

greatest goals in stones history

BY TIM PARKS



▲ Dropping shoulders and chipping in from the fringes of the green... Glenn Little salutes his champion goal at Champion Hill. Pictures by Stuart Tree

The Little bit of magic that set us all thinking

Glenn Little's extraordinary goal at Dulwich had us all reaching for the superlative dictionary. 'Sublime' 'exquisite' and 'delicious' were just a few of the words bandied about to describe the strike that quickly became a YouTube favourite.

How had the 38-year-old midfielder managed to bamboozle, out-sprint and outfox four defenders barely half his age?

And was it the best goal we'd

ever seen in a Wealdstone shirt?

Ah, now you're asking!

Of course, it all depends on how long you've been watching this grand old club of ours. The benchmark for the grey-haired brigade of the 1960s and 70s seems to be the legendary Hughie Lindsay goal that sunk Stevenage in '65. And context is everything - that goal at Lower Mead was the matchwinner as the Stones came from 5-3 down

against the brutal Southern League side in a pulsating FA Cup tie.. Lindsay's awesome strike coming in the very last minute to record a 6-5 victory. No wonder many of the 2,500 crowd rushed onto the pitch to acclaim Hughie and the rest of the Wealdstone heroes.

Now, we're all going to have our own ideas and no doubt the Forum and Twitter will be buzzing with your own favourites in

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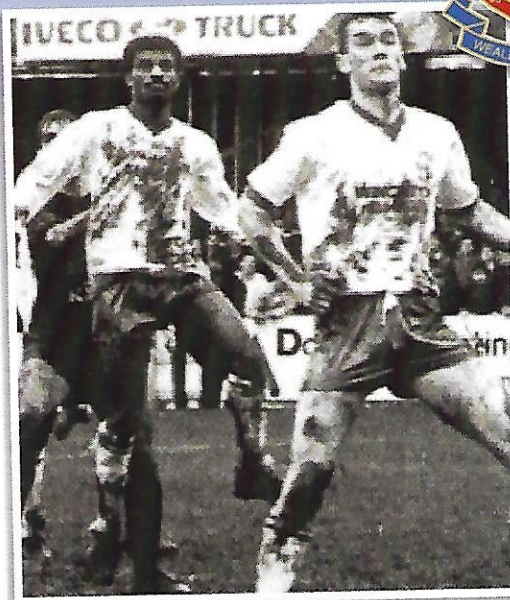
greatest goals continued



response to this article before too long. But here, for what it's worth, is my own personal Top 20 Wealdstone Goals Of All Time. Today we'll have numbers 11-20, with my top 10 goals in the Hampton programme on December 28. That will be one programme not to miss...

20: Samson Olal-eye v Stafford Rangers at Lower Mead, Conference, March 1988 (won 4-2) NEVER-SAY-DIE

Samson was a bit of a folk hero in the desperate days of our last Conference season - and he had his reward on this dark and stormy night at a mud-spattered Lower Mead. We trailed Stafford 2-0 at half-time and it looked like the same old sad story for a side that had only won once in 12 games. The conditions were awful and we huddled in the Elmslie End, waiting for the axe to fall. But amazingly, the game transformed with the introduction of sub Samson. The lithe but unco-ordinated striker seemed ideally suited to skating over the cloying surface and Stafford were suddenly taken apart in the space of 20 marvellous minutes. Olal-eye grabbed an unlikely hat-trick and his third, to put us 3-2 ahead, was the pick, running free onto Tommy English's through ball and leaving four defenders in his wake as he rounded the keeper and shot jubilantly into the rain-soaked net. English added a fourth for the last memorable moment of our Conference career.



▲ Neil Cordice (left) obviously forgave the home fans at Yeovil for he followed manager Brian Hall to the Somerset club in the late 80s. He is pictured (left) with another former Stone Steve Rutter in Yeovil colours, winning their Player of the Season award in 1990 and scoring the last goal at the old Huish Stadium.

19: Eddie Presland v Wimbledon at Plough Lane, FA Trophy 1st round proper, January 1974 (won 1-0) EDDIE

Presland, our ex West Ham full-back, was a wonderful old-school striker of the ball and he broke the deadlock for the underdogs with a sweet 30-yarder that beat the famous Dons keeper Dickie Guy all the way to his top corner.

