

SUTTON MANOR MAGAZINE

No. 9

DECEMBER 1990



MANAGER'S COMMENTS

As you are all aware the Pit has been through a very difficult time on the production front. The cumulative October Results above show the picture, with the Pit having lost a total of 90,420 tonnes so far. It is this position that has put Sutton Manor back into the Reconvened Review Procedure. Since October, I'm glad to say, that things improved and L.24's Face is now starting to produce more coal and the week by week tonnage is starting to rise. You all know that to get out of the Reconvened Review Procedure, we have to produce 12,600 tonnes per week, so the upward trend in output must be maintained, until we consistently reach this figure.

Last year, from December onwards, the output rose dramatically, resulting in the record output in mid January, let us repeat that again and show the true potential of our Pit.

Development work has now started for L.27's Face, with the Return Junction being complete and the Intake about to be built. The Contract is also about to be placed for W.23's Developments, so that work can start on them early in the New Year, to ensure the Face is ready to replace L.27's. The development program has been stepped up and as many as six teams could be working at any one time. This is to ensure that faces are ready on time and that new areas of coal are assessed so that the Pit can go from strength to strength.

However, everything hinges on day by day results to get the required tonnage and this is what we all need to work hard to achieve.

It is usual for me to talk about increasing trends at the Pit, but I am glad to say that one trend is now falling. This is the accident rate. We did not have a good start to the year, but due to your care the number of accidents has reduced. That does not give us room to relax, as the only way to avoid accidents is by constant care and attention for ourselves and others. Keep Sutton Manor a safe Pit (accident rate falling) and an efficient Pit (output rising) and it will be a good place to work.

Finally, it only remains for me on behalf of myself and all the Staff at the Pit to wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

P. G. Redford

RESULTS UP TO OCTOBER

Saleable Output	230,280 tonnes
Net Proceeds	£10,860.00
Total Operating Costs	£14,134.00
Operating Cash Outflow	£3,274.00

BRIC-A-BRAC FROM THE BRANCHES

A Personal Word from Rod Frazer

Now that the dust has settled and the ballot over and done with, we find precisely nothing whatsoever has been resolved. All it has done has prolonged an already ludicrous stalemate.

On the one hand, British Coal insist that we accept the majority/minority principle, before wages and conditions are discussed. For our part, we insist that we are mandated by special delegate conferences, not to do so.

British Coal's argument is seriously flawed by the fact that present policy would seem to leave every Manager's door open for discussion, debate and negotiation. Why then insist on a single majority representation, if in fact, everyone is already allowed their say.

On our side, there are those who say that the Union should reconsider its position on the issue. There are frequent moans about militancy, Scargill and Union Closed Shops etc., almost ad nauseam. The answer to these people is that they should get to their Branch Meetings and argue their case. What ever policies then emerge would have come from a comprehensive and representative debate.

To return to the standoff. It is my experience that sooner or later one of the Parties, if not both, realise that a meaningful gesture of conciliation is needed. For procedural reasons I believe that British Coal are in a better position to do this, than are the N.U.M. I further believe that only good could come from such a move. After all, so many issues are at

present lying stagnant. For instance, the question of overtime. Overtime as a wage enhancer may seem fine, but when it becomes mandatory, both to ensure a decent wage and to keep one's Collieries open, then it tends to become oppressive. The ultimate result is a tired and jaded work force, more accidents and reduced efficiency. As this would ultimately lead to productivity stagnation it thus becomes self defeating.

Only if and when, British Coal and the N.U.M. get a joint act together and address this and a host of other issues, will the industry thrive. Thus, my plea to British Coal in this forthcoming time of peace and goodwill is "Let's meet, with no strings attached and make progress to a real and secure future".

On a seasonal note. By the time this goes to print the Branches will have held a Christmas Party, with presents for nearly 100 of the smaller children and given out almost 150 vouchers to the older ones.

Finally, may I wish each and every one of you and your loved ones a happy and Holy Christmas and prosperous New Year.



A New Year Message . . .

When asked to contribute to the December Issue of our Colliery Magazine, I found myself asking the questions "What can I say I say that has not been said already by other Union Secretaries at the Pit? Has anything changed over the year?"

Looking back over 1990, there has been some surprising

events - Eastern Europe embracing the West, the instability in the Gulf and the reopening of the "Stute" as a viable venture, but all these great events pale into insignificance with the political assassination of the P.M. by her own Party. I'm sure the first person to send her condolences would be A.S.

