to Craig Brebner for this. I suggest you follow his regular blog, including video highlights of most of the games that he has attended as well as hundreds of other goodies. Go on! You know it makes sense!

Sunday September 18. Scunthorpe (Again). The same issue of TOOAB featured an April 1971 game against Scunthorpe as its classic match programme. Rather dryly, it states, "City won by 2-0. Scorers were Paul Aimson and substitute David Chambers". I recall it being a filthy wet afternoon, the last day of the season. For Scunthorpe, a young Kevin Keegan missed a penalty before his summer move to Liverpool. The programme pictured looks in pristine condition, to this day my programme is crumpled and hasn't recovered from the incessant rain.

Monday September 19. Christian Fox. He is sacked by Selby just days after Lee Bullock lost his job as Whitby Town manager. When the next pandemic strikes, I'll tot up how many ex City players are now managing clubs.

Wednesday September 21. Squad Games. Early reports suggest that Notts County, our next opponents, might be short of numbers on Saturday. With a small squad, they are suffering from an early season injury crisis. That's quite unlike City with squad size into the upper 20s if you include all the our professionals. We've run a big squad for several years, in my mind, too big considering we don't have a reserve or under 23 side meaning every season we have several players who have very limited, if any, game time. Hardly good for their progression or morale. I can imagine, some of our managers have never seen some of our players in action. I suppose County can go out and sign a player or 2 on loan if they're desperate, otherwise, it is a case of making do with what they have. Back to City, with a large squad, we chop and change our side (and with some managers, past and future), we also

chop and change formation. That hardly gives players the chance to settle down with their teammates and establish patterns of play within the side. No, it means one mistake, one defeat, and the players are looking over their shoulder expecting to be dropped.

Wednesday September 21. Red Card. A strong City's Under 19 side start their league season with a 2-0 win over FC Halifax with goals from second half substitutes Jonny Shepherd and Alex Hernandez. The game witnessed an unusual event. Half way through the first half, the FC Halifax keeper picked up a yellow card for taking too long to release the ball. 15 minutes later, he got another yellow (and subsequent) red card for taking out a City attacker. Why can't football authorities apply the 6 second rule more dilligently? It is not uncommon for a keeper to hold onto the ball for 20 seconds, just think how much more open games would be if keepers released the ball more promptly, teams playing out more quickly, when their opponents not properly reset.

Thursday September 22. Macaulay Langstaff. He is named Vanarama National League Player of the Month for August, great just in time for Saturday.

Friday September 23. New Striker. John Askey confirms that he is looking out for a new striker now that Scott Boden's departure has freed up his wages. Given his fine form in the loan market last season, no doubt we'll have a new striker in next to no time.

Friday September 23. Pig Racing. Back by popular demand, the York City Supporters Trust holds a fundraising pig racing night at the Acomb Conservative Club. Whilst I've always had the impression that the Trust believe that fundraising isn't their main aim, I suppose as one supermarket likes to say, every little helps. Indeed, they provide City with a CEO, in business such a role would probably command a near 6 figure salary for a business of City's size.

Saturday September 24. City 1 Notts County 3 (1). For the first time this season, City are comprehensively beaten, going down 3-1. And yes, Macaulay Langstaff came back to haunt us with a brace although Quevin Castro scored the goal of the game, a spectacular long range free kick. Friends behind the goal said it was unstoppable. Back in the day, I always thought we should defend the edge of our penalty area, give the likes of Graeme Crawford and Roger Jones a clear view of the ball and they'd never be beaten. Modern football, swervy balls, who needs it? The upside, we're still just one point away from a play off spot.

Saturday September 24. City 1 Notts County 3 (2). A crowd of 6,759, including 1,734 County fans, the most any visiting side has brought to the LNER watched the game. County sold out their end and took an overflow area in the West Stand. A little slap over the wrist for City as we initially put visiting tickets on general sale allowing any County fans the rights of purchase. Sales were quickly halted and City allowed County season ticket holders a period of exclusivity before away tickets went on general sale. In the good old days, clubs could control ticket sales with credentials being checked and physical tickets collected from the ticket office. Nowadays with online sales, that is not as easy. I wonder if I'll return to this subject again, I've already been here before in respect of the Maidstone game in August. Who would have thought selling tickets would be so difficult? I'm sure not the last on the subject.

Thursday September 29. YCST AGM. Held at the LNER, it was a poorly attended in light of attendance at some recent SGMs that have been held over recent years. A chance to catch up given the covid led disruption of the past 2 years. High point is YCST chairman Mike Brown's announcement that he has joined the YCFC board for until next May to deliver a specific project. He insists there will not be a conflict of interest in holding senior roles within both the Trust and the Football Club and that he has committed to abstain in the case

of any board votes, in fairness to Henderson, who hold a 51% shareholding. Come next May, Brown, YCST chairman for the past 5 years, plans to stand down from both his YCFC and Trust positions. Whatever anyone might think of the YCST and Mike Brown, there can be no denying that his 20 years of unpaid YCST service deserves everyone's respect. 20 years is a long time in anyone's life. He has been a constant, no doubt, often at the expense of family life and putting a strain on his health and sanity.

Thursday September 29. Ethan Ross. In Yorkpress, he insists that "there's no point making a pre-assumption on any team". Quite what is a "pre-assumption"?

Friday September 30. Scott Burgess. He has joined Kidderminster on loan until the new year, will he ultimately fall into the "don't return for a second spell category"?

Friday September 30. Month End Accounting. Happy to see us in ninth place, just one point outside the play off places. Unfortunately after a solid win at Yeovil at the start of the month, our performances have tailed off and Notts County put us firmly in our place. Generally impressed by the quality of John Askey's summer signings and the speed at which he has gelled a new team in a higher division.

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Saturday October 1. Barnet v City (1). Will it be 5-1 like 1993 or 3-6 (1999) or a repeat of the 2015 1-3 Hive horror show?

Saturday October 1. Barnet 0 City 5 (2). A fraught day at home as daughter's study year in Taiwan got off to a frustrating start with problems with her bank and access to her money. It seemed like I spent about 4 hours on the phone earlier in the day helping her to sort it out. I was thinking I'd miss the game, certainly, plans to walk to the game were out of the window. However, her money problems sorted, a quick tube ride to the ground and I walk through the park with 2 minutes to spare. It looks like no one else is going to the game. It seemed strange. As I get closer, I can hear the loudspeakers blaring out music. Issues with turnstiles that don't take cash sorted and I'm finally in the ground, its 3:20 and kick off is delayed due to there being no ambulances due to traffic delays. National League – a proper league? Still enough time to sell 6 YCS lapels badges before kick off before I sit down and enjoy the game. Someone said, the best City performance since 2012, 2-0 up and in complete control when Barnet had a player sent off. 5-0 at full time. The adventure weren't over

Saturday October 1. Barnet 0 City 5 (3). During the game, I spent some time scanning the City fans for someone I'd ever met before, previously I'd DM'ed him on social media but had had no other contact. At half time, I'd spied him, I couldn't have been much further away from him, but being near the exit, I thought I'd approach him on the way out as we all left. My plan was scuppered, being in a busy section, my progress was blocked, I saw him waltz towards the exit gates and saw him go into the busy gents. I followed him. As he passed me on the way out, I approached him, "Are you Craig?". It was Craig Brebner, introductions made and a chat on the way back to the tube.

Monday October 3. Askey @ 50. Tomorrow's game is John Askey's 50th game in charge of City, "I didn't realise that (it was the 50th game), but it's been fantastic for myself and Kingsley (James, first-team coach)," he enthused.

Monday October 3. Bury Away? Despite being a phoenix club, Bury would not be a new ground (Stainton Park, home of Radcliffe FC who we beat 4-1 in a 2000 FA Cup tie) for City.

Clitheroe away would mean a comedians' derby, Jimmy Clitheroe v Arthur Askey for the younger readers. Definitely will be a small number of tickets available and maybe live on the BBC. When will Guy Mowbray get to commentate on City on the BBC?

Monday October 3. John MacPhail. Sad to hear about his plight, he was always a larger than life character and well loved by supporters of all the clubs he played for. For City, in terms of pure defenders, he is our all time top scoring defender. He's confined to hospital as a result of life changing injuries he suffered in a fall last December. Hopefully a recently launched justgiving page will raise the funds required to modify his family home to allow his return.

Tuesday October 4. FC Halifax 1 City 0. It's a funny old game. Lowly FC Halifax go into the game on the back of a 4-0 defeat whilst City go in after the 5-0 win at Barnet. Once again, City give a lack lustre performance against a struggling side. The defeat sees us stay 9th, but more 2 points off the play off places. A local Halifax paper notes their midfielder "(Kian) Spence was the best player on the pitch, unplayable, shrugging off opponents, finding space and always passing to a team-mate". We could do with a few like him, pity he chose FC Halifax over City after a trial with Steve Watson's City side in the summer of 2021. It makes young wonder just how many players slipped through our fingers as triallists. Over the last 20 years or so Danny Johnson (still a steady scorer at or even above our level over the last 7 years), Oliver Banks, Luke Waterfall and Andy King all featured as triallists. Billy McEwan's attempts to sign a young King from Leicester were thwarted whilst a few weeks earlier, he had James Meredith on trial from Derby but soon sent him packing. Just glad Martin Foyle thought more of Meredith 2 years later. With secrecy often shrouding the identity of triallists, I am sure there are many more triallists who have passed through City's doors and went on to have successful careers. Even this summer, we had several triallists, Dan Pybus being one. A year earlier, Steve Watson signed 6 players after they joined City as pre season triallists.

