

# THE CORSICAN

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# WELL, HOW ABOUT THAT ONE?

By Andrew Tripp  
SEASON REVIEW 2016

After an inaugural season that was inconsistent, new manager Patrick Vieira, and a whole host of shiny new players, delivered us a season that was absolutely bats in the belfry. Our sophomore season was exhilarating. The team went from a freshman limping just above the imaginary relegation line at 17th overall (8th in the east), to finishing comfortably with a bye into the playoffs; scoring 62 goals, more than any other team in the league.

We started the season watching Paddy trying to solve the conundrum that is our hilariously sized pitch at Yankee Stadium, beginning with experiments in the “W” formation and eventually settling on a 4-3-3. Results improved as time went on and our captain, David Villa found the net 32 times. Messrs Pirlo and Lampard assisted and added to the tally, along with young guns Stiven Mendoza and the phenomenal Jack Harrison; who showed more than enough this year to make me believe he’ll be a legend for the team. Joining this offense party was a player of suspect political affiliation and noted Hearts of Oak favorite Tommy McNamara, who lit up our lives with some spectacular goals and fluid passing from both the left and center.

However, for all of our attacking verve old problems remained unsolved. Any sort of foray into our penalty area was enough to send your author into a cold sweat. Whichever center back pairing of the week ultimately failed to put up convincing arguments for their starting positions. Josh Saunders’ shaky form throughout the season eventually lead to Eirik Johansen

being introduced for the final game of the season and both legs of the playoffs to good effect. The midseason acquisition of Maxime Chantot, despite being curtailed due to injury, helped improve the back four when available. RJ Allen continues to be a home-grown favorite and the form of Ronald Matarrita at left back was a huge positive; he will be excellent for us in the future.

Ultimately, the effect of all of this was goals. We shipped as many as we scored, we had very high highs as well as incredibly low lows. The dismantling of the so called best-defense-in-the-league Colorado Rapids without David Villa in the side, was balanced out by the Red (Bull) Wedding (0-7). After beating that same NJ side for the first time in our history in impressive fashion, there was yet another US Open Cup loss to the Cosmos. Our incredibly impressive 1-0 holdout against the Galaxy was followed by the royal hiding that Giovinco and his Canadian company gave out in our first ever playoff games (0-7 on aggregate).

The bottom line on 2016 is that the team grew in leaps and bounds in what seems like the blink of an eye. Despite not advancing further in the playoffs, Patrick Vieira and his players are due an immense amount of credit for the change not just in style and results, but in attitude. Now, as we look forward there will certainly be changes. The departure of Frank Lampard leaves open a Designated Player slot, and the retirement of two classy servants of the midfield Andoni Iraola, and Mehdi Ballouchy offer big opportunities. To borrow a phrase from the supporters of our parent club that I think we can all agree on, “the future is bright, and the future is blue!”

Games	Wins	Loss	Ties	Goals	Against	Difference	Points
34	15	10	9	62	57	+5	54

# ARTS OF OAK

TITLE: THAT'S THE WAY WE SPELL NEW YORK, 2016

MEDIUM: A KNIFE, A FORK, A BOTTLE AND A CORK

ARTIST: DANIEL LYNCH & LESTER BULLOCK



# WHAT'S IN A FLAG?

By Dan Lynch



By now, I'm sure many of you will be familiar with the sight of our tricolor waving furiously over Section 238 on matchdays. But how did such a staple come to be? Where did it come from? Perhaps you've found yourself puzzling over this from time to time. Maybe you've never given it a second thought, but are nonetheless interested in hearing about it now. In either case, I hope to achieve your utmost satisfaction in answering such a query. In fact, this article will be followed by a brief, anonymous and voluntary questionnaire, through which you will have the opportunity to grade the scope of my expertise and effectiveness in communicating it.

When Hearts of Oak was first conceived (on my living room sofa, if you must know), we consciously embarked on an effort to stand out from the crowd in spite our small numbers. Part of that meant flaunting the orange, white and navy of New York City's tricolor (used only as secondary and tertiary colors by the team itself) in those early days when others had openly embraced the sky blue of City Football Group.

Personally, I've never had a problem with sky blue (much less its association with Manchester City), and in the days to come you can expect to see more of it used in our designs. It is, after all, a beautiful [expletive] color, and after last season, I hope you share in the sentiment that it finally feels like it's ours, not just the hand-me-down of an older sister. From the outset, though, we were never here to blend in.

