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BY MARK HYDE



## **WEALDSTONE 2021-22**

## Written in Stone

## AWAY TICKET PURCHASING SERVICE

The club is aware that the move by many clubs in the National League to advanced online ticket sales only can be problematic for some of our supporters.

In response to the above issues the club will be offering an away ticket ordering and printing service for any supporter who requires it.

General Manager Harvey Hicks has offered to assist any supporters requiring this service between 9am and 5pm on weekdays. Simply pop down to the club and Harvey will assist you through the booking service and provide you with the printed ticket at the end of the process. Please remember to bring your credit or debit cards with you for payment.

### NEXT GENERATION - 18-23 YEAR OLD INITIATIVE

Wealdstone FC are happy to announce the launch of our new 'Next Generation' ticket for our National League home fixtures.

For just £8 people in the age bracket 18-23 years old can now catch all the action at Grosvenor Vale as we entertain the likes of Notts County, Wrexham, Grimsby Town and more this season.

These tickets must be purchased online in order to be valid and can be done so by visiting the 'Match Tickets' section of our online ticketing portal prior to kick off. https://wealdstonefc.ktckts.com/





## 'BRINGING FAMILIES BACK TO FOOTBALL'

There are still FREE season tickets available for our Under 16 Supporters

Just register at the stadium for the Lawrence Rand Estate Agents sponsored scheme to receive a free season ticket and a free Wealdstone FC scarf as well as the chance to win one of 40 of the club's newly launched kit in partnership with our kit supplier Kelme.

## ONLINE AWAY COACH BOOKINGS

www.wfcsc.co.uk/away-travel

Keep an eye on the above link in the coming days for a new easy booking system for Supporters Club coach travel to away fixtures.

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## WEALD STO

## FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2021/2022

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SECRETARIES

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Andrew Lane CLUB PERSONNEL

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Chris Woods Assist. Press Officer Nicole Cho-Yee PA Announcer Ashley Holding, Peter John Baptiste Club Historian Peter Worby Media Manager Adam Williams Events Officer James Klarfeld Club Caterer Lynn Evans

LIAISON OFFICERS James Klarfeld

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1951 / 1952 Athenian League

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2019 / 2020 National League South

#### NATIONAL CUPS

1965 / 1966 FA Amateur Cup 1984 / 1985 FA Trophy

#### LEAGUE CUPS

1981 / 1982 Southern League Cup

#### MIDDLESEX COUNTY CUPS

1958 / 1959 Senior Cup 1962 / 1963 Senior Cup 1964 / 1965 Senior Cup 1967 / 1968 Senior Cup 1984 / 1985 Senior Cup 2003 / 2004 Charity Cup 2010 / 2011 Chartty Cup

#### NON TITLE-WINNING PROMOTIONS

1997 / 1998 Isthmian League Division 2 (3rd) 1998 / 1999 Isthmian League Division 1 (3rd,annulled) 2003 / 2004 Isthmian League Premier Division

The legal name of Wealdstone Football Club is Weeldstone Football Club (2000) Ltd (Registered Number 03953962). Shares in excess of 10% are held by Peter Marsden Property Finance Ltd & Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

## GROUND REGULATIONS

People are only allowed entry to The Vale on match days subject to the following rules and regulations: 1) The dub reserves the right to eject from the ground any person who is considered to have committed any of the following: acts:

acts:
-Entering the ground through any means other than through the turnstiles or entrances
-Entering the field of play before, during or after a game without prior authorisation
-Being drunk, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs - Using violence of any nature
-Carrying items which may be considered a danger to others, including cans, bottles, or glasses containing alcoholic beverages
-Throwing any article onto the field of play -Climbing floodlight pylons, fances, stands or any structure or building
-Using obscere or bad language likely to cause offence to others - Hitting the side or back panels of the Bulla stand

2) No spectator ball garnes.

3) The consumption of alcoholic drinks is permitted INSIDE the social club bar, garden and boardroom areas.

4) Vehicles parted on the Grosvenor Velie site are at the owners' risk.