Wednesday October 5. Money, Money, Money. It is reported that National League clubs will receive £12.6m in funding from the Premier League over the next 3 years. £9m will go towards running costs, it looks like it'll be split equally between the 72 clubs, meaning £42,000 per club per season. It is about enough to pay one player's salary for a year whilst the overall figure is about the value of one televised Premier League game. If the split is true, it sounds like lessons have been learnt from previous covid funding that was split with a strong bias towards the top flight. At the time, regional clubs, like City, had argued strongly for a more even split. Oh dear. The rest will towards community projects.

Thursday October 6. Yeovil. After 5 weeks, neither Yeovil Town nor Avon and Somerset Police are able to identify those who racially abused City's Lenell John-Lewis at Huish Park in early September. They knew which part of the ground (Yeovil's community stand) the chants emanated from and had video footage but couldn't identify the culprits. They've escaped scot free. At the very least, Yeovil could have sent a message by closing that part of the ground for their next game. None one of the usual high profile organisations who usually like to have a say on such matters seem to have anything to say. Yeovil's statement makes all the usual platitudes, but completely fails to issue any sort of apology to Lenell- John-Lewis.

Thursday October 6. Nathan Thomas. The wide man has signed on a 3 month contract after several weeks training with City. Out injured for over a year, he comes with a decent pedigree after playing with several clubs, including Sheffield United.

Saturday October 8. City 1 Torquay 0. A win, some said scrappy, others said City dominated, but it took a late breakaway goal from Alex Hurst to earn City the 3 points. The win moves us up into 7th place and the play offs but we really need to be beating bottom of the table sides much more easily if we're to stay this high up the table. I can't establish whether Torquay debutant Chin Okoli is any relation to James Okoli who played 4 games for City during the 2002/3 season.

Saturday October 8. Goals Galore. Barnet's run continues with a 5-7 defeat at Wrexham after, reading backwards a 4-3 win on Tuesday preceded by 0-5 and 4-5 defeats. Someone might get the sack soon. 32 goals in 4 games, a record never beaten by City where our best is 31 (F: 15, A: 16) in 4 games in 1932. I can think of 4 occasions when City have scored 16 goals in 4 successive games, but none since 1957.

Monday October 10. Returnees. John Askey confirms City "are not far off being a full squad" as injured players return from injury. Unfortunately, none are guaranteed starters.

Monday October 10. Macaulay Langstaff (2). The ex-City striker and National League's top scorer becomes the first person to win back to back player of the month awards in the competition's history. He has now scored 15 goals in 13 games this season. Just shows what playing in your best position, consistency of selection and confidence can do for you. Who said it is a simple game?

Tuesday October 11. City 1 Dagenham 1. Hopes of back to back home wins are scuppered but thanks to Sam Sanders late equaliser we stay 7th. A 2 goal win would have lifted us into 4th place.

Tuesday October 11. Bury Tickets. Finally, the Bury ticket distribution is announced. There are multiple reasons for the delay, including the date / time not being decided until the previous Friday, Bury not issuing physical tickets (only an online portal without the facility to allow the visiting club to sell their own allocation) and City having been allocated only 400 tickets to distribute amongst our 2,211 season ticket holders, many of whom have not provided email contact details to City. All compounded by Bury being an all volunteer club with no full time officials. City season ticket holders are asked to update their email contact details and the next morning those with a valid email address were provided with an email containing a link to Bury's ticketing portal which opened at lunch time on Wednesday.

Thursday October 13. Lewis Cunningham. Released by Doncaster in 2021 after his scholarship, he signed a professional contract with City. He made a steady start for our Under 19 side, scoring 4 goals in his first 6 appearances from the left (wing) back before loan spells at Warrington Rylands and Glossop North End. He was released by City in the summer and now after a trial, has signed a one year contract (with another year's option) with Championship side Birmingham where he will link up with their Under 21 side. How can lowly Doncaster and even lower City not spot his talent? After his explosive scoring start to last season and given City's dire form, I even thought he might be in first team contention.

Friday October 14. Jonny Haase. Meanwhile, this season's Under19 left back, Jonny Haase has joined Eccleshill United on loan. Unusually, he signed his first City pro contract in 2021, when in the middle of his 2 year scholarship under Steve Watson. He signed a new contract in summer 2022 under John Askey. To me, that means City (and 2 different managers) must rate him. However, he seems to be another going backwards. He played on trial for Bradford PA (National League North, Tier 6) and joined Guiseley ((Northern Premier League (Premier Division), Tier 7) on loan in August. Now he has gone on loan to Eccleshill United, another Tier 7 club.

Friday October 14. City Linked With Chelsea And Manchester United. Checking the FA's web site, the FA Youth Cup page states that City, along with Chelsea, Manchester United and about 20 other clubs have an exemption until Round 5 meaning that home games do not have to be played at the club's first team ground.

Friday October 14. FA Youth Cup Success. This season's youth side beat Hyde United in the final qualifying round of the FA Youth Cup. City switch the game to Selby's Fairfax Plant Hire Stadium, although to my mind, "Stadium" is too grandiose for it, presumably the switch is due to the conditions of City's LNER lease arrangements. Defender Jacob McLoughlin got the winner after a goalmouth scramble in a game that featured a full scale brawl, one red and 10 yellow cards. Watching the game, you could have imagined City were playing Rochdale, as their training tops and coats were visible. Simple reason, Hyde are effectively Rochdale's second youth side. Let's hope the bad blood from the game doesn't spill over into Round 1 when City travel to Rochdale.

Saturday October 15. Bury AFC 1 City 2. It was harder than it should have been. The home fans seemed stuck in the early 1990s. Looking forward to a 1st Round cracker, "any one at home" to badly paraphrase Bill Shankly.

Sunday October 16. Aldershot. They've sacked their manager, Mark Molesley and put former Aldershot boss Terry Brown (70) in charge. Guess who their next opponents are? At 27, Chris Brass was City's youngest ever managerial appointment and at 57, John Askey was City's oldest ever appointment. When sacked, at 61, Tom Lockie was our oldest ever manager.

Monday October 17. Shrewsbury Away. I might have named that as the worst possible tie. Away to a competent but poorly (for the league) supported Division 1 side.

Wednesday October 19. Jamie Reed. He has announced the end of his playing career as he is appointed manager of Cymru Premier League side Airbus UK Broughton. File in the Alex Kempster and Reece Thomposn envelope, lower league strikers who showed initial promise but lost their way (some more than others). His high point might have been his first few minutes in a City shirt at Bolton in 2011. For the record, 37 City starts and another 48 appearances as a substitute netted him 25 goals. For the record, only Richard Brodie (55) and Scott Jordan (52) have made more substitute appearances for City.

Wednesday October 19. Minsterbelles. 2,280 see their LNER debut and an enthralling 1-1 draw with Leeds.

Saturday October 22. Aldershot 2 City 1. Alex Hurst is sent off, City equalise before conceding a late winner to lowly Aldershot. Another game we shouldn't have lost (even with 10 men).

Sunday October 23. Max Kouogun. Reports emerge that he is on Bristol Rovers wanted list. With so many players on one year contracts, we're prone to losing our better players for next to nothing. It is never too soon to put contract extensions in front of them. It should be a win / win situation. Extra security (and a wage increase presumably) for the player whilst City can insert a release clause giving City a realistic fee if the player moves whilst giving the player surety of a move if the clause is triggered. In the case of Kouogun, presumably, he took a step up to join City last winter, certainly, he proved himself, earned a new contract and hasn't looked out of place playing at a higher level this season and is probably worth a contract beyond this season. That's how it should work, come in prove yourself and get a decent contract, unlike former years when "unknown" players arrived on 2 years contracts and couldn't hack it with City. That said, when City are competing with other clubs, maybe it takes a multi year contract to sway a player towards City. Likewise, players signing a first

pro contact or re-locating to York might want the guarantee of a 2 year contract. A footballer with a young family might want a multi year contract. Try going to you building society and asking for a mortgage with a contract that runs out in a few months.

Tuesday October 25. City 1 Chesterfield 1. A late Mitch Hancox equaliser earned City a point against high flying Chesterfield who might feel they should have put the game to bed earlier whilst City might feel we could have won the game late on. 9th, just a point of the play off places. In Chesterfield's midfield was Oliver Banks, son of Ian who was a teammate of Gary Mills way back when. Oliver Banks had a City trial in 2012, rejected by Mills, Banks subsequently has had a long career, often playing for clubs at or above City's level.

Friday October 28. Away Tickets. Another twist, City announce that Wrexham are selling their own away ticket allocation for the game on December 3.

Saturday October 29. City 0 Southend 2. A tame performance as City go down 2-0 to headed goals from corners. With "The Shop" going off with a calf strain midway through the first half, City were rather toothless upfront. It leaves us in 10th place, 3 points off the play off places. More worryingly, 2 points from 4 games and an increasing trend to concede set piece goals. Good to see Jake Hyde at his City best. Joining the action in the 52nd minute, he limped off with a hamstring injury before the end.

Monday October 31. Boost The Budget. The "Supporters Trust launches a Boost The Budget" scheme. Often touted over the years, City finally jump onto the bandwagon. Darlo regularly raise a sum well into to six figures (with crowds less than half of City's average attendance). Closer to home, it seems that when nearly every York City Knights signing is it announced, the support of their budget booster scheme is acknowledged. The target of £100,000 might support the addition of one (or 2 players) for a season or be used to plug gaps or bring in additional loanees during the season. One gripe. It runs for 12 months until October 2023, personally I would have run it to May 2023 when all the monies raised would have been available for next season's budget.