Changes are still occurring in our own industry, forced on us by an unsympathetic government and a cruel market place. Changes, which prompted the Chairman in his annual report to reflect, "certainly the toughest year I have known in my time as Chairman and it would be wrong to suggest, that despite the hard work and sacrifices of everyone in the industry, the process of restructuring is yet complete". Let's all hope that after the latest changes at Westminster, a more sympathetic government may be elected, to ensure that any further restructuring is to the benefit of the mining industry and its total work force.

Reflecting on the changes at Sutton Manor over the past twelve months, I would like to take the opportunity of welcoming our Manager, Mr. Redford, to his first Appointment as Colliery Manager. He has taken over at a difficult time, but is determined to procure a future for the Pit. Certainly, from a union point of view, he has continued an "open door" approach to the Pit Representatives.

The Colliery itself now seems to be coping effectively with the many changes occurring from the closure of Headquarters and many of the tasks which were done, such as planning, contracts, ventilation and asset management, are now an everyday function of Colliery Staff. It goes without saying therefore, that industrial relations are now more pit based and it is important that all our unions are allowed to play their part in this important aspect of the industry. It is the duty of management, together with the unions to ensure that

morale is kept at the highest level, creating an enjoyable work place where production and safe working practices compliment each other, bringing the benefits of high output and job security.

1990 has certainly been a year of change, of man's humanity to man, let's hope the rest of the decade and into the next millennium we will continue to see positive change.

On behalf of all C.O.S.A. Members of the Pit, I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Terry Murrey
C.O.S.A. Secretary



Just a few words to ensure that Rod doesn't completely take over the whole of the Magazine.

It's at this time of year that we usually think of others, particularly those less fortunate than ourselves. There are a few of our own workmates who will be spending Christmas laid up, through being injured whilst at work. Workdays lost through injury has increased so we must be ever vigilant to ensure we keep ourselves safe at work. We have held collections for these men, but this is a most unsatisfactory way of doing things and I will be proposing that a weekly deduction is made, so that all men are treated the same. At the moment it depends on who you are and how well you are known, also many men have their wages paid into the bank and do not carry cash (no Ken I'm not advocating cashless pay!) Of course, this would be unnecessary if the Sick Pay Scheme was improved.

A Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year to all.

Brian Spencer
Secretary St. Helens Craftmens Branch



MANOR VIDEO SERVICE

The Safety Department are now producing their own safety videos. Comments and constructive criticism is welcomed.

BLOOD DONORS

The local Blood Transfusion Service usually arrange donation sessions around Christmas. Go along and give blood, it could give someone a "gift of life" this Christmas.

SAFETY NEWS

Hydraulic equipment and hoses are becoming more common within British Coal's mines. They operate under tremendous pressure and any maintenance work which is carried out must be done with extreme caution, as this case study demonstrates.

Accident Causes

A chock fitter was removing a damaged bottom pin from the leg of a chock. In order to carry out his task in accordance with the relevant rules, pressure was applied through a coupling valve, to lower the support leg.

As the pressure was applied the coupling valve flew off and struck the man in the face, resulting in facial injuries, including the loss of sight in both eyes.

The action was attributed to an intensification of pressure (estimated to be 12,000 psi), which caused the valve to shear the threads on the lower holes.

Stay Safe Action

The use of isolating valves, as hose coupler on powered roof support hydraulic systems, has been prohibited.

Sutton Manor Flyers

A Team of Runners, made up of P. Langley, Ste Robinson, John Irwin and Jane Fairburn, have had a busy time over the past few weeks.

Running in the Liverpool Corporate Challenge Race, over three miles, they finished in 34th place from an entry of 200 teams.

In the Crewe Corporate Challenge Race, over four miles, the Team finished 20th out of an entry of 102 teams.

Jane, who had volunteered for the Races, unknown to herself, clocked up a time of 27 minutes, 11 seconds in the Liverpool Three Mile Race and 34 minutes, 14 seconds in the Crewe Four Mile Race and having been sponsored in the latter Race hopes, *when you all pay up*, to raise £400 for the Whiston C.A.T. Scanner Appeal.

In conclusion may I wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and remember lads, over the holidays if you're going for a pint - leave the car in the garage.

Also, if you live locally and have children make sure they don't play on the Colliery surface area during the holiday.

K. Storey

SISTER SAYS

Sponsored Run

Thank you for all the support that I received for the Run I

took part in on the 21st October. I have been promised approximately £400 for the C.A.T. Scanner Appeal at Whiston Hospital.