5) Wealdstone Football Club supports the FAX campaign on pyrotechnics (e.g. flares and smoke bombs). Any misuse of such items in and around the Ground will result in those responsible being asked to leave the ground and, in line with football authority guidance, may result in a report to the Police, potential prosecution and a ban from the Club of up to three years.

BY STUART MAYNARD

## **WEALDSTONE 2021-22**

## From the Gaffer

## Good afternoon to you all and a warm welcome to Altrincham FC

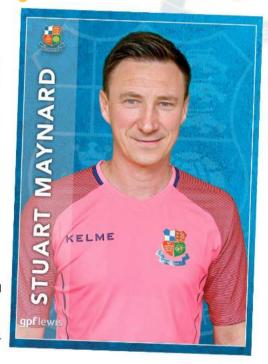
We come in to today's game after gaining two good points, at home against Southend United and on the road against table topping Dagenham & Redbridge.

Importantly at this early stage of the season our performance levels have been exceptionally good and that bodes well for upcoming games and for the rest of the season.

We have got a very clear philosophy amongst the group now and we are still a work in progress. Every game for us is a chance to learn and get better at what we do. We don't get the same amount of time on the training field as the rest of the teams in this league, so with that in mind we are looking to be a team that gradually improves as the season goes on but we are certainly happy where we are currently. This is why it is so pleasing to go to places like Chesterfield and to have dominated possession in the game for large spells.

The National League can be brutal at times, and there is no doubt in my mind that we will go through some tough spells but we are optimistic we can achieve the target we have set ourselves this season and hopefully today can be another step in the right direction.

Today's opponents Altrincham have started well and they too have a clear philosophy of passing the ball and to overload the opposition in



certain areas of the pitch. That should make for a very good game of football and hopefully we can execute our game plan and come out on the right side of the result.

Finally, a huge mention to you, our away support at Chesterfield and Daggenham helped us massively in difficult periods of both matches and you are a credit to yourselves and our wonderful football club. I can assure you the players appreciate it massivly as do we as a management team. We are all going to need to stick together this season and so far your support has been tremendous.

Let's hope for an exciting game of football today, and more importantly, 3pts for the Stones.

Up the Stones

Stuart

BY SUDHIR RAWAL

## The Elmslie Ender



# EE takes pride in our current crowd sizes and their diversity

love numbers. It's my working capital and I have a geeky fascination for football attendances too, so it would be remiss of me not to talk about the crowd last bank holiday for the visit of Southend United. The attendance of 2,151 was the largest league crowd at the Vale, beating the one from the previous week against Woking. It was also the second highest crowd we have had at the Vale, the highest stands at 2,469 verses Colchester United in the FA Cup.

The Shrimpers gate beat both FA Trophy semi crowds against Newport and Brackley.

Going back into history, it was also our highest National League crowd ever beating 1,725 v Enfield back in April 1983. Had we beaten them that evening, we would have probably gone onto win the NL title a couple of years ahead of when we actually did. Going back to the start of our professional era, we have only had six league crowds higher than the bank holiday gate, that's in fifty odd years. We had a halcyon period running

from April 1974 to December 1975, when we were

We're on our way
to Loftus Road!
Wealdstone's Kop,
the supporters at the
Elmslie Stand, salute
Keith Furphy's first
goal direct from a
corner during Saturday's F.A. Cup match
against Reading.

riding the wave of big home crowds, but other than that period, our home gates have been pretty ropey, since we turned professional, in contrasts to our away support which has always been healthy.

to our away support which has always healthy.

According to Roger Slater, our crowd at Chesterfield, 5,366, was the highest away league gate that he can find in the historical records, though there is a lack of information during

records, though there is a lack of information during the fifties and early sixties when crowds at Amateur matches were at their highest. Delving little further back, the biggest league gate he could find that we had played in front of was 7,000 at Lower Mead verses Hendon in 1952. Depending

on how some of the Belts do, we have matches late on in the season at Stockport and Southend, which might see those records broken still.