18: Neil Cordice at Yeovil, Conference, March 1983 (won 5-1)

A GOAL memorable for its Mandela-style victory against racism, coming in the Somerset hotbed of ignorance, Yeovil's old Huish stadium. Home fans in the 1500 crowd had begun their monkey chants as soon as our Cordice brothers got on the ball, so it was wonderfully fitting that the decisive third goal - following two expert finishes from Mark Graves - was a masterclass by the

pair. Alan Cordice scooted past four defenders in a mesmerising run to the byline, and when he cut the ball back the green and white scarved contingent had their baboon calls stilled by one swipe of brother Neil's boot. Justice!

17: Cliff Jones v Banbury United, Southern League Cup, August 1971 (won 3-1)

THIS was an historic moment: our first game in the (semi) professional ranks and there was palpable nervousness as we failed to make inroads against an ordinary Banbury side. But then a cross was only half-cleared to our big-name signing - former Spurs double-winning winger Cliff Jones - and the ex-Welsh international stretched to volley a magnificent shot into the Elmslie End net from the edge of the box.

16: Gary Churchouse v Nuneaton Borough at Lower Mead, Southern

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▲ Andy Graham's wonder strike at Wembley is acclaimed by skipper Paul Bowgett (far right) as Boston United keeper Kevin Blackwell grasps at thin air...

League Championship Shield second leg, May 1982 (won on penalties)

WHAT an end to the season, and what a goal to end it on! The Stones won everything the Southern League had to offer on their romp back to the Conference - the Div One South title, the Southern League Cup, and the Merit Cup for scoring the most goals. All that was missing was the Championship Shield, played out between the winners of Div One North and South. Nuneaton were formidable opponents and took a 1-0 lead into this second leg tie, and although Richard Dixey bullet-headed into his own net (a contender for the best **own** goal of all time) to take the game into extra time, Nuneaton were next to score. They now led 2-1 on aggregate. Only a few minutes of the extra period were left when Alan Cordice accelerated away down the right, attacking the Cinema End. His cross was half blocked and deflected up into the air, seemingly impossible to reach for our wrong-footed strikers... but Gary

Churchouse thought differently. The blond No.10, drafted in for the last few games as regulars Ray Knowles and Neil Cordice were simply exhausted, threw himself at the ball on the edge of the box and scissor-kicked it past keeper Allan Dulleston into the net.

The crowd roared its relief. Ten minutes later the referee blew his whistle and it went to penalties.. which, amazingly, we won with Alan Cordice lashing in the decisive kick. Remarkable times.

15: Andy Graham at Wembley in the FA Trophy final v Boston United, May 1984 (won 2-1) REMEMBER this goal? Everyone remembers this goal!

Just 84 seconds of the final had elapsed and we were in delirium. Alan Cordice won a first-minute corner, Brian Greenaway topped his cross but Graham read it brilliantly to collect the ball with his

back to goal, 22 yards out on the point of the box. He flipped the ball in the air and lazily spun and hooked his shot beyond an astonished Kevin Blackwell and into the far top corner. Absolutely stonking!

14: Brian Jones at Cheshunt, Ryman Lge Div Two, February 1998 (won 2-0) OKAY, this was only the lower echelons of the Ryman League but nevertheless a team goal of pure quality. The Stones were on their way to third place and promotion, and a huge part of that was due to the three men involved in the dismantling of Cheshunt's defence - our wily old ex-Blackburn legend Simon

Garner (very much the Scott McGleish of his time), Dennis Greene (whose goals for Harlow had always sunk us in the past) and Brian Jones (tricky ball-player extraordinaire). Anyway, the

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▲ Brian Jones in celebratory mood