Monday October 31. Month End: Long Range Weather Forecast. As summer / autumn turn to winter, City's form takes a turn for the worse. Can we expect stormy and frosty conditions ahead?

1.1.5 FROM 221101

Tuesday November 1. Car Crash. Radio York hosts a one hour interview with Glen Henderson. After one and a half hours, Glen Henderson was digging himself deeper into a hole. The crux being his relationship with John Askey and being unable to give any assurance that John Askey would still be in post at the end of the year, the role of his son Ethan and some of his comments on the standards of lower non league football. As a life long City supporter, David Ward just let Henderson do the talking and he talked honestly and openly, maybe too much so for some people's liking. Oh, he didn't like my question about who his trusted independent football advisers are.

Tuesday November 1. FA Youth Cup Defeat. No joy as we go out on penalties at Rochdale, a Round 1 defeat equalled our best effort in the competition in 6 seasons, but suggests we're still a long way from establishing a youth team to first team pathway.

Wednesday November 2. Car Crash Radio - Update. More rumblings from that radio interview. The stories centre on the proposed appointment of Glen's wife, Janee to the board and the contractual status of some of our key players.

Thursday November 3. Brew York. City's commercial links with local firms is extended with a deal with Brew York. The 2 year deal includes sponsorship of the South Stand and the launch of a locally brewed, limited edition York City Centenary Ale. Let's hope the tie in lasts longer than last season's South Stand sponsorship deal with Nfnnerty. Any synergy with local firms is to be welcomed.

Friday November 4. FA Cup Preview. It is Round 1 of The FA Cup tomorrow, a big day for many little clubs. Today's big news story appears to be that another City player, Dan Pybus is attracting interest from the likes of Leyton Orient, Crewe, Doncaster and Notts County.

Wednesday November 3. Centenary Quiz. A highlight of the club's centenary season celebrations was a Brew York sponsored 100 question quiz night at the LNER.

Saturday November 5. Shrewsbury. A decent Division 1 side away where we were long odds against to get a result, a disappointing nothing draw, not the draw we wanted, not the result we wanted. City name just 4 substitutes and lose 2-1. I doubt if the tie earned us £10,000. Whatever happened to City's illustrious FA Cup tradition?

Tuesday November 8. Boreham Wood 1 CITY 1 (1). Turned out to be not as cold as I expected and I got to Boreham Wood's ground on my London travel card in good time. Got to the turnstiles, searched inside my bag for my wallet, no wallet. With the variable autumnal weather, I was swapping between big coat and fleece. My wallet was at home with my fleece. I had to blag £20 from someone for a ticket, get my fix of 3 Y Fronts on the drip and accept someone else's offer of a half time cuppa. Thank you everyone. We took an early lead, didn't look convincing, conceded just after half time and despite both teams having chances to win, we held on for a draw as the home side finished stronger. Before the game, a good chat with a mutual admirer of Wilko Johnson.

Tuesday November 8. Boreham Wood 1 CITY 1 (2). Just at the moment, nearly every team we play seem to have an impressive Sheffield United loanee in their side, tonight it is turn of Boreham Wood and midfielder George Broadbent. How come they end up all over the country except York?

Saturday November 12. Catch Up I caught with up with the step grandad of Luke Jones. Released in the summer by City, he signed for Northallerton and after a good start, he fell out of favour when the team started to struggle. Dropped by the first team manager, he was having to ring the reserve team manager on a Friday night to ask for a game the next day. Apparently, the 2 managers hate each other and don't speak to each other. A move to Knaresborough soon followed. How different it must have been for Luke who 2 years earlier, as a City year 2 scholar, had been training with our first team squad. Mickey Cummins coaching him to shadow Jake Cassidy (I'm unsure if that was in the target man role or the non scoring striker role). Come November 2022, Luke is working as an Asda delivery driver and combined with his football pay (which is not much less than a scholar earns) is "rolling in money". Whilst Josh King's transport issues for his aborted loan at Tadcaster were well documented, around the same time, Luke had also experienced his own loan issue. Signing for a club, the manager didn't want to play him for fear of upsetting his own number 9 who might exercise his 7 day notice rights and walk out and join another club if he didn't a game (and his appearance and goal bonuses).

Wednesday November 16. John Askey – In Person. Plenty on social media about John Askey's sacking. At least he had the luxury of a face to face meeting. Last season's first year professionals found out they'd been released via social media.

Wednesday November 16. John Askey – The Sacking. Writing my diary, a couple of days after the event, I wish I could say the dust has settled, but I don't think I can. Some of the social media postings of Mike Brown and John Askey's comments probably point towards the truth. Askey inferring that Jason McGill was hands off whilst Glen Henderson was hands on, I'll leave you to interpret whether that means interfering or just protecting his investment. Mike Brown noted that the board had not been informed of Paddy McLaughlin's loan move Kidderminster, John Askey had arranged it without their knowledge going against process and protocols.

Wednesday November 16. John Askey – The Cost. There was a lot of speculation about how much John Askey's sacking would have cost City. It must be remembered, thanks to the Professional Footballers Association, that player contracts must be paid up in full for the remaining duration of the contract, a manager's contract does not, it is more like a more normal employment contract with a set notice period, especially at City's level when there is no shortage of out of work contracts looking for their next post. With no inside knowledge, a 3 months' notice period seems a reasonable amount, probably less for Kingsley James.

Wednesday November 16. John Askey – How Long? Given City's poor run of form at the time of his sacking, how long would it have been before support for John Askey naturally ebbed away?

Wednesday November 16. John Askey - xxxxx. I caught

xxxxy November 25. Jonny Haase (2). Oh dear, his development really seems to be have stalled. After featuring in Tier 6 then Tier 7 earlier this season, he has now joined Tier 9 Northallerton Town (Northern League) on loan.

Saturday November 26. Dorking1 CITY 0. You enter the ground and are immediately immersed in a cramped (and City had under 300 fans) fanzone. It was lively with a good range of reasonably priced food and drink. My burger and drink cost me £6.10, I handed over a tenner and got £6.10 back in change. Pre match sees the high profile Dorking chairman / owner / manager, Marc White warming up with his players and chatting to the match officials (I hope it wasn't trying to influence them). At least we've never had a high profile chairman on the pitch (that is if you exclude John Batchelor getting a few minutes as a late sub in a pre-season game in 2002). Barely had the game started when Ryan Fallowfield pulled a hamstring when chasing the ball back towards his goal line, he slid off the pitch in his efforts and the ball ended up in the hands on of a perplexed Ethan Ross. He held onto it for at least 10 seconds, seemingly not knowing what to do (and maybe hoping the referee would blow to allow the physio on, why should he, the player was off the pitch). . If I'd been the ref, I'd have booked Ross for exceeding the 6 second rule. Meanwhile Fallowfield; crawled back onto the pitch and eventually Ross through the ball into touch. Cue trainer on the pitch and Fallowfield substituted. From City's point of view .the game didn't get much better. A simple long throw, head on and Dorking were one up. Largely insipid and certainly not incisive going forward, City improved a little in the second half and got out of the game what they deserved.

Saturday November 26. Wilko Johnson. Before the game, a sad reminiscence with a mutual admirer of very recently deceased Wilko Johnson, less than 3 weeks earlier we had been sharing reminiscences of his long and memorable career.

Saturday November 26, 2022. The Magic Of The Cup. CFA Cup Round 2, little teams ponder a win and a big pay out in Round 3. Or so Barnet thought. Drawn away to Accrington, the hope is for a good result and prize money. The 1,532 crowd paid £9,771.66 after VAT was taken. Stanley paid for stewarding, floodlights and medical costs, and as per FA Cup regulations, they covered Barnet's £5,000 travel costs. All that left £5.99 profit from the game to be split between the 2 clubs. Less than £3 per club. At least Accrington get £67,000 in prize money and the chance to go again for £105,000 in Round 3 prize money, although an away day at Boreham Wood might not be the hoped for pay day.

Monday November 28. Sam Hird. Bolton's first team coach has rejected interest from City. His manager, Ian Evatt said, "He (Sam Hird) is pleased to be a part of what we are doing and loves being a part of this football club, thinks the world of the way we do things. Sharon (Brittan) is an excellent mentor to me, and she said to me at the very start 'make sure you surround yourself with excellent people' ". I wonder what he meant by 'surround yourself with excellent people'?"

1.1.6 FROM 221201

Friday December 2. David Webb. Not many saw that coming. When I read City's press release, my first thought was have they got his name wrong as Daniel Webb had been a front runner. Alastair Smith put me right and I seemed to spend most of the rest of the day creating a page for him on the York City South web site. Time will tell if he's an inspired appointment. Initially his CV doesn't read too dissimilar to that of a young Graham Potter and possibly far better than some of the has beens, chancers and wasters from ex England managers downwards, all eager to get (back) onto the managerial merry go round, say the likes Lee Clark, Stuart McCall, Peter Taylor and Harry Kewell.

Saturday December 3. CITY 1 Wrexham 1. Late drama as Wrexham took the lead on 88 minutes and Manny Duku equalised 4 minutes later, just 22 seconds after coming on as a substitute. Duku once again proving himself to be a better impact player than starter. Mooted protests against Glen Henderson largely failed to materialise. City seem to continue to get it wrong. In the days leading up to the game, some long standing hospitality bookings were cancelled due to over capacity (later booking at a higher price seemingly honoured). After the game, there was much consternation as the Stadium Management Company, apparently at short notice, had cancelled the minute's applause planned for former director, Rob McGill, father of Jason and Sophie McGill who had died a year to the week earlier. SMC said it posed a "security risk and would be C". Sophie Purves (nee McGill), her mum, husband, children and extended family were making their first visit to the ground. "Inflammatory and divisive", maybe we should ban all away fans, no wait a minute, let's ban home fans as well in case they protest against the club.