## **WEALDSTONE 2021-22**



There was much talk on the latest excellent Stonescast about where away fans should be housed, with Woking fans having been put on the Megastore Terrace, whilst Southend were given the Turret End, with 400 and 800 strong followings respectively. For what it is worth, I think that the flexible arrangements used so far should continue. Other than a few of the Belts and maybe the team from HA8, most away followings will fit snuggly on the side and it allows us to continue the non-league tradition of changing ends. The flip side is that the atmosphere was better for Southend than Woking as most of the crowd were in the BC and the Bulla, and it was a decent too. I don't get why people for the Woking game stayed in the aforementioned stands when we were attacking the other end, didn't make any sense at all. The reality is that as our crowds have grown, the hostility of our home fans has faded. Bigger crowds doesn't necessarily mean a more hostile crowd. What you need is an influx of youth and whilst the new campaign by the club has certainly brought in a lot of

youngsters, they are probably too young to get a decent atmosphere going and way too much of the signing is started by old farts.

Talking of old farts, rather worryingly. concessionary sales to the older demographic at Wealdstone appears to have fallen through the floor. Not really sure why, but it could be obviously a concern of being around people after coronavirus or even the need to buy tickets in advance online for many games is proving a challenge for those whose IT skills are limited. To give you an example, for the Dagenham away game, you had to purchase your rather expensive ticket by 12pm of the game online. No tickets are available on the day. "Dave the Bike" struggled with the IT aspects of doing so, so spent a four-hour round trip to travel to Dagenham and purchase his ticket in person in the week before. Surely there is a better way, maybe having some tickets available on the day to be purchased in person is the way to go.

Most of you wouldn't have noticed at the Southend game, but there was quite a remarkable crowd demographic. To put it bluntly, I am not sure I have seen as many brown faces at a football match. We should be extremely proud of the fact that we have the most diverse football following in non-league football and all of this has been done without the need for gimmicks, promotions or right on politics. It has been done because people seem happy and comfortable to come to a game of football. When you look over at HA8, where there has been little penetration into the local populace which is demographically challenging, but here at Wealdstone we have proved it can be done.

Sud

## STATS TO WATCH THIS SEASON

The following are Wealdstones top Home League crowds since we tured professional

3,400 v Wimbledon 1st January 1975 2,548 v Trowbridge 4th May 1974 2,419 v Wimbledon 12th May 1977 2,400 v Basingstoke Town 20th April 1974 2,396 v Bexley United 30th April 1974 2,167 v Wimbledon 26th December 1975 2,151 v Southend United 30th August 2021 2,000 v Dorchester Town 18th April 1974 1,890 v Cambridge City 11th January 1975 1,725 v Enfield 12th April 1983



# Charlie Cooper Cooper dynacty

Youngest of the super Cooper dynasty, Charlie aims to provide the energy in Stones' midfield engine room

It's been a tough few months for Charlie Cooper. First the all-action midfielder decided to turn down Alan Dowson's offer to stay at Woking: then his beloved grandfather Terry

hit with a sinus infection that has limited his usual snap and bite.

But the 24 year old is determined to show what he can do in a blue shirt now that he has been given the responsibility of 'dead ball expert' by the Stones management team.

passed away at the end of July; then he was

'Not that I deserved that label for my free kick in the Southend game!' he laughed. 'My technique went right out of the window then; edge of the box in a great position and I put it over the stand. It was a shambles."

So how did Charlie come to join the Mighty Stones? "Well I weighed in with a few goals and assists last season - and set pieces were crucial to the way Woking operated with all their big players - and I had the option to stay. Dowse (manager Alan Dowson) offered me a good deal but, to be honest, I fancied being somewhere where I was really valued and the gaffer here, Stuart, gave me that.

"Yes, it's part time but I get the opportunity to do a lot of training on my own and I use a gym close to home in Solihull. I want to influence every game I play in."

harlie was brought up in Birmingham which explains why he still lives nearby. "I'm used to the travelling; it was further to Woking although I often used to stay over in a club flat there with some of the other players."

Charlie has always been a midfielder, right from his early days as a pro at Birmingham City where he followed in his dad Mark's footsteps as a tenacious, high-energy player.

