

**2008 Scarborough Athletic Board Election Hustings
Ambassador Hotel, Esplanade, Scarborough
Friday September 19 2008**

Candidates

Simon Cope (SC)
Dave Holland (DH)
Kevin Smith (KS)
Andrew Troughton (AT)

BC: Before we start I have something to mention. The board would like to thank Chris Rooke for his time on the board since October 2006, thank you for your long hard service.

Round of applause from those present. Thanks given by Chris Rooke.

BC: So, on to the election hustings. We have three openings on the board and four candidates: Andrew Troughton, Dave Holland, Simon Cope, and Kevin Smith.

At the time of notification of the AGM you will have received candidate statements and hopefully you will have taken great note of them as now is your time to ask them your questions.

Question: To all candidates, what do they feel they can bring to the board if elected?

AT: Basically what I have been doing for the last year or more; working very hard to make money for the club and help the club move on. We started 15 months ago with nothing, no players, not a manager, not even a ball. Now we are 15 months down the line, we have money in the bank, are top of the league, and have two teams. But, we have got to keep working and pushing, and moving onward.

DH: I have run a company for the last 17 years, organised in a similar way to the trust as in we are not operating for profit. I took the company over when it was making around £60,000, four years later we were making over £750,000. We did this by getting the community to work together. Success is not about the ten people up here it is about the 470 members. This board has to lead and I think I can help it to lead us onwards.

SC: I believe I shall continue to bring to the board what I have already been doing. I think personally I have developed a lot since the trust was set up and I think I can still get better and better at what I do. We as a club have managed to develop really good contacts which I think I can help to develop for the benefit of this football club and I want to be given a chance to still be on the board when we get promoted.

KS: I think it is safe to say at some point we will face financial challenges, and at least that is something I come across every day in my job. I will be a chartered accountant by the end of next year and I feel that so far I have worked towards the preparation of our accounts, which start with the budget. I help to protect the financial position of the club, which is the key to going forward. I feel I can really help the club move forward in these areas which are part of my expertise.

Question: We all know our main aim is to get back to Scarborough. How do you think you can help to speed up that process, what expertise can you bring?

SC: In term of securing a football stadium I think it is safe to say there are very few people who have experience in that. But, I think it is important that we identify what is required in getting that. I have developed good relationships with the leader and chief executive on the council and also various councillors and council staff and I think the key to getting what we need as a club comes from those relationships, until we have somewhere to play in Scarborough.

DH: I think it is down to our credibility. The strength of the business plan is not to be under estimated and the members of the board know how strongly I think about the business plan. It is all about other people having the trust and faith in us and I think the experience I will bring to the board will help to bring confidence.

AT: We are all really in the hands of the council and all we can do is put ourselves forward as a club which is winning, which I think we have done. Sponsorship is up 300%, and that doesn't even count the some match

sponsorship we have got coming in which hasn't been paid for yet. We are in talks with the Co-Op, and we are continuing to be successful. I think at the moment we have got to keep that up.

DH: I mentioned earlier about credibility, and it is also about the energy of the board. We have been on the back foot a bit when it comes to pushing forward and I think I can help the board to act more proactively.

Question: This is a question for Dave. You mentioned earlier about your successful business. I myself ran a club and a business. With your company being so successful would you have the time to do what you need on the board?

DH: I was asked exactly the same question last year. I do have a privileged position in that I can give myself time off if I need it. But it is not about the board up here doing everything for the people. Its about motivating them and taking the lead.

Question: Raising finances is very important. What experience do you have of raising finances that can help the club to move forward?

DH: I mentioned about the increase in turnover for our business. In that it is all about selling our product but we have also been successful in securing grants. We have got European funding, as well as from development agencies. We can access a huge range of available funds.

AT: I have never done anything with grants. Making money from merchandise and sponsorship is more my area. I have not only done it this year but I have also played football and cricket for 20 years in the town and I have spent a lot of time raising money for those clubs aswell.

KS: I have to be honest this is really not my speciality. My position is to tell people how much money we do need. I'm afraid I can't be any more help than that.