If you sponsored me and haven't yet paid up - please call in A.S.A.P.

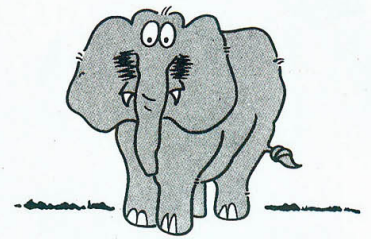
Thank you very much.

Well Man Health Screening

Your Colliery Occupational Health Department is offering the above service on a regular basis.

As you may already know, a lot of G.P.'s are moving towards preventative medicine now and the trend is to have regular checks and keep well, rather than waiting until you become ill, then seeking treatments.

A number of men have attended already and you can be assured the service is strictly confidential and purely voluntary - if you are interested in a 'Health M.O.T.' just call into the Occupational Health



DRINKWISE

Never forget there is a limit.

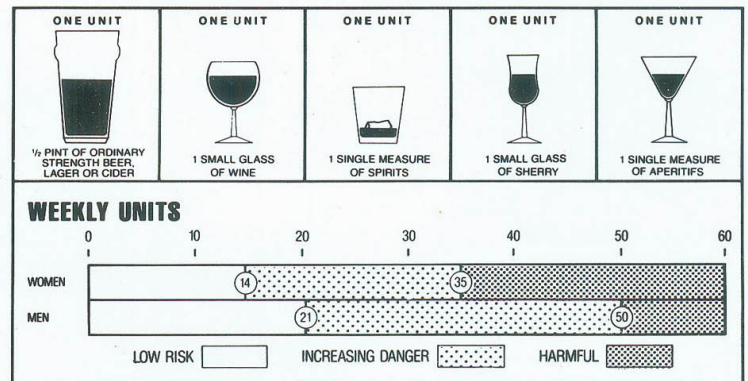
Department and book an appointment.

Drinkwise

Most of us enjoy a drink after work, with a meal, at parties or when we are with friends, but drinking too much, or at the wrong time, can damage your health and cause problems with work, family and friends.

You can protect yourself by keeping a count on how many units of alcohol your drinks contain. Spread over a week, women generally can drink up to 14 units and men up to 21 units, without harming their health.

Just remember over the festive season that hangovers are not just a nuisance, but your body asking for a bit more respect!



Ear Defender Covers

Available in the O.H. Department. The ear defender cover makes muffs more comfortable to wear and reduces potential irritations by soaking up perspiration and keeping the ears dry. They are more hygienic than covering your ears with dirty muffs - they

must however be changed on a regular basis to remain effective. Call for some now.

It just remains to say, have a safe, healthy and happy festive season and take care!

Sister J. Fairburn



PERSONNEL PATTERN

Having a day or two off of Voluntary Absence, besides threatening your job, deprives you and your family of money that could be put to good use - how much? See the table below:-

FACEWORKER				
Absent	Wages	Incent	Att. Bonus	Total Lost
1 Day	£36.65	£18.00	£8.35	£63.00
2 Days	£73.00	£36.00	£16.65	£125.95
3 Days	£109.95	£54.00	£25.00	£188.95
4 Days	£146.60	£72.00	£33.35	£251.95
5 Days	£183.25	£90.00	£33.35	£306.60
6 Days	£219.90	£108.00	£41.65	£369.55

HAULAGE				
Absent	Wages	Incent	Att. Bonus	Total Lost
1 Day	£32.62	£5.00	£8.35	£45.97
2 Days	£65.24	£10.00	£16.65	£91.89
3 Days	£97.86	£15.00	£25.00	£137.86
4 Days	£130.48	£20.00	£33.35	£183.83
5 Days	£163.10	£25.00	£33.35	£221.45
6 Days	£195.72	£30.00	£41.65	£267.37

APPOINTMENTS

As Trentham Training Centre is to close this year, Collieries will be undertaking their own training programmes. This has led to the appointment of a Colliery Training Manager, in addition to a Training Officer.

Mr. Brian Salkeld, who is currently our Training Officer, is to take up the new Post of Training Manager - a well deserved promotion - Congratulations Brian!

RETIREMENT

Mr. Alan Jones, Colliery Deputy, retires in the first week of the New Year on health grounds. I'm sure you all join me in wishing Alan well on his retirement.

TRANSFERRED

Jim Finney, the Colliery Accountant, has moved to a new post at the Bickershaw Complex. Jim wasn't with us very long, but nonetheless, Jim made many friends here at the Manor.

Good Luck, Jim!