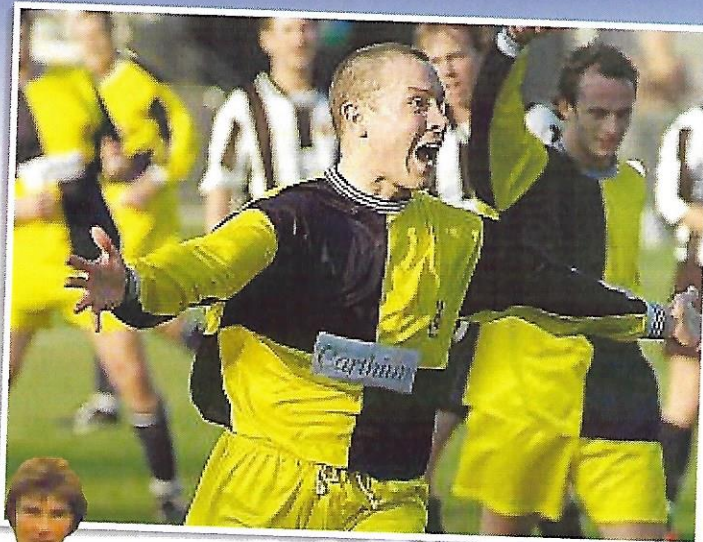
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goal: a great first touch and turn by Garner exposed the home defence in a break-away; Greene moved fluidly onto the ball and lobbed across to the far side of the box where Jonah volleyed irresistibly past the shell-shocked keeper from 20 yards. The ball barely touched the ground in the whole move!

13: George Duck at Chelmsford, Southern League Prem, January 1975 (Drew 3-3)

GEORGE (right) didn't get many goals from outside the box - mostly they were rebounds off the keeper or anticipated near-post crosses. His sense of balance was brilliant and there was no finer volleyer of the ball in non-League.. and of course the placement of his headers (unerringly into the top corner) was legendary. But this goal was sensational as we fought back from 3-1 down to take a point from the club's first League visit to Chelmsford. A deep free kick was nodded across the box by Bobby Moss and Duck controlled the ball on his instep, 20 yards out, before looping a terrific volley over the head of motionless keeper Willie Carrick into the far corner. Absolute perfection!



▲ Robin 'Three Touch' Tucker celebrates his unlikely goal at Dover!

12: Robin Tucker at Dover, Isthmian League Premier Division, December 2005 (won 4-2)

WHAT a great moment for skipper Tucks! The self-deprecating defender actually scored a few important goals for us (not least on the final day at Salisbury City which kept us up on goal difference) but this was in a different class altogether. We were already 3-1 up against a team destined for relegation when Tucks won the ball with a fierce challenge just inside the Dover half, flicked it past one player and then, before the ball hit the ground, lifted it over another challenge. The jubilant away fans were already celebrating our skipper's unexpected

ball juggling when, with his next touch, he volleyed a terrific shot over the bemused goalkeeper into the roof of the net. Dover, just relegated from the Conference, were a real scalp and how we loved it!

11: Jermaine Beckford v Slough Town at Chestnut Avenue, Southern League Prem, October 2005 (drew 2-2) THIS was the season Jermaine begged the football world to sit up and notice his goalscoring exploits. Since then he has dazzled millions on TV with awesome match-winning strikes for Leeds against Manchester United, and for Everton against Chelsea, but believe me this strike at Northwood's ground would have beaten any keeper. The ball simply sat up, waiting to be hit and from 35 yards Beckford did it beautifully.

▲ What a strike force this would have made: George Duck (top) and Jermaine Beckford, heroes 30 years apart

IN NEXT PROGRAMME: THE TOP 10 ALL-TIME GOALS!

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PART TWO

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▲ Ryan Ashe's finest hour against Rotherham in the FA Cup.. the pictures show Ashe twisting in and out before curling his clever shot beyond the Millers' keeper to the far corner

Here they are.. Wealdstone's top 10 goals of all time

(In my own humble opinion...)

IN the last programme we ran through goals 11-20, including some absolute crackers. But now for the best of the best...

10: Johnny Henderson v Hastings United, FA Trophy second round proper at Lower Mead (won 5-2) THIS extraordinary game has passed into folklore thanks to George Duck's hat trick

of penalties (the last of which prompted the Hastings player-manager to walk his whole team off the field). But who remembers Johnny H's goal? The mercurial winger seemed lost when a low cross was delivered behind him - but Henderson simply swivelled in mid-air and backheeled the ball, on the volley, past the open-mouthed keeper. The Elmslie End

erupted!