Monday December 5. Saturday, World Cup Fever. 2 more Round of 16 games. Brazil beat South Korea and Croatia finally overcome Japan, both games commentated by genuine York City fans, Guy Mowbray and Jon Champion respectively. And not a mention of York

City from either. I trust Mowbray is probing his co-commentator, Jermaine Jenas for any insights into David Webb from their time together at Spurs.

Thursday December 8. Alastair Smith. Alastair made a guest appearance at the York City South AGM and he spent a good couple of hours enthralling us with his experiences over the past 5 months as City's CEO. It was interesting to hear about the recruitment process for a new manager and to understand some considerations which many supporters might never have considered. Equally, there are probably lessons to be learnt to improve manager / board relationships going forward.

Saturday December 10. Woking. On the sickbed listening to Radio York. They made it out that the first half was drab, very drab. Turned over to twitter and City's official twitter feed made it a first half full of chances and near misses, City could have had 4 or 5 goals. Up against it, a battling second half performance saw City win 2-0. First double of the season (at first attempt). Great win against in-form side. Post match, great first interview from Micky Morton. Decent debut for the NL live streaming service, even if it was displaying "Woking 2York 0" until the 85th minute!

Tuesday December 13. Glen Henderson Offers To Sell Shares. After a courtship that was 4 years in the making, divorce papers are served 4 months into the marriage and finalised with the announcement that Glen Henderson is willing to sell his shares. Remember, "the smallest cheque a football club owner ever writes is the one he writes when he buys the club".

Friday December 16. The Crux Of It. Listening to their excellent podcast prompted me to follow them and name my biggest 3 disappointments of City's season to date. So here goes and I'll squeeze 9 into my top 3. First, the wide men (Kouhyar, James and Hurst) have failed to deliver, they should be capable of taking defences apart. 2 dropped down a league (or 2), the other has attracted attention from above. Some good approach work has too often failed to deliver end result. Number 2, AJ has gone absent. I was hoping he would become our midfield lynch pin, a new Sean Haslegrave (or even Sean Reid), maybe he needs to channel his aggression and energy better. Finally, once again our 5 first season pros, to date, have made zero impression in terms of first team minutes.

Friday December 23. 3 Up / 3 Down? It took 20 years for the Conference to get a second promotion spot. Now plans are hatched for a third spot. Three up is great, but not so sure about 3 down. The financial chasm between Football league and Conference is huge. Many thought Stockport and Oldham were this season's pre-season promotion favourites, both have struggled, both on and off the field, beset by financial problems and struggling to avoid a second successive season. It only takes a few months of poor management, loss of form or an injury crisis and a stable Football League club can be plunged towards the foot of Division 2 and relegation. Just ask Southend, for many years a successful Football League club now beset with a protracted ground move, they estimate they'll make a £2m loss this (2022/3) season always assuming they are not wound up first). Just one club who have found the transition to non league football too much to take. Whilst parachute payments help for 2 seasons before all central funding is cut off, teams need to make a quick transition and tighten belts. We know ourselves, the financial constraints that hit us in 2016 and our ongoing struggles to re-capture our Football League status. Whilst a competent non league side can survive in the Football League, the same cannot be always said of clubs travelling in the opposite direction (even if you accept that the relegated clubs are competent). Fair better to stay at 2 up / 2 down and give clubs a bit more stability.

Saturday December 24. Saturday, Wot No Game. Saturday, no game. Maybe understandable given its Christmas Eve, but what has happened to the fixture scheduling? Boxing Day Monday and New Year Monday and nothing else. The Maidstone game on January 7 being just our 3rd league game in 3 weeks. Not long ago, it was 4 games over Xmas and New Year in around 8 days. Everyone played the same amount of games and it was a key time in the season for league positions to be cemented and promotion pushes to be started. Remember 1973 (8 points from 4 games in 15 days), 1983 (10 points from 12 in 8 days), and 1993 (2 points from 6 over Christmas before the weather caused New Year's games to be postponed). Happy days, plenty of football and you knew when the games were being played. Nowadays, the Premier League's Boxing Day fixtures are spread over several days and, the EFL pick a cold Thursday night for a second fixture set.

Sunday December 25. Merry Christmas. Oh 1957, a full Football League programme, a local derby at lunch time, pub and home for Christmas Dinner.

Monday December 26. David Webb. A lethargic City go down 0-3 at home to struggling Gateshead. Pleasing to see Lenell John-Lewis, Manny Duku and Nathan Thomas all start. It should put City on the front foot, but when all 3 start together, there is no one to come off the bench to make a difference up front. As it turned out, we really needed to make a difference in all areas of the pitch. After his covid, David Webb made his managerial debut in the dugout but couldn't help City to maintain their recent improved form. Post match, he gave his first interview to Radio York (and probably first ever post match interview), a cliché ridden performance, full of buzzwords, in which he appeared to contradict his analysis of City's performance. He gave the impression that he's not yet been on the training ground since he recovered, so to be fair to him, given he was hospitalised for several days, I'll put it down to not being 100%. He came across poorly as opposed to Micky Morton whose interviews over the previous 3 week were thoughtful, interesting and full of passion. Post match, several social media posts likened City's performance to the one against Bradford PA in January. Here's hoping we have the same outcome in 4 months' time that we had after the Bradford game.

Tuesday December 27. Shaqai Forde. Welcome Shaqai, he's already proved himself in men's football, albeit Kings Langley, a couple of leagues beneath City, but if he turns out to be the next Brad Fewster (or even Diego de Girolamo), then he'll do.

Saturday December 31. Southend. Tom Lawrence, the Southend CEO noted that despite a recovery plan being in place, they currently have a funding gap of around £2m per year that needs to be plugged. Generous donations from their owner, main sponsor and Shrimpers Trust will help, but still all too often their name is in the news for non payment of wages, HMRC payment issues / winding up notices and delays over a move to a new ground. Their Roots Hall saga seems almost as long drawn out as Bootham Crescent. Their medium term solution is Fossetts Farm, their proposed new home, the short term answer is bridging finance. Their owner has contributed £1.5m this year and since he purchased the club 24 years ago, he has put in well over £20m and charged no rent. City's finances seem a closely guarded secret, but even going back years, in the days of financial excesses, I doubt if turnover ever reached £3m a year. Nowadays, I suggest the figure is probably less than half of that figure. Roots Hall is tired and in need of constant upkeep, a money pit with inadequate facilities to service our fans and to generate income, that sounds all too familiar. Their vision is Fossetts Farm, complete with its significant conferencing and banqueting space, seven day a week bar and other revenue streams making Southend a 365 day a year business which finances to compete at the top end of League One. That sounds a lot like the LNER vision that the council sold to City. They forecast promotion to League Two would

swing the turnover in our favour by at least £1.4m, with central funding and Football League sponsorship being unlocked as well as making the club a more attractive proposition for other sponsors.

Saturday December 31. A Time For Reflection. Another Saturday, no game, end of the year, So a perfect time for reflection. Pinching the idea from the excellent “The Crux Of It Podcast, here are my 3 biggest City disappointments of the season. Number 1, the wide man (Maz Kouhyar, Alex Hurst and Luke James). I’ve grouped them as one entity and what should have been our biggest threats going forward. Kouyhar often fails to deliver on his fine approach play (and has now been missing for a month with a near mystery injury) whilst the others, who both dropped out of The Football League, one for a fee, have largely disappointed. Number 2, AJ Greaves, I looked forward to him being a powerful and aggressive force in midfield, to date, he’s hardly figured. Perhaps he needs to better channel his energy and aggression. Number 3, another entity, the youth products and their lack of game time. This season, exactly 0 (zero) minutes in the league come the end of the year.

1.1.7 FROM 230101

Monday January 2. The Wrong ‘Uns. After signing Scott Boden and Gus Mafuta from Boreham Wood, it seems like we might have signed their wrong uns. We should have gone for Danny Elliott, on loan from them, he was Gateshead’s best player in our 2 festive season games against them.

Monday January 2. Stats Overload. Meant for David Ward and Radio York, they never used it, so straight after their coverage of the Gateshead game finished, I tweeted “Congrats Shaq Forde. Since 1922, the 1,200th player to play for City, our 614th scorer and 112th to score on debut. #Firstofmany #COYR”. Cue feedback overload and clarifications. “Wow. Fascinating and not what I'd have been anywhere near guessing. Thanks for the stat (keep them coming) and your reply” and “How do we keep stats like this its mental to me” was just some of the feedback. Yes, it is all true and based on the excellent work started by David Batters. For clarification, last season (2021/2), 16 of our 31 players scored for us, so it is easy to see how more than half our players have scored for us. The 614 scorers are all City players, own goals scored by opposition for City are excluded. Equally, in the 6 and a half seasons since we were relegated back into the National League in 2016, we have had 10 players score on their City debut. Step forward, Shaqai Forde, MacKenzie Heaney, Jack Redshaw, David Ferguson, Alex Kempster, Kyle McFarlane, Clovis Kamdjo, Alex Harris, Amari Morgan-Smith and Daniel Rowe. You can see how that could stretch to 112 debutant scorers in 101 years. To the end of the 2021/2 season, 224 of our 614 scorers had scored just one or 2 goals for City.