"I think it's good to mix my game up a bit and

show a bit of nastiness. My dad says he scored more goals than me, but that I'm the better player!"

That's quite a tribute from Mark Cooper, who is currently managing Barrow in League Two, considering his 300-odd Football League appearances for the likes of Fulham, Birmingham and Exeter. My Exeter-supporting pal describes both Cooper Seniors as 'absolute legends' for the Grecians - Mark having turned out 150 times for the red & white stripes, most latterly when his dad Terry was manager. Terry Cooper guided Exeter to their one and only league title, Division Four, 30 years ago.

And that is particularly poignant this summer for the close-knit Cooper family. The death of Terry, who starred in the 1970 World Cup for defending champions England, was a shock to Charlie and his cousins who often used to go for impromptu holidays to visit 'grandad and grandma' at their sunshine home in Tenerife.

"They had lived out there for 20-odd years and we were always flying out there to see them in the



NF 2021-22

ence and that was a bit of an eye-opener, living away from home as an 18-year-old".

Next was a loan move to another Conference outfit, Forest Green Rovers- which became permanent when his dad became manager.

"I got the occasional complaint that I was only playing because my dad was in charge - but I'd come down from championship football so was very comfortable at that level - and then we won promotion to the Football League three years ago at Wembley so no-one was complaining then!"

Charlie was established as a defensive midfielder in that excellent FGR side that caught Tranmere Rovers by surprise in the play-off final. He played the full 90 minutes as the Gloucestershire side (from the village of Nailsworth, with the smallest-ever population for a FL club at just 5,500) took a 2-0 lead, then 3-1 and clung on to the final whistle.

"I thought but would be a harder game than it was, but Tranmere gave us a lot of

time on the ball and it was really enjoyable - the pitch is massive which helps when you're looking to find space".

Charlie went on to play the most of the next season, Forest Green's first in the EFL, before moving on loan to Boreham Wood, Halifax and then Woking.

ow he's an integral part of Stuart Maynard's midfield. "We've got some lads who can really play and I think we'll be fine" said Charlie after the goalless draw with Southend.

"We are trusted to keep the ball and keep moving it around, and that's a style that suits me as an individual. I know that it's a small ground, Grosvenor Vale, but the atmosphere has been class and we really appreciate the backing of the fans.

"They can be the difference in these tight games because the NL standard this season is higher than ever before. But we'll be properly going for it this season, I can promise you that."

school holidays - grandad used to join in the kickabouts on the beach and then latterly he'd come to watch my games in England too."

It is rare to have such a good football lineage. Not just a dad immersed in high-level football, but a grandad acknowledged as the best attacking left back of his generation.

"I read about him turning up uninvited for a trial at Leeds in 1963 with his boots in a brown paper bag" I told Charlie. Is that true?

"Oh yes, totally true. He'd been a miner and felt he was good enough despite being released as an amateur at Wolves.

"After he died, all this footage started appearing and I spent hours watching him play. He was really, really good! He made the game look easy and was so strong and comfortable on the ball."

harlie's own career began at Birmingham
City but despite spending 10 years as a
blue - and three years as a pro - never made
a 1st XI appearance. "I was the first in my age
group to go out on loan, to York City in the Confer-

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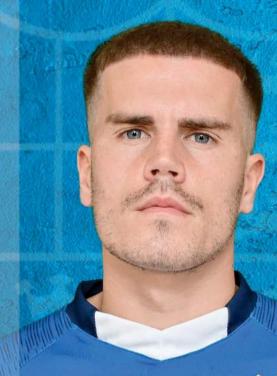
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CHARLIE COOPER









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# CALTRINCHAM FC THE ROBINS Altrincham was established by a Sunday school around 1891 as Rigby Memorial Club. They soon merged with another local team, Grapplers, to form Broadheath Football Club, and were founder members of

After playing at various grounds in Broadheath, Timperley and Altrincham, the club moved to Pollitt's Field in 1903, at which point they changed their name to Altrincham. They won the Cheshire Amateur Cup in their first season under the new name, and went on to win both the Manchester League and the Cheshire Senior Cup the following season. They won the Manchester League again in 1906–07, and moved to their current Moss Lane ground in 1910.