9: Ryan Ashe's second goal v Rotherham at the Vale, FA Cup 1st Round Proper, November 2009 (lost 2-3) THE battling Stones were never ahead in the titanic tie here four years ago, but Ashe did his best to salvage a replay with two marvellous goals attacking the tea bar end. If only

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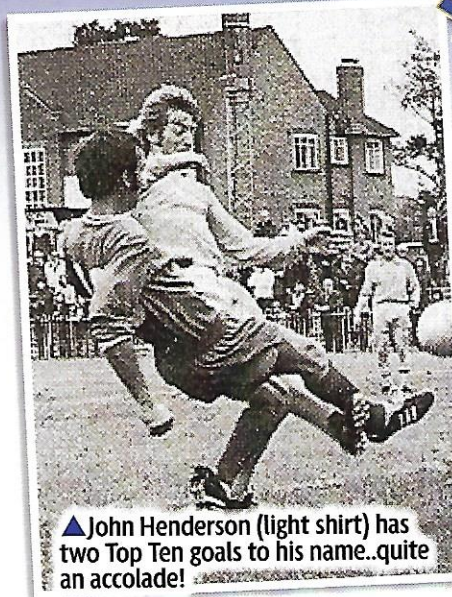
greatest goals continued



the Bulla Stand had been in place for the frantic finale! Ashe smashed his first goal past the Millers' keeper from an angle when we were 2-0 behind and, although Rotherham soon made it 3-1, the little midfielder ran about like a man possessed and fully deserved another, picking the ball up near the Collins stand, twisting outside then doubling back and curling a delicious shot into the far corner from a ridiculous angle.

8: John Henderson at Kettering, Southern League Prem, September 1974

(won 3-2) WINGER Johnny H was hugely popular among the Stones following but we really didn't know if his trickery and pace would work against Premier Division defenders - especially not at places like Kettering, who had won the League only 18 months before. Newly-promoted Stones were finding their feet but they cut the Ks to pieces this glorious afternoon, with Henderson putting us ahead following a break from his own half. It was a real push-and-run goal, sprinting past three defenders, nutmegging a third and then beating keeper Gordon Livesey as he rushed out. Can still remember the joy and bedlam behind the goal!



▲ John Henderson (light shirt) has two Top Ten goals to his name...quite an accolade!

7: Andy Graham at Lower Mead v Welling United in the FA Trophy last 16, March 1985 (won 3-1)

THE legend of Andy Graham began this spring afternoon, two months before the Trophy Final. Mark Graves was injured and the tall Lancastrian drafted in for this vital Trophy tie with the high-flying Southern Leaguers - and he marked his arrival with a jaw-dropping goal. Roy Davies'

high pass found Graham on the angle of the box and the big man calmly took the ball on his chest, swivelled and volleyed the ball irresistibly across goalkeeper Jessop to the far corner of the Elmle End net. Unbelievable stuff!

6: Andy Graham v Kettering Town, Gola League at Rockingham Road, April 1985 (won 1-0)

AS with Graham's goal at Wembley, this was all about context AND magnificence. There we were at the penultimate league game of the season, knowing that three points would clinch the title - and take the heat out of a last-

game grudge derby at Underhill against Barnet.

Yet it looked as if our plans were in tatters as the solid Kettering side soaked up our intermittent pressure. Then came a high, deep, diagonal pass to the far side of the box. Graham, the master of the left-foot volley, caught the ball perfectly from 23 yards and it arrowed across the keeper and into the far rigging. The crowd exploded with joy and relief, and 20 minutes later we were lifting the Conference Championship trophy.

5: Scott Fitzgerald v Potters Bar at Grosvenor Vale, FA Trophy 1st Qual Rd, October 2012 (drew 2-2)

IT looked like a calamitous week for the Stones - starting with an FA Cup replay defeat by Met Police - would end in the ignominy of a Trophy giantkilling to local minnows Potters Bar.



▲ Scott Fitzgerald is mobbed after his 50-yard game-saver v Potters Bar

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▲...AND CHRIS O SENDS US INTO RAPTURES Our No.8 climbs to James Hammond's deep cross, and look at the rapt faces as he collides



with the defender... meanwhile his bullet header beats keeper Louis Wells to find the far top corner. Richard Jolly is about to start the celebrations!

▲ Chris O'Leary's magnificent header at Dartford is No.3 in the hit parade...

The Ryman Div One side scored a last-minute goal to lead 2-1 at the Vale, and the thin crowd was heading for the exits as we restarted, now into injury time. Scotty Fitzgerald went for broke and decided to go for goal from the kick-off, and his astonishing 50-yarder flow over the head of startled keeper Shane MacWeeney and just under the crossbar. Breathtaking in its audacity and execution - and a bit of a lifesaver that season. We stuttered badly in the league, finishing midway, but went on

to have a spectacular run in the trophy after winning the replay 3-1... Beating Brackley away with Deano's late goal and only falling to Newport County after a replay.