Wednesday January 4. Amateur Accountants. With the potential Henderson share sale in full swing, there is plenty of speculation of how much it would take to buy him out and the valuation of the club. To my mind, 2 very different figures. He might have paid a few hundred grand to buy his stake (effectively a pre-defined purchase price), but City’s true valuation might be quite different as the club’s net equity was stated at over £4m in May 2022 when the most recent set of accounts were released.

Saturday January 7. Round 3 Saturday. It used to be one of the biggest days in the footballing calendar, FA Cup 3rd Round day, now, it is just a damp squid with games being spread over 4 days (each with multiple kick off times) and many teams de-prioritising it. It

got me thinking, which is my most memorable 3rd Round day supporting City? Arsenal 1975 is probably the earliest one for me, but memories of the day are hazy, Jimmy Seal's equaliser being the key moment. It was probably the first time I'd been wondering the streets of London by myself, pay on the gate, stand on the halfway line, it must have been mixed standing, before the days of crowd segregation. I always remember a picture in the Press showing Jimmy Seal pivoting on one leg as he smashed home City's equaliser. I'd plump for Stoke in 2010 closely followed by Bolton a year later. A real snow storm at Stoke, snow flakes as big as bricks. City's coach was delayed, kick off was delayed and the game was in doubt. We briefly lead half way through the first half before losing 3-1. A year later, we were goalless at Bolton with less than 10 minutes to play. 2 Premier League grounds and City were not outplayed on either occasion.

Saturday January 7. VAR Rules? Personally I can't get excited about whether VAR should be used in all FA Cup games or not at all. In any one game, it is the same for both sides and given the inconsistencies of VAR, you can't say either side is guaranteed an advantage (or otherwise) if it is in use.

UNDATED / TO DATE: Standing Firm: Football's Windrush Story. Just watching Benjamin Zephaniah's excellent documentary on the ascent of black footballers in England and having a right old chuckle listening to John Barnes and Luther Blissett and how they shrugged off some abhorrent abuse and there is a clip of John Barnes scoring his League Cup goal for Watford at Old Trafford. Guess who is the first player to congratulate him? Brian Pollard, that's enough City relevance to make entry in my City diary.

Monday January 9. Feelgood Monday. After Shaq Forde's stunning hat trick, the loan signing of Ollie Tanner is confirmed, he sounds an exciting prospect with a well screwed on head, he's joined City in preference to Harrogate. Incidentally, is he City's first ever signing to have appeared on Match Of The Day a day earlier. Elsewhere, details emerge on social media that Dan Pybus has agreed a new "long term" contract, even if it is only to the end of next season, he's locked in and we've protected his transfer value. Whilst from City's viewpoint, it is not good if transfer clauses are triggered, at least City get some money (unlike Pete Jameson and Akil Wright) and it demonstrates to others that careers can be progressed at City. Finally, an additional role for Paula Stainton, she's been an asset to the Foundation and I'm sure she'll add more value in her new role. Another of the much vaunted backroom staff who keep the club running day to day, come what may.

Thursday January 12. Fulham 2 Chelsea 1. Chelsea fans bemoaning another defeat and asking when they'll be successful again. Around the start of their golden era, I remember beating Manchester City and thinking glory days here we come. 25 years later, when will we get back to Division 1 and see an end to Tuesday nights in a darkened Guiseley and windswept Gateshead? The life of a football supporter.

Saturday January 14. City Beat Chelmsford On Penalties. "There's a couple stripping off ready for action", David Ward's commentary making the Chelmsford game far more exciting than it was. With hindsight it was probably a couple of Chelmsford substitutes.

Saturday January 14. Shaq Forde / Tobi Adeyemo. Whilst City laud Shaq Forde (one of his passes today was sensational as he continues to impress), his 17 year old Watford teammate, Tobi Adeyemo, comes off the bench and scores within 4 minutes of his home debut to seal their 2-0 win over Blackpool. Adeyemo, fresh from a month's loan at Hitchin Town (Southern League Premier Division Central, Tier 7), in November steps up and makes an immediate impression in Tier 2. Meanwhile, some of our young pros and academy

prospects come back from loan spells across Tiers 7, 8 and 9 and continue to struggle to break out of academy football and into Tier 5.

Saturday January 14. Nathan Jones. I can't decide if I want him to succeed at Southampton given his Luton connections. They've come a long way since we beat them at Wembley in 2012 and say what you want about their fanbase, but they do seem to be united and firmly behind the club.

Wednesday January 18. Adam Crookes. He becomes the latest City player to sign a 2 year contract after Mitch Hancox a day earlier. By my count, they join 5 other players who are already contracted for next season and possibly others who have a contract just for this season but with a possible extension clause that can be triggered by City or is performance related. Look at any of our recent (going back over 50 years) promotion sides and every one of them had the basis of the previous season's side as its spine.

Wednesday January 18. Welcome Back Glen Henderson. Removed from the Supporters Facebook page in November by one of the administrators, he's allowed back in. Cue an upsurge in activity on the site. It seems that he can't do right, whether it's spending too much time on Facebook, answering fans with DMs or even just being on the site. He was quite approachable at early season games and spoke freely with fans at games. Yes, sometimes, he spoke too freely and without engaging brain, but at least he has engaged. The recent elevation of Paula Stainton and a number of 2 years contract extensions suggest a vision from him and the board. Given that even now they've been in charge for less than 6 months you can be sure that they are still getting to grips with many aspects of running a club. Henderson has mentioned on several occasions that his desire is to get more from the youth set up, if he and / or David Webb can achieve that and we can produce a steady stream of young, hungry and first team players from the youth set up, then that will probably be their biggest success.

Friday January 20. Postponed (1). Tomorrow's game at Eastleigh is off, a frozen pitch after a 4pm inspection. For an away game in the south, City would normally be well on their way to their overnight stop at the time after a stop off to stretch their legs at someone's training ground, Fulham, Barnet and Ascot being popular / recent stop offs. After travelling south, the team trained and stayed in their pre-booked hotel on Friday night, a bit of team bonding and an early morning training session before being on the road north by mid morning. Meanwhile, David Ward was at the ground for the Friday pitch inspection and confirmed a frozen pitch and was making plans to attend another game on Saturday.

Saturday January 21. Postponed (2). Spare a thought for Wealdstone and FC Halifax. Their FA Trophy tie was postponed a week ago due to a frozen pitch, re-scheduled for Tuesday, it fell foul of a frozen pitch early in the day, put back 24 hours, the thaw never came. Today's league match between the 2 is off after an early morning inspection at The Shay. Unsure how much travelling and expenses has been wasted but just the logistics of changing arrangements must be a nightmare for the clubs and their supporters.

Saturday January 21. Game Off, Its Going To Be A Quiet Day Until ... Facebook wars erupt when Ian Savage indicates Ethan Henderson, aged 20, has "has signed a pro contract with us", David Ward appears to confirm it before suggesting his confirmation was premature. Glen Henderson weighs in saying "David Ward makes a statement that he can confirm and then retracts it to cause chaos". Being a lifelong supporter, I'm sure that's the last thing Ward wants to do. Several hours later, Glen Henderson posts, "To squash all rumours Ethan Henderson is currently on an amateur dual signed contract, with York City FC and Northallerton Town FC. He has also, had one training session with Marske United but nothing has been decided as of yet". If true, maybe we should just give Ethan a chance. He

scored 22 goals in 15 starts (+10 sub appearances) in his first City scholarship season. 4 goals in 9 in a curtailed second season (long term knee injury and covid) when Steve Watson saw enough to put him, then aged 17, on the bench for the first team. Since, prolific in US college football, he made his mark at Northallerton.

Saturday January 21. Back In The Day. Both John Byrne and Richard Cresswell were 21 when they had their break through seasons, both had made their City debuts 3 years previous. For Cresswell, he bulked up a lot in the summer before his final City season (and £950,000 transfer) whilst Byrne developed both mentally and physically. They had the luxury of reserve team football to help their development. At just 20, Ethan Henderson is too old for youth team football whilst City have no reserve or Under 23 side to help his (and other young players) to develop.

Monday January 23. What's Going On? City give AFC Telford seven days notice to re-sign Maison Campbell (aged 19), last season's bench warming keeper. This season, since signing for AFC Telford in October, he has made just one appearance for them. It seems that they have used 4 (Campbell plus Luke Pilling, Louis Gray and Joe Young) different keepers across the season. With Ryan Whitley joining Boston on a month's loan, first year pro Jacob Bulmer (19 next month) was on the bench for the first time in the last game. Just hope it doesn't mean that Ethan Ross is going to be recalled. By my reckoning, we have 32 contracted professionals (if you include our Scott Barrow, 3 loanees and exclude Ethan Henderson).

Monday January 23. Eastleigh, Well Done. Bought my ticket online before the game. When the postponement was announced, I emailed Eastleigh asking for a refund and received a response early on the next working day stating I'd get a refund within "5- 7 days". The refund arrived the same day. Well done Eastleigh.

Tuesday January 24. The Cold Snap. For once, the south seems to be suffering the most from the prolonged cold snap. Although a little warmer today, most of tonight's National League games in the south have succumbed to frozen pitches. Despite the sunshine, at midday, my lawn was still frozen and there was an inch of ice on the garden pond. With most games south of a line between Solihull Moors and Yeovil postponed, intrepid Ray Goodearl heads north on a solo drive from Ealing to Oldham to re-establish his achievement of seeing City play at every ground in our division.

Tuesday January 24. Shout Out. Shout out to Ray Goodearl driving solo from Ealing to Oldham to re-establish his achievement of seeing City play at every ground in our division.

