

## HELPING MEN LIVE WELL

“I couldn’t think of going to a football game when the incontinence was at its worst. Now I can get **Back in the Game**”



**Mark Farrington, 56,** is a repairs planner, from Horwich in Greater Manchester.

He lives with his wife Kim and has two adult children. He’s been a Manchester United fan since he was child, and also goes to watch his local team, Bolton Wanderers, who are walking distance from his home.

### Clubs:

Manchester United F.C. and Bolton Wanderers F.C.

### Manchester football fan calls for stadiums to support men with incontinence after prostate cancer treatment.

“I like being able to walk down the road to watch my local team again. I couldn’t think of going to a football game when the incontinence was at its worst. It was just too stressful. It’s been a tough few years, but things are looking up now.

“Kim and I have just celebrated our first anniversary. We’ve been together for 28 years, but after the cancer and a few really tough years, with quite a bit of bad luck, we decided to get married and concentrate on us, bring a little extra happiness into our lives.

“I had an accident cycling a few years ago, and broke my shoulder, I was 54 at the time. I was seeing my doctor regularly during my recovery and he mentioned while I was there that I should get a PSA blood test.

“The test result showed my PSA level was high– so my doctor sent me for a biopsy which revealed I had prostate cancer, so I had surgery to remove my prostate.

“I was really pleased with how well I felt after my surgery. It’s the next stage that’s difficult. You have a catheter for a week, and then when that’s out, you’re in unknown territory.

“The incontinence side of things, you’re just not used to it. It’s a traumatic, major operation, and then you have to deal with incontinence after, and you’re just not prepared for it.

“In the beginning I didn’t want to go far at all because the incontinence was bad, and I would have to change pads quite often and that would be too stressful. Then even when you do get a little more confident to go that bit further, you worry constantly – will I leak, will I be able to find anywhere to change my pad? Going to a football game was out of the question.

“I wouldn’t even go to the pub with friends for a long time, let alone a game where you might be queuing for the loo at a football stadium. When you’re incontinent anything can set things off, so standing, sitting or even walking for a long time might mean you need to change your pad more often. You just can’t hold it in like you used to before the prostate cancer treatment.

“Eventually I did start getting out and about a bit more. I like craft beer, and in these types of places there’s only ever one loo and I would go in and see bins for period products and I would think – why not my pads? I used to have to take out doggy bags and pack them up and put them in my bag or take them to a different bin. I used to feel so self-conscious.

### “Having bins for me to have disposed of my incontinence pads would have made such a difference to me.

Especially if you knew where you were going would have a bin. You’d know you have somewhere to put it – I would 100% have gone to some games if things had been different.

“Things are much better for me now. It’s been nearly two years, and I wear a pad now and again as a back-up, especially if I am having a few drinks. I won’t ever be 100% dry, and I accept that, and get that I’ll have to wear a pad every now and again forever.

“At the end of the day, I’m here, and I’m grateful and you just get on with it. And now – if there are bins at Manchester United, I can get Back In the Game, and that’s absolutely brilliant news.”

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