In 1911 the club joined Division Two of the Lancashire Combination. They finished as runners-up in their first season in the division, only missing out on the title on goal average and earning promotion to Division One. They remained in Division One until World War I. When football resumed in 1919, the club were founder members of the Cheshire County League, where they remained until World War II.

the Manchester League in 1893.

After missing out the 1945–46 season, they rejoined the Cheshire County League in 1946. They were then founder members of the Northern Premier League in 1968.

They reached the semi-finals of the FA Trophy in 1976–77, losing 2–1 to Scarborough in a second replay; the season also saw them apply for election to the Football League for the first time, but they received only 12 votes compared to the 27 received by the elected Wimbledon. The following season they went one better in the FA Trophy,

reaching the Wembley final, where they beat Leatherhead 3–1. In 1978–79 they finished as runners-up in the Northern Premier League and applied for election to the Football League again. Although they finished as the top non-League club in the ballot, they received only 13 votes to the 37 received by Halifax

ALTRINCHAM'S 6.085 CAPACITY MOSS L

Town, the lowest-placed Football League club. Instead, Altrincham became founder members of the Alliance Premier League, the top level of non-League football, the winner of which would be the sole non-League nomination for future Football League election ballots.

The league's inaugural season saw Altrincham crowned

champions. In the subsequent elections to the Football League, the club missing out by a single vote. Altrincham retained the APL title the following season, but again failed in the Football League elections. The next two seasons saw the club finish in midtable, together with another FA Trophy final appearance in 1981–82, this time losing 1–0 to Enfield. This was followed by four consecutive top-five finishes between 1984 and 1987 and a second FA Trophy win in

## **WEALDSTONE 2021-22**



1985, beating Runcorn 1–0 in the final. The 1985–86 season saw them record one of the biggest FA Cup giant-killings of all time when they defeated top division Birmingham City 2–1 at Birmingham's St Andrew's.

After finishing bottom of the Conference in 1996–97 the club were relegated to the Premier Division of the Northern Premier League. An eighth-place finish in 1997–98 saw them return to the Conference two seasons later as Premier Division champions. However, they lasted only a single season in the Conference as they finished second-from-bottom and were relegated back to the Northern Premier League.

A twelfth-place finish in 2003–04 saw them qualify for the newly formed Conference North. They finished fifth in the new division in its first season, qualifying for the promotion play-offs where they were promoted to the Conference National.

In 2005–06 Altrincham finished bottom of the Conference National after receiving an 18-point deduction when they were found to have fielded an ineligible player, James Robinson, for 15 matches, during which he scored six goals and Altrincham won 18 points. However, they were reprieved from relegation after Canvey Island resigned from the league and Scarborough were demoted. The following season they again finished in the relegation zone, but were reprieved after Boston United were demoted. A third successive relegation reprieve occurred in 2007–08 when Halifax were liquidated.

After mid-table finishes in 2008-09 and 2009-10 and Ricky Ponting becoming a shareholder of the club in 2009. Altrincham were relegated to the Conference North at the end of the 2010-11 season. However, after finishing fourth the following season, they defeated Guiseley 2-1 in the final to earn promotion back to the Conference National. In 2015-16 the club finished in the relegation zone and were relegated to the renamed National League North. The following season they finished bottom of the National League North, leading to a second successive relegation to the Premier Division of the Northern Premier League, However, the 2017-18 season saw the club win the Northern Premier League title, earning promotion back to the National League North.

In 2019/20 They finished in sixth-place resulting in another play-off campaign. After defeating Chester 3–2 and York City 2–0, the club beat Boston United 1–0 in the final, earning promotion to the National League.

In 2020/21 Altrincham finished their first season back at National League level in 17th possition.