4: Hughie Lindsay v Stevenage at Lower Mead, FA Cup 3rd Qualifying Round, October 1965 (won 6-5)

THIS is the goal that every fan in their late 50s will be voting for.. at least, everyone who was present at this awesome FA Cup tie 48 years ago. To set the scene: Stevenage, having kicked the Stones off the park and had

star midfielder Johnny Brooks sent off, nevertheless led 5-3 with 10 minutes remaining. Then we were awarded a penalty which Lindsay converted... quickly followed by a remarkable equaliser as Lindsay hooked home a half-chance following a corner. The ground was in bedlam, with sections of the 2,500 crowd on the pitch, thinking the game was over at 5-5 - but that was merely the aperitif.

Stones won a direct freekick 35 yards out and Lindsay, buzzing with adrenalin, started his

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greatest goals continued



▲ No picture of Neil Cordice's stunning strike v Yeovil.. but the Harrow Observer catches Nigel Johnson's goal in the same game (above) , and describes Neil's moment of fame (right)

run-up on the halfway line and concluded with an absolute rip-snorter of a shot that beat the keeper all the way to the roof of the net. Wish I was there!

3: Glenn Little at Dulwich, Ryman Prem, November 2013 (won 4-1)

YES, I've put Glenn's wonder goal in at No.3 which is pretty bloody good considering it's taking on the weight of 50-odd years of Wealdstone history. Needs no more description here. Like Andy Graham's goal at Wembley, Robin Tucker's at Dover and O'Leary's at Dartford we can wonder at the glory of it on YouTube!

2: Chris O'Leary at Dartford, FA Trophy 3rd round, February 2012 (drew 2-2)

WAS this the best headed goal in football history, never mind Wealdstone's? We've all seen bullet headers from the edge of the box but this sensational effort from Mr Braveheart himself saved our FA Trophy bacon and left us in with a shout of the memorable quarter-final at Cambridge. This game, delayed by snow, was played on a Tuesday night at the new Princes Park stadium of the Connie South high-fliers - but a couple of

defensive howlers seemed to have sealed our fate. But in the dying moments James Hammond floated a ball to the left-hand corner of the box... A Dartford defender looked favourite but O'Leary powered in to meet the ball 18 yards out and collect a mighty whack from the defender in the process... The Stones fans, pressed in behind the goal, watched in awe as the ball soared beyond the flying keeper, brushed the underside of the bar before nestling in the far corner. Chrissy O was concussed and so were we... an absolute knockout header!

1: Neil Cordice at Lower Mead v Yeovil Town, Conference, October 1979 (won 5-0) POSSIBLY the cleanest striker of a ball in Wealdstone history - with apologies to Hughie Lindsay - Neil Cordice exploded on the scene in 1979 for our first season of Conference

Wealdstone 5,
Yeovil Town 0

SUPERB Wealdstone made a mockery of the Alliance Premier League table with a scintillating, five star performance against high flying Yeovil Town at Lower Mead on Saturday.

The super 'stones, who started the game, third from bottom, came off four goals up at half time to a tumultuous standing ovation from their 650 wildly excited supporters.

And how those Wealdstone players earned such a rare honour at Lower Mead. Third placed Yeovil were clinically and coolly laid to rest in a rivetting 45 minutes of attacking football.

Alas, poor Yeovil! They had no slope to save them from the 'Stones lethal three prong strike force of Nigel Johnson, Bobby Moss and Neil Cordice who all scored.

But it was the coloured Cordice who really quickened the pulse. He capped a tremendous display with two great goals, the second was the sort of score all strikers dream about - a cleanly struck volley from over 30 yards.

And just to show that the half time cup of tea had not mellowed their ambition, Wealdstone made it five just two minutes after the re-start.

football.

This goal was a wondrous strike in a wonderful team performance as we led 4-0 at half time... a long, high pass was played out to the ex-Northampton striker on the left wing, and Cordice watched the ball drop over his left shoulder before catching it sensationally full on the volley. The keeper could only watch as the ball rocketed over his head, travelling the 30 yards in a split second, and bursting into the net behind him. And this wasn't a one-off.. Neil Cordice scored a dozen wonderful strikes in his long Stones career, though none quite as amazing as the one that helped sink Yeovil.