In plucking our name from a source with little or no existing imagery to accompany it (save for that of the modern-day 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery), we expanded our mining of New York City lore when seeking inspiration for our badge. I've always held a leisurely interest in heraldry, which is part of the reason I feel such a strong draw to the graphic design of football clubs the world over. I knew a shield was in the works, but what would it depict? We explored quite a few possibilities; some just short of the mark, others traveling straight from the drafting board to the recycling bin. Ultimately, the solution (like all great inspirations) came out of the blue:



I had been reading up on Henry Hudson, and found myself wondering which flags would have been flying from his ship upon first sailing up the river that would take his name. With little effort, I discovered it was that of his employer, the

Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie. Immediately, my eye was drawn to the monogram at the center of their tricolor, and I felt that this was the answer: A monogram of our own, in similar style, with the kind of symmetry I could perfectly picture before even putting pencil to paper.

Its earliest iteration was thought to look like two Greek phis by a confidant I showed it to. Because of that, the negative space at the edges of each letter was then added (or should I say, deducted), serving to clearly define where one overlaps the other, and tricking the eye into seeing three dimensions where there are really only two.

The monogram then found its way onto the navy plane of a shield, along with a single star symbolizing both Polaris and the City itself (with one point for each Borough). An obscure (and intentionally unused) alternative version of the badge does exist, one that includes both Mantling and a Banner; but the Mantling erroneously took on the task of Supports, and it was silly to have it there without a Helm to accompany it in the first place, and having a Banner without any of that other stuff looks kind of dumb, so...forgive me, I digress. Basically, less is more. That isn't to say I won't revisit the possibility of further embellishments, but I'm not saying I will, either.

The flag, though! This was supposed to be about the flag!

When the time came to create our own flag(s), I returned to my original source material: Henry Hudson's flag of the Dutch East India

Company, which is really nothing more than The Prince's Flag (or Prinsenvlag) of the Dutch Republic with their trademark slapped on it. Brandeis blue was replaced with navy blue, and the V.O.C. was substituted with our very own H.o.O. Just to be clear, our flag is in no way, shape, or form meant to commemorate the V.O.C. or Dutch royalty. Rather, it is something inspired by Henry Hudson's voyage of 1609 and his indelible mark on New York history. In the process, it has become something entirely our own.

And that, dear Hearts, is all she wrote!

One more thing before I go. Dutch revelers have an expression they love to recite on April 27th of each year, when they dress up like fleggers and place an orange pennant above the Vermillion Red bar of the Netherlands' flag, in honor of the rebel Prince William of Orange and his bloodline: "Oranje boven," which translates to, "Orange on top!"

This same mantra may come in handy if ever you're confused about which way is "up" on our own tricolor. Hope that helps!

Well, then. This was fun! I was kidding about that survey, but I hope you enjoyed reading this anyway. Maybe we'll do it again sometime. We can talk about the "New Amsterdam" flag, the handshake logo, the moonman icon, the bover-rock roots of the phrase HEARTS RULE OK... whatever suits your fancy!

Until then, Cheers!

# A LETTER FROM OUR FEARLESS LEADER, PRESIDENT JOHNNY FLANAGAN.

We have a football club.

We have a charity team.

We have a fundraising team of walkers, runners and hikers.

We have an art team.

We have history.

We have 238.

We have friends and family.

We have work to do.

2016 had it's bumps and bruises, but you're the best motherfuckers on the planet, and I can't wait to get even more awesome in 2017.



# MEMBER 130: MY FIRST YEAR IN HEARTS OF OAK

by *John White*

Around this time last year, I was in a conversation with *The Lone Wolf™* on where to watch City games. We had both been early members of the Third Rail, and he was the only one I still spoke to. I found it hard to make friends at the Third Rail. There were many problems; it was so large, and the drama was too much, and more which I won't go into (FINANSHULS?) In the end, what really pushed me away was the infighting. It seemed that no one trusted each other enough at any level to give anyone the benefit of the doubt, and seemed like everyone was searching for their voice, but were too afraid to give anyone else the space to find theirs. Factions broke out, and no one had the heart to bring everyone together. Chaos ensued, which, while hilarious, became too much for me. I wanted to find a group where people trusted each other enough to make mistakes, where people believed in the future enough to allow for small disagreements to not cause the end of a supporters group.