### LAST SEASON

Saturday 7th September 2020 HOME - Won 2-1 (BCD) - Emmanuel

Tuesday 26th Janueary 2021 AWAY- Lost 0-2 (BCD)

WEALDSTONE'S RECORD v ALTRINCHAM FC

P 19 W 6 D 3 L 10 F 17 A 25



# Opposition in focus WHO TO WATCH

Captain - Jake Moult

#### 1. TONY THOMPSON - GOALKEEPER

Talented goalkeeper Tony joined Altrincham in the summer of 2017 after appearing in several pre-season games. After initially acting as an understudy to Tim Deasy, he soon established

himself as Phil Parkinson's first choice goalkeeper and was a key part of the EvoStik title winning squad.

Before joining the Robins, Tony had began his career with Rotherham United. He gained experience on loan out at Curzon Ashton, Ossett Town, Chelmsford City and Southport.

He later transferred to Morecambe where he made two professional appearances before making the move to Chester and then AFC Fylde.

#### 5. TOM HANNIGAN - DEFENCE

Tom is the only remaining Alty player to have been signed by previous manager Neil Young. A dependable centre-back, he has enjoyed two promotions with the Robin's.

Tom began his career with Tranmere Rovers before playing for Vauxhall Motors and AFC Fylde.

#### 6. JAKE MOULT (C) - MIDFIELD

Arriving from Scottish side Dundee in 2019, Nathan Ralph's first season at Southend was disrupted after dislocating his shoulder in December against Burton Albion. Formerly of Peterborough, Yeovil Town, Newport and Woking, with loans at Kettering Town and Aldershot Town

#### 11. RYAN COLCLOUGH - MIDFIELD

Colclough started his career with Crewe Alexandra progressing through the academy to sign a two-year scholarship in the summer of 2011. He was promoted to the first team in September 2012, after impressing in preseason games and for the under-21s. He made his professional debut for Crewe on 22 September 2012, in a 1–1 draw with Leyton Orient in Football League One, coming on as a substitute for Brendon Daniels.

Colclough joined Wigan Athletic in January 2016, playing over 50 games for the club in the Championship, before

joining League One side Scunthorpe United for an undisclosed fee, signing a three-year deal.

Colclough joined Altrincham in November 2020

#### PHIL PARKINSON - MANAGER

Phil Parkinson was appointed on 28 April 2017, the eve of the last game of the 2016-17 season in which Altrincham had been relegated to the Northern Premier League. He had managed The Dabbers since February 2015 and in that time he had transformed them from a relegation-threatended club to promotion contenders. Phil also took Nantwich to the FA Trophy semi-finals in 2016.

As a player, he was a junior at Crewe Alexandra, and then at Reading, before having a year at Port Vale. He made some two hundred appearances for Nantwich as a player, where he captained the team that won the FA Vase in 2006, as well as leading the Dabbers to promotion from the North West Counties League and UniBond League First Division.

Phil enjoyed promotion from the NPL as champions in his first season and reached the play-offs in 2018-19 in National League North before wining promotion to the National League via the play-offs in 2020. On 9 April 2021 it was announced that his contract had been extended to the end of the 2023-24 season.



Manager - Phil Parkinson



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## **FAN IN THE STAND: LUCA ROSSETTO**

## Wealdstone is always great because of the atmosphere ..we love to make a noise & it's just what the team needs

Your name and age? Luca Rossetto, 18 Whereabouts do you live? Harrow

Have you always lived in that area? Yes

When was your first Stones game? Maidenhead United on Boxing Day 2016 - we won 2-1 but I don't remember much about the game other than that Maidenhead scored a penalty.

Who first brought you along to a game? My mate Jamie and his dad. Jamie's been one of my best mates since Year 8 at school, so for about six years now. Usually it's me, Jamie, Alex and Cameron that go to the games together - for example me, Alex and Jamie travelled to Chesterfield for the first away game and all four of us went over to Dagenham last Saturday.

Do you think we're doing enough to connect with teenage fans like yourself? Compared to a lot of clubs, there are plenty of young people who come down to the Vale and it does help as a lot of them play for Wealdstone Youth. What is the great is that the atmosphere is always good, especially when going away. We love making a lot of noise which is exactly what the team needs. What were your first impression of the club? I loved football so as a 14 year old I just loved being at a ground.