Tuesday January 24. Keeper Update. Come January, Ryan Whitley was sent to Boston (NLN) for a month's loan to get some game time (where his first 3 games were postponed) promoting 18 year old Jacob Bulmer to the bench. On January 23, City made what seemed to many a surprise move to re-sign Masson Campbell who had played just one game for AFC Telford in NLN this season whilst on non contract terms with them. One the bench at Oldham a day later, he was called into action just before half time when Ethan Ross suffered a head injury, maybe a little nervous, he did alright on his City debut. That makes him the 100th keeper to play for City since 1922 and leaves us with 4 keepers for the rest of the season.

Tuesday January 24. Oldham 2 City 0. Our bench includes 2 right backs (Fallowfield and Duckworth), 2 right wingers (Thomas and Tanner) and young Maison Campbell with the gloves. The team was equally unbalanced, Alex Hurst at right wing back in a side reverting to a back 3 and John-Lewis stranded upfront. It was Maison who came on first, replacing the concussed Ethan Ross who compounded poor defending by dropping the ball to give Oldham

a lead just before half time. Despite twice hitting the woodwork, it was a poor defeat against a poor side.

Tuesday January 24. John Askey. With John Askey in the crowd at a City game for the first time since his sacking and the defeat, compounded by the early withdrawal of Shaq Forde, there were the inevitable chants of “John Askey’s red and blue army” and “You don’t know what you’re doing” rang out loudly for the first time under David Webb. On BBC Radio York, David Ward noted he hoped to get an interview with Askey, if so, I never heard it, I wonder who was keeping their distance?

Tuesday January 24. No Manny. Reward for his strop when being subbed in the last game? David Webb suggested squad rotation in light of a busy programme.

Tuesday January 24. Elsewhere (1). Tonight, Scarborough are playing Thornaby in the North Riding Senior Cup whilst Northallerton’s tie against South Park Rangers falls foul of the weather. Just think, if City had beaten Whitby we could have been facing Ethan Henderson in the semi finals or the winners of the Redcar Town / Guisborough Town tie. Make you wonder how we’ve only won the competition 11 times in 100 years.

Tuesday January 24. Elsewhere (2). Reports state that Everton are up for sale and would join Manchester United and Liverpool in looking for new owners. Confusion abounds over Everton, is it for sale or not. Sounds familiar? Whilst Sir Jim Ratcliffe is looking at United, have we ever seen so many big clubs up for the sale at the same time? I can’t help but think that maybe the days of the billionaire owner are coming to an end as they realise they can’t compete with state owned / backed clubs. With the Qataris looking to buy into a Premier League club, that would make 3. Any thoughts of which country should buy City? Or maybe a town the size of Filey or Settle would be more appropriate.

Tuesday January 24. Write A Book About A Year In The Life Of City. With so much happening today, it feels like I could write a whole book about just one day.

Wednesday January 25. Ian Burchnell. Sacked by Forest Green Rovers after just 8 months in charge and allowing him to sign 7 players already in the January transfer window. Elsewhere, his successor at Notts County has just signed a new long term contract to ward off potential interest from the bigger boys. I wonder how David Webb is feeling about his mate from Ostersunds? The perils of being a manager and the decisions facing a board.

Thursday January 26. Kolo Toure. Sacked by Championship (I remember when they were below Scarborough in the Northern Premier League) after just 2 months and 9 games in charge. Excluding Charlie Spencer who died in post in 1953, Sam Collins’ 139 days is the shortest managerial reign by any City manager.

Thursday January 26. Mark Beck. Solihull Moors trigger a release clause in his contract and he’s off down the M1 after scoring 18 goals in 28 games for Darlington this season. He’ll be back at the LNER next month.

Thursday January 26. Maz Kouhyar. Becomes the latest City player to sign a 2 and a half year extension, by my count, 4 players have such a contract and another 5 are contacted to the end of the 2023/4 season. Well done City, all 9 are players who you like to think could play at a higher level. All 7 of the 9 earned their extended contracts based on City form, surely the way forward – reward success.

Thursday January 26. New 2 Year Contracts. Maz Kouhyar becomes the latest City player to sign a new contract. No one knows the contract details but here goes. City are committed to the wages for the duration of the contract duration. A new contract might come with an additional signing on fee and probably an increased wage, although it is not unknown

for a player to plump for a longer contract on slightly reduced terms (remember Anthony Straker, he joined City on a 2 year contract for a lesser weekly wage than he was offered for a one year extension at Southend). Often it is a chance to rip up the old contract and start a new contract (at new terms) immediately. We wouldn't want Maz to sign a new contract today and join a Football League club tomorrow for nothing. Some players might like York so much they want to stay here. For City, it is the chance to insert release clause, guaranteeing City a transfer fee if it is invoked (hi Mark Beck, hope you enjoy Solihull). Equally, any new owner arriving in April might see the benefits of having our best players contracted 2025 rather than having no stars contracted beyond May.

Saturday January 28. Explain. FA Cup day. 3 weeks ago, Boreham Wood drew with Accrington in the FA Cup. 4 days ago, Accy won the replay. Today, 4 days later, they've hosted Leeds in a high profile Round 4 game. Can anyone explain why the footballing authorities continue to say that they need 10 days to arrange a replay yet can easily arrange a new tie in just 4 days.

Saturday January 28. City 1 Maidenhead 2. For the second time in 4 days, City go down to a defeat to a struggling team. Lacking cohesion (4 changes and a new formation from the last starting line-up), but with what many people would suggest is about our strongest side, City went down to a 1-2 defeat. I'm afraid returning keeper Ryan Whitley didn't have the game he would have hoped to have. Unspotted for the first goal (and I'm not blaming him for it) but he conceded a contentious free kick for the second goal by picking up a back pass which came to him via a defenders' knee.

Saturday January 28. Glen Henderson. Is seen giving V signs to fellow supporters in the East Stand during the game. That evening YCST issue a tweet stating, "The Trust is extremely disappointed to hear reports and receive an official complaint about the Chairman's behaviour at today's match. We do not condone any form of abuse at our football club. The matter will be addressed via the appropriate channels". How different it all was less than 6 months ago when Glen Henderson was widely seen as the club's saviour.

Saturday January 28. Smells Like Team Spirit. For the 3rd time this month, a substituted player doesn't react in the best possible way. Duku (Chelmsford), Forde (Oldham) and today Pybus (Maidenhead). What does it say for team spirit? The result leaves us in 15th place, 7 points from the play offs and 7 points from the bottom 4. Where's your money?

Sunday January 29. Wrexham v Sheffield United. BBC cameras at the game, not sure what got the most coverage, the match or Ryan Reynolds whilst the play seemed to focus on Ben Tozer and his long throws. They struggled to reach the 6 yards box, I wonder what they would have made of Sam Muggleton's long throws, especially when hitting the cross bar twice in 2 minutes for City in 2017. Best you can say about the Reynolds (and the other one, his name escapes me) is their presence has regenerated Wrexham with 24,000 replica shirt sales this season. Can we expect their "When Owners Go Bad" docuseries in a couple of seasons time?

Sunday January 29. Nightmare Scenario. Given the increasingly toxic atmosphere, should one fear the nightmare scenario? Given Glen Henderson owns 51% of the shares, could he walk away with 51% of the net assets, which the previous board stated were over £4m in when they sold up in July 2022.

Sunday January 29. Manny Duku. Along with F3, City teammates and Carlisle United striker Tobi Sho-Silva deliver their Faith and Football event sharing their stories about how their faith has supported their careers in football. Arranged by City and the Foundation it is

a worthy event but surely not the type of money making events that were envisaged by City to fill their LNER.

Sunday January 29. Wrexham v Sheffield United. From our division, Wrexham's celebratory owners are lauded by one and all, the club is united and probably £500,000 richer from their FA Cup run with prize money and TV appearance money included. City? Maybe £20,000 from this season's FA Cup.

Tuesday January 31. Month End: Explain (2). Just 3 days after Blackburn and Birmingham draw in the FA Cup, they stage their replay. I repeat, what ever happened to the 10 day rule that the football authorities and police insist on? A clue is the fact that Blackburn are live on Sky Sports next Monday, one or 2 days before the usual replay date. TV rules, money rules, you decide.

Tuesday January 31. Transfer Deadline Day. I couldn't keep up with all the movements, but noted the millions being spent on foreign players in the January window, goggle eyed at how much money went out of the British game and how little money filtered down from Premier League to Football League clubs. The Premier League really does live in its own bubble. On the radio this week, there has been talk of every Premier League club fielding a home grown player in every game, far better, if every transfer window, every Premier League club had to buy one player from the pyramid beneath it. Keep the money in house.

Tuesday January 31. Free Agents. Transfer deadline day today. Does it affect City? Yes and no. It means it is the last day that Football League clubs can sign City players, whilst post deadline, City's ability to sign players is unchanged. Reports of Wrexham's interest in Max Kuogun appear unfounded as they sign Charlton defender Eoghan O'Connell. In the run up to every transfer deadline day, a number of Football League players are released by their clubs, deemed surplus to requirements. No doubt the players will have got good financial settlements based on their remaining contract duration. Those players are free agents are any club and sign the anytime they want. Just today, amongst those released are Joe Dodoo (Burton), Michael Devlin (Fleetwood), Owen Gallacher (Crawley), George Thomas (QPR) and Courtney Senior (AFC Wimbledon). Thomas immediately joined Cambrigde, Dodoo was once a highly rated young forward, all are in their "seasoned, but not veteran years" with 4 having a decent number of first team appearances behind them.

Tuesday January 31. Month End: One Year Ago. January 2021 ended with an abject 0-3 home defeat to Bradford PA and the hounding out of City of Sean Newton. You could say, one year later, not much has changed, o has it?

1.1.8 FROM 230201

Wednesday February 1. Losses Written Off. Leicester chairman Aiyawatt Srivaddhanaprabha effectively written off the club's outstanding £194m debt by converting it into shares. It is a paper exercise that means the debt he would not expect to get back is converted into shares which he'll have trouble cashing. It got me thinking, in City's 100 year history, how much money has passed through the club's hands? In recent years, City's accounts have yielded very little information, more can be gleamed from JMP accounts where YCFC turnover was noted at a little over £1m a year in recent times, although it is not clear whether that equates to total turnover, more likely, it represents the 75% of turnover relating to JMP's 75% shareholding. I'd reckon £60m at the very, very top. Even during the excesses of the later Craig years and some of the McGill years, annual turnover rarely

approached £3m a year. City's annual turnover didn't reach £500,000 until the very early 1990s. Chicken feed compared to Leicester losses.

Wednesday February 1. AFC Southend. It is reported that some Southend fans are planning to set up their own phoenix club in case the worse happens to their club. Where would a phoenix York club play? Starting on the bottom rung of the pyramid, presumably the cost of renting LNER would be prohibitive, so a new home would be needed. Possibly minimum requirements would be an enclosed ground, turnstiles, floodlights and proper dressing room facilities. In York, that might mean a ground share with York RUFC (Clifton Park) or one of the senior amateur rugby league clubs (say Acorn or Heworth) or possibly the College Of York and St John on Haxby Road. The thought of starting again from the bottom isn't appealing, far better to make what we have already work for us.

Wednesday February 1. Are You Yeovil In Disguise? Despite widespread publicity, City's review of CCTV footage and stewards' body cameras could not substantiate any of the claims about the bad behaviour of individuals during the Maidenhead game. City's statement went onto say "to ensure that the focus of supporters remains towards supporting the team on the pitch, Club Chairman, Glen Henderson, has chosen not to attend York City matches for the time being".

Thursday February 2. Disaster Strikes. After painstaking work with Paul and Andy over many months, we have extended David Batters' original work by creating Microsoft Excel spreadsheets from 2008 onwards detailing each game, match details and team line up. Then we linked them altogether into a master spreadsheet. Along the way, I'm afraid we uncovered some anomalies with David's work, hardly surprising given that a lot of his early work will have been done with pen and paper. We identified various discrepancies, including a Paul Aimson substitute appearance, occasions when our line up included 2 players wearing the same shirt number, some anomalies in cup appearances, a few numbers transposed and a few match dates were incorrect. It has only been with the use of Excel, by using various checks and balances we have come up with our enhanced data. Having resolved all but one the queries (and much of that involved Paul checking newspapers, both his and library copies) and we were left Edmund Harvey. In 1926/7 season, he was a City regular playing 28 games before a post season transfer to Bradford City. In the following season, a Harvey played just one game for City, the second game wearing the same number 7 shirt. Despite David's career summary for Harvey stating he played 28 games, it seemed reasonable it was 29 given one game a season a later. Paul's research suggested otherwise as Edmund Harvey was kicking off for Bradford City at exactly the same time of City's second game of the 1927/8 season. Conclusion? One more City player. Newspaper reports suggest it was a Harvey (coincidence or what?) who played that game, one whose City career lasted just one game and whose first name is unknown. With Edmund Harvey the 96th player to play for City, that makes the second Harvey number 112, so all those that came after him, up to Maison Campbell at 1202 should really have their heritage player number increased by one.

Thursday February 2. Scunthorpe. New owners and the much vaunted 7 new signings, one an hour across the day, seemed to end with just 6, largely (at least to me) unknown players, although they did include Sean Shields who had a good game for Barnet against City in October (that is if you can have a good game in a 5-0 defeat). Their rumoured signing of Luke James didn't materialise.

Thursday February 2. Fans Led Charter. The interim findings and recommendations of the Fan Led Review of Football Governance, led by Tracey Crouch MP, were first published in July 2021, 18 months later. not much has happened apart from them being re-gurgitated. Headlines include "fit and proper owners", financial sustainability and a better distribution of

wealth down the pyramid. Jason McGill and Glen Henderson, even John Batchelor, were all deemed fit and proper back in the day. Company law already enshrines a duty on directors to run a financially sustainable business whilst football authorities allow clubs to run up millions in debts every single season. Closer to home, we've seen how multi national corporations can come in, buy and decimate local businesses and change names / production locations to suit. Meanwhile, nearly every move the big clubs makes seems to be to squeeze money out of the little clubs, scrapping FA Cup replays and EPPP included. Even the vast bulk of their transfer spending is with overseas clubs. What chance does football have to make change? About the only good I see is the proposal that all clubs will need to reapply and gain a fresh licence, it that becomes an annual (or bi-annual event) and the authorities have the power to depose owners that fail, that might help, but only if someone else is ready to step into the breach. I'd like to be in on the conversation as to what is deemed fit and proper.

Saturday February 4. Southend 2 City 0. TA pre match strolling the South end Pier, now the longest in the country was the highlight of a morning in closed for winter Southend, that is if I discount spotting City's overnight hotel, the seafront Park Inn. With tickets only available via the box office on the day, I encountered a dilemma, the young lady (say early 20s addressed me as "Love", how do I respond?, "Darling", "Sweetheart" or similar I thought, being a typical northerner, I called her "Duck", she looked confused. After a largely even first half, City had the better of play after play break before Southend took the lead on the hour and quickly extended their lead. City heads quickly dropped whilst city's vocal supported ramped up the you know who and who out chants as soon as the goals went in. For City, if results don't improve, then their days of hotels that offer "comfortable rooms with scenic views" will soon come to an end to be replaced by day trips to Scarborough and Farsley. After the game, comic scenes when Southend's foul mouthed stewards held City fans behind locked gates, whilst Southend's disabled fans were held at the other side of the gates to allow a few Southend fans to pass behind them on their way out of town. It took a security officer to see the irony and open the gates. After a few games of what seemed like relative inertia in the league table, our league position materially worsened. Now 17th, we're 9 points off the play of places but only 4 above the bottom 4 where a number of clubs are massed, all of whom seem to be finding form as City's woes increase. Meanwhile, behind Southend's South Stand, the new build behind looked menacing, ready to encroach across the pitch and envelope the large car park as soon as finances fail. They reminded me of triffids, with their lights coming on as the sun set over Roots Hall.

Saturday February 4. Green Football Weekend. Apparently today marks the start of "Green Football Weekend", some players are wearing green armbands and a few clubs have got various initiatives in support of the campaign. Watching Match Of The Day on Saturday there was scant evidence of anything happening. A few green armbands were visible, Liverpool travelled to Wolves on a green coach whilst Pep Guardiola noted his team's 4 hour plus coach journey to Tottenham when assessing their defeat. It almost passed me by, but at least I took public transport to the ground although I was disappointed that Southend sold me my half time cuppa in a disposable cup rather than bone china, although they did their bit by not producing a match day programme whilst various tube lines and train companies chipped in bit by cancelling services. Equally, York Pullman did their bit by cancelling the supporters' coach to the game.

Monday February 6. Manchester City. They are accused of over 100 breaches of Premier League financial fair play rules, failure to declare player and manager remunerations and failure to co-operate since the investigation started in December 2018. There are multiple financial breaches going back to between 2009 and 2018, that's 14 years ago. It is 5 years

since the last alleged breach. Meanwhile, the footballing authorities are quicker to slap transfer embargoes on lesser clubs, surely similar could have been done a decade or more ago if Manchester City were under suspicion in 2009. Some breaches relate to rules requiring full details of manager remuneration, from the 2009-10 to 2012-13 seasons, when Roberto Mancini was in charge - and player remuneration between 2010-11 and 2015-16. With annual accounts, by law, being filed 9 months after financial year end, the first filing would have been around March 2011. Surely, that's when investigations should have started with resolution much sooner, stopping Manchester City from compounding their indiscretions (and that is being kind), not to mention the impact their actions have had on English and European competitions over the past 12 years. I seem to recall Peterborough being relegated 2 divisions in the 1960s and Swindon similar in the 1990s. At least it will give those hundreds of thousands of Manchester City supporters who supported them throughout the 1990s a chance to re-visit former haunts. Maybe the likes of Liverpool and Chelsea will be adding to their collection of Premier League titles much sooner than they thought. The footballing authorities have done nothing for many years, there doesn't seem to be much noise from the other Premier League clubs for any action. Maybe it is time for an independent regulator as once again, left to its own devices, football is doing nothing. Maybe it needs the Inland Revenue to launch an investigation.

Monday February 6. New Signings. Mark Ellis appears to be a bit of a legend in Torquay, hope he can do it in York. After they shenanigans over the weekend, I was hoping that the lack of news from Scunthorpe meant that we were still in the hunt for Danny Elliott. Hopes were dashed mid evening.

Tuesday February 7. Debutants. Mark Ellis will be City's 22nd oldest debutant since WW2. He will be 12 days older than Denis Smith was when he made his debut, nearly a month younger than Neil Thompson and 18 months younger than Steve McNulty. He was born exactly one week after Sean Newton was born. 6 of the top 22 are keepers, with Paul Musselwhite being City's oldest debutant. Pre WW2 records are incomplete. After all that, hope he plays tomorrow.