SC: When we move back to Scarborough there will be a lot of new aspects related to that move. There will be big change in running costs and so we as a board will have to plan what the increase in cost is going to be and how much income we will be going to generate from advertising. The other aspect is in terms of raising finance. We will need to do that now to be prepared in a community stadium, so if we were to return to the McCain as a long term or short term solution we as a club need to get that stadium up and running again which will be a big challenge for the club to decide how much money will be required and where it will come from. I have little or no experience of going to bodies for grants and I think we need to work together as a board to make those applications and make them successfully.

Question: How will you approach teething problems you may have in relation to the McCain Stadium?

SC: I hope we answer for everyone when I say we cannot really answer questions like that when we don't know what the long term plans are.

Question: Some of you are probably aware about the bee I have in my bonnet regarding fans involvement. How would you bring on board more fans?

SC: We have made mistakes and one of the biggest mistakes in my mind is that we have not actively set out to involve fans in decision making. I think there is still room for fans to be involved in certain discussions. When we are talking about discussions with regards to a Scarborough Athletic ground it is something I want to see opened to the whole membership board.

It is up to the fans to make a decision. As far as voluntary involvement I agree we need to find ways to find volunteers and get them involved more. Personally it is not my area of expertise. I do think we reached a stage where the fans expected the board to take care of everything and there is only so much we can do.

KS: I can only really share my personal experience. I felt I could give something to the board that wasn't already there and I feel that the board was open enough to accept my advances. I think the only thing the board can continue to do is to be open enough to accept those advances. In my case the board liked what they saw and I was co-opted. The board need to be seen to remain to be approachable and from my perspective everyone always has a right to get involved.

If people think they have got something they can give they need to come forward and put their hand up. If people are willing to help out then I think it is an equal responsibility for the board to find them and for people to put themselves forward.

AT: I think it is a perennial problem. There are always people willing to say we need to do this and we need to do that, but when it comes to actually doing this or that not everyone comes forward. It is a big problem but it is not just our problem, it is a problem at every club. People are willing to do it if they are getting paid. Without the help of other people we won't be able to go on and do bigger things.

DH: In my company I have a mantra and my team hate me for it. I say "don't tell me you can't do something because...", I want to hear "I can do something if...". I think we should be much more proactive than we have been. Where I am coming from is that the club should recognise that they need to hold out a hand then the support will come. The enthusiasm is there.

Question: I am sure everyone in this room has a dream about the future of the club. I would like to know what you dream is?

SC: The first response to that question most people would talk about is what level we are playing at. I will brush over those and say I think there enough support in this town to back the club, which I hope to be a sustainable club at conference national level. My aim is to have our own stadium, like Dartford, where the council built a £4million stadium for the club, which is a shining example of what a council can do if they work with a football club to provide facilities for the community.

My aim is that the football club is not just about the football, but that it is a positive influence on Scarborough and makes the town a better place. That's my dream, I want to see the club as a positive influence on the wider community.

KS: First of all I would love to see us win the league. I am so passionate about this club and I cannot understand why other people don't share my feelings.

The most upsetting point is walking down Scarborough town centre and seeing the shirts of premier league teams rather than our own, so I would like to see local pride restored. If I can walk down the centre of Scarborough and see more Scarborough replica shirts than any other team then I will be happy.

DH: My dream is a personal one. I'm 51, I started supporting Scarborough in 1964 and I have got nothing but happy memories even of the difficult times which I got over. When I thought the old club was dead I was at rock bottom, I just want to keep enjoying my football, so I won't talk about the level we need to be playing at As long as we get results I'm happy.

AT: I would love to see us at Wembley, and just for us to play the highest level possible with a team that's playing good football and we aren't in debt. As long as we've got money in the bank I'm fairly happy.

Question: The question really is, if you want to be elected would you still bring the skills to the board if you were co-opted.

AT: It's difficult. I would like to think I could go and watch the matches instead of missing half of it.

DH: I do have some experience at failing to get elected to the board of Scarborough Athletic. But it didn't stop me contributing behind the scenes and I will still go to matches and continue to help out and talk to the people who didn't vote for me and I promise not to hold a grudge against those who don't vote for me this year.

SC: I will still help out though I think my contribution wouldn't be as great as it would be if I was on board.

KS: I wouldn't actively seek to be co-opted afterwards. It's only right if the membership decide I'm right person to be here. But of course I will still help and feel I have something to give.

BC: If there aren't any more questions that marks the end of the election hustings.