What was the first football match you remember ever seeing live? Or on telly? The first live game I went to was a Championship game between Watford and Peterborough - I used to play for Watford PDC and we got free tickets to games. Deeney scored a last minute penalty, that's all I remember about it!

Do you follow any other team? Another local team, Rayners Lane who play in the combined Counties Division One.

Do vou watch them home

and away? When no fans

where allowed in at Wealdstone I'd go watch Rayners Lane, yes home and away.

What's the most memorable game you've EVER seen?

The Euro 2020 final. I was at Wembley when Italy won the Euros against England - it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and it will be something I never forget.

And the best Wealdstone game? Although we lost, probably the FA Trophy Semi





WEALDCTONE

Football is a massive part of my life, nothing can top it.

How do you fit watching football in with your famlly/working life? My life only really consists of four things and that's work, football, family and friends. I'm never at home on a Saturday as I'm always out watching some sort of football. I work as a dispatcher for Kelly Communica-

I work as a dispatcher for Kelly Communications in Wembley, helping the engineers provide telecoms and broadband for our customers.

Who are the best Wealdstone players you've ever seen? Jacob Mendy - what a player, best player in the national league south and then won the Player of the Year last season. A wand of a left foot and every time he got the ball, you'd think something would happen. It's just a shame that he went to Boreham Wood.

Could you name a best-ever Stones side? I'd probably just have to say our National League South winners team + Northy in goal, as it's that team that made me admire the Stones the most.

What was your favourite Stones era? The current one.

What do you think of the bars and catering at the Vale? Very good, staff are very friendly and the price for the drinks are very reasonable. And especially when you go out you respect how little they charge compared to others.

**Do you visit the Megastore?** I should go more often to be fair.

Do you think Stones can aspire to playing in the EFL? Well we need to establish ourselves in this division before we think that far head... It may take us a couple of years but once we're full time and established in this league, I don't think it would be too unrealistic.

How are you coping football-wise with the Covid restrictions? It was tough watching it on a stream, even tougher watching us lose most weeks towards the end of the season.

Did you watch the various streams of the live games last season? I watched all the home games and certain away games - they were well presented and commentated (Good answer!)

Finally, where do you think Wealdstone FC will be In the year 2025? Well ideally for us to be an established national league side and for us to go full time as then it would help us get better players and progress through the

leagues.

final against Brackley a few years ago. The atmosphere was amazing and the ground was packed, it was just unfortunate that we couldn't win and get to Wembley.

Favourite away Wealdstone trip? Every away game I've been to we've lost (including the game at Chesterfield) but I'm looking forward to the aways this year - especially Barnet & Notts County.

What level of football do you prefer? After seeing how hard clubs have to work to survive, and how tight the relationship between the fans and the club is, I'd have to say non league. The togetherness is unmatched.

How big a part of your life is the game?

Right: Luca's favourite Stones player, Jacob Mendy Mendy, celebrates his outlandish goal against Sutton live on BT Spirt

## The vital facts on recent Stones matches...

v Woking at the Vale, Vanarama National League Matchday One

Saturday August 21 2021, 3pm Warm afternoon (19 deg) and a perfect grass playing surface

1,405 (400 away fans)

WEALDSTONE

Wickens Okimo Tavares
Eleftheriou Cook Browne
Cooper Buse Fasanmade Umerah Lewis

WOKING

Ross Casey McNerney Diarra Ince Kretzschmar Maguire-Drew Nwabuokei Effiong Campbell Lofthouse

STONES 1

Umerah 69 K

WOKING 2 Kretzschmar 20 Cook own goal 24

POSSESSION

Wealdstone 67% Woking 33%
SHOTS ON TARGET Stones 5 Woking 4
SHOTS OFF TARGET Stones 6 Woking 3
CORNERS Stones 9 Woking 3

After an impressive, unbeaten pre-season the Stones were caught cold by new-look Woking's high-intensity start. The second half, kicking downhill, saw Wealdstone dominate possession but only manage to pull one back through Josh Umerah's clever header from Andy Eleftheriou's cross

Excellent 2nd half performance, a different level to anything we witnessed last season so a lot to be positive about. Woking have done a good rebuilding job with an expensively assembled