Alf Young, at 40 was City's oldest outfield debutant playing in the 1945/6 FA Cup which was considered to be a post war competition. The next season, Alf Roberts was 39 when he made his City debut. The next oldest outfield debutant was Paul Groves in 2004 aged 38 which also made him City's oldest 21st century outfield debutant.

Wednesday February 8. David Webb Out.

Saturday February 11. Question. What do City get the most from? Today's FA Trophy prize money or gate receipts. The prize money is £6,000 plus a guaranteed for each £2,000 for each of the next round losers. With a crowd of 2,780 paying a top price of £10 for admission, after VAT and match expenses I'd imagine each club will take away less than £5,000. So the answer is prize money. In the last round, Southend beat Darlington by 2-1 and Darlo complained about the length of time it took for them to receive their share, it was finally received just in time for the FA allow today's game to go ahead.

Saturday February 18. Wealdstone 3 City 1. Before I moved to London, I have vague recollections of Wealdstone were challenging Scarborough to be the top non league club in the late 70s when City was just above them both at the foot of Division 4. Before that, before my time, they were a leading amateur side, attracting 100,000 fans to their FA Amateur Cup Final in 1966. I have that programme somewhere up in the loft. When I moved to London, I was working near their Lower Mead ground in Wealdstone. They sold it to Tesco for £20,000,000 and just one passageway remains to remember the club's tenure. Plans for a

new ground fell through and they spent nearly 20 years leading a nomadic existence. 2 seasons at Watford's Vicarage Road ground (£1,500,000 annual rent) and then a series of ground shares before arriving at the current ground in 2008. The ground isn't fit to host Football League grounds and on a series of 5 year leases, there is little incentive to invest. Come June 2023 and their lease is up. Given the large footprint, it must be prime residential land. Despite an extremely dry spell in the area, both goals were heavily sanded and in a poor condition, they were cordoned off and displayed "Keep Out Of The Area" signs before kick off. Wish they'd left the sign in place when City were defending. Before the game there was a minute's silence for Brian Lee, the former Wycombe manager and chairman and National League Chairman Brian Lee has died a few days earlier. I'm sure records don't exist, but it might be the longest ever minute's silence. The players seemed to line up for a long time before the referee blew for the silence, which then seemed to last the full minute and some more. A personal best for me today, my shortest ever trip to an away game, about 3 miles. Pity City's display didn't warrant their personal best. On a wind swept afternoon, City playing into the wind in the first half were largely pinned in our own half. Wealdstone went to a one goal lead at half time. The goal looked too easy, the scorer had a free header in yards of space, so free, I thought he must be offside. With the swirling wind in our favour after the break, we failed to capitalise, we struggled to play any decent football. Wealdstone coped much better with the conditions than City. They were more organised and structured. As the skies darkened (and the hoped for sun never materialised), I was rueing my decision to leave my big coat at home in favour of a lighter fleece, fearing for City's survival. I wonder, were we defeated before kick off? Psychologically, what must the players have thought when they saw neither Lenell John-Lewis or Shaq Forde were in the match day squad, our top scorer and most skilful players. Interesting comments from Mitch Hancox that he believes City need an experienced manager and he said that Mickey Morton agrees with that statement. With Mitch serving a 2 match ban, FA regulations prevented him from fulfilling his expected role on City's bench. Writing this after the event, with Tony McMahon already recruited, how many young and relatively inexperienced coaches does it take to support Mikey Morton. We'll soon need a bigger bench. Final thought. With Southend's financial woes and Wycombe's ground issues, what's to say 2 potential play off clubs might not exist come next season?

Sunday February 19. More To Come.

1.1.9 POST 230301

Wednesday March 1. More To Come.

Wednesday March 1. In The Dock. Gateshead docked one point which drops them into the bottom 4. How will it affect them and City?

Monday March 6. Bromley 0 City 3. A day before the game, the local weather conditions for the game read "*Locally, the atmosphere remains heavy but the downward pressure will ease shortly with a couple of thunderbolts from the front spreading towards the opposition goal. Then, we should see the deep depression hanging over LNER gradually ease and be replaced with increasing sunny spells with some intermittent showers. However, the new ownership is liable to receive an icy blast, even hailstorms the size of tennis balls, from the south and east if they put a foot wrong*".

Tuesday March 7. Bromley 0 City 3. A surprise win away against play off hopefuls. City went one up before the hosts had a player sent off. The post match interview became a love in between manager Mikey Morton and guest summariser Dean Kiely. Morton revealed that his prized childhood possession was the shirt that Kiely wore in City's 1993 Wembley win, its tucked safely away in his loft.

Thursday March 16. Sam Sanders. After a few days of speculation of a month on loan at Boston to help him get match fit, Sam Sanders joins them on loan until the end of the season., plenty of time to get fit for his summer holidays.

Saturday March 18. Money. With money becoming tighter, a supporter loans City money with the express purpose of covering club running costs and not to buy out Glen Henderson.

Saturday March 18. City 2 Dorking 1 -Priorities. Out all day, got home mid evening and first thought was to watch the Ireland v England 6 Nations decider. How times have changed. A red card for England's Freddie Steward changed the course of the game, the contact deemed was bad enough to merit a red card. Many called it a disgraceful decision. Ireland's Hugo Keenan had bent down to pick up a loose ball and collided with Steward, the referee deemed it to be an elbow on head, to me, the fleshy inner arm just above the bony elbow joint. In today's' climate it was deemed a red card with no mitigation to downgrade it to a yellow card. Puny me, who has never played rugby since enforced school games' lessons can't know exactly what was going through Steward's mind in that moment as the ball spilled loose. Whatever, it just shows that rugby has its own VAR issues. Penalty awarded to Ireland and their forwards spent the remaining 5 minutes of the half heads lowered and used as battering rams as they tried to breach England's try line. Work out why they can do that to themselves but Freddie Steward gets a red card.

Saturday March 18. City 2 Dorking 1 – Marc White. An important win in a relegation dogfight with a reasonable display but far too many late palpitations. Call out from the game must be Marc White, Dorking's chairman, manager and chief dog's body who is responsible for 2 decades of progress (and countless promotions). He was sent off when challenging a controversial decision. Post match, he gave a great interview, he won over many City fans, it was insightful on the game and noted we were "really looked after us today, great people", well done to all at the club.

Saturday March 25. Non League Day. The biggest story is Ben Foster making his Wrexham debut. Elsewhere, BBC's Football Focus is based at Scarborough, the scene setting showed City as being the closest "recognised" (not sure if the BBC still classify City as Football League) club to Scarborough, closer than Hull and Middlesbrough, and the first guest, a long serving volunteer was eager to get in a couple of digs when recalling 2 of Scarborough's (42 / 51 check) wins over City.

Sunday March 26. York City Ladies. Peyton (daughter of you know who) Henderson makes her debut, on loan from Everton, in goal for City Ladies as they lose 4-1.

...

xxxxday May 13. Poch. News that Poch to Chelsea is on, but why the delay? It sounds like they've been wrangling over his backroom team. I wonder if a certain David Webb got the nod.

1.1.10 TO DO / TO ADD

TOOAB DONE TO (and including) 04/11/22

Saturday September 24. City 1 Notts County 3.

Re-branding. The new year has seen an advertising blitz by Hyundai and Skoda.

- both are re-branding themselves.
- Hy und day – was / now / Hy – un di
- Skoda / schoda

Could City do similar. Yo-yolk? How could City be known?

ADD:

- Removed from the Supporters Facebook page
- Ethan Henderson – YCFC / Marske
- Warnock - story
- Robson – story
- SOMETHING ABOUT MIKE BROWN / YCST commitment
- Harry Burland
- HIGH: Yeovil / Darlo
- Jo(h)nny Shep(h)erd
- Youth / Youth released
- Diary: NPL – PL too many Premiers

220812 Aug 12 2022 – MB “Over the years I have spoken to maybe a dozen prospective investors. The majority have not been credible and in some cases our due diligence has revealed historic criminal activity including a billion-dollar fraud”.

221022 AJ Broken jaw

221100 GC debut / FB

221100 Henderson banned from FB group

221230 30/12 Nathan Thomas

230100 Paula Stainton appointment

230107 Forde / RY / Shaq’s 10th game / goals - Shaq Forde’s 10th game

230121 <https://www.bridtownafc.com/2023/01/24/bridlington-town-v-cleethorpes-town-21st-january-2023-match-postponed/?fbclid=IwAR3N1FQ0J0dh5Ssnz1qhfHit1s6vmN7LZHwVAEZbY9IU3BaApK6axdUo31lc>

230500 End of Mike Brown’s special role as director what was it

The fall out continues, discuss.

- **John MacPhail woes**

- **Bumped into LJJ outside the ground. He reminded me that Grimsby went unbeaten in their first 12 games of last season, didn't win in the next 12 but still got promoted**
- **MONDAY post WOKING YORK City's new ownership will host its first fans forum since taking over on Monday night (7pm).**

Askey

- Despite Glen Henderson's earlier Radio York interview, it came as something of a shock to hear of John Askey's sacking. Cue much work for me in updating his and various other YCS web pages and stats.
- [GH statement](#)
- Next Day. Finger trouble on my phone meant I called Alastair Smith rather than texting an "are you alright text". I quickly hung up and sent my text. I was pleasantly surprised when Alastair called me 3hours later. He was fine and we had a good chat. From some of Mike Brown's social media and Alastair's comments, it seems very clear that John Askey's view of manager / board relationship was very different to what the board expected. Indeed, Alastair said that Glen Henderson had been accosted by an angry fan outside the ground earlier in the day and after Henderson bought him the fan a coffee and explained the situation, the fan was won over.