I left Third Rail and wandered into the desert looking for a home. I had heard of Hearts of Oak and the blood sample that was required for entry. I know for a fact that Tommy Mac had an easier time getting into the IRA (unconfirmed) than many early members did when entering HoO. I was skeptical, yet the season was approaching and I was afraid that I would have no one to yell stupid things with. Heaven forbid. *The Lone Wolf™* had ditched his title and attached himself to Hearts. I went along, and brought my stool sample. After it was agonized over, Erwin (Director of Social Media) and Johnny (El Presidente) let me know that I was in; Johnny actually pulled me aside after first meeting him to tell me that I was short on fiber, and seriously needed some Weetabix. God Love our fearless leader.

At the first game I was super nervous. I went to Yankee Stadium alone, and walked into 238. I saw some faces that I recognized from Third Rail who also made the jump, but I only knew *The Lone Wolf™* well enough to talk to. So, I went up to the one man I had recognized from Hearts of Oak and shook his hand. Andre was the first person to welcome me; there he was with his kilt, and his jester's hat. He immediately drew me in and let me know I was welcome to our humble group of tomfoolerists. I then turned to find that I was now surrounded by friends.



The game went well, City drew 4-4 with Toronto in a nail biter that saw 4 penalties given and a stoppage time equalizer by Patrick Mullins; who is, at this very moment, hunting racoons at JFK stadium. Not the result I wanted, but a result nonetheless. At the bar later, I introduced myself to Johnny who once again welcomed me to the group, and as the season progressed I made more friends, and became more active in the social aspect of Hearts. I joined the football team and played in some tournaments, where contrary to what you heard, HoO FC beat Brown Bag FC 12 - 1. People who weren't even playing came to watch us, and Dan Lynch's son brought pyro. Elaine made a tifo and as a family did a display that would put Italian Ultras to shame. We didn't win any of the tournaments we played in, but I had tons of fun.

There have been hard times with the group. Any group will have strong personalities that don't mesh, and Facebook only amplifies that. I have allowed myself to get angry with my fellow members and have lashed out online. I thought that the computer screen put a distance between me and the other person that frankly did not exist in the stands. The same people that I would be cursing on Facebook would be high fiving me on game day; I needed to remember that. I needed to be the person I was at the stadium on the Facebook group. I have not always been

successful, and for that my friends, I am sorry. We are all in the together and I must remember that in the coming year.

The good times did not end with that first match. I attended my first tifo painting, and made lasting friendships there. I have not met Fred's famous bird, but I hope to soon. At Red Bull away I got in a dance off with some members who I had never spoken to before, online or in person and had a blast. It was stupid hot, and yet still the love of the group and our club kept me singing in the rafters.

I believe we need each other. Whether we know it or not, we have made ourselves into a family. It seems very similar to the Irish family I grew up in; with all the drinking, cursing and fighting, but still there is so much love there. I think next year we will grow on what we have done in 2016 and move forward.



# I HAD THE CHANCE THIS SEASON TO INTERVIEW THE ONE, THE ONLY, ROBERT BROWN.

**WE SAT DOWN IN THE PRIVATE HOO-CAVE WITH SOME HOT TODDIES AND CIGARS AND SPOKE ABOUT HOO.**

**- John White-**

## **1. WHY DID YOU JOIN HEARTS OF OAK?**

I joined HoO after learning about it from Tim Gallagher. I jumped on the chance to be a part of a grassroots SG, not something that felt forced by the Front Office.

## **2. WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE FIRST YEAR?**

I've had season tickets to other professional sports teams, but never had I experienced anything like the supporters section for a professional team. It is hands down the best atmosphere in sports

## **3. WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE EXPERIENCE THIS YEAR?**

My favorite experience this season would have to be when we beat NJRB in July.

## **4. WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE PLAYER ON CITY?**

My favorite player is Jack Harrison. My reason being I decided to support City to be a part of something from the beginning and I feel like Jack is a City legend in the making.

## **5. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CITY/HOO MOMENT?**

I'll always cherish our sing alongs at YBAG before and after matches

## **6. WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT SEASON?**

Beating NJRB, hoisting the MLS Cup, and Johan delivering that keg of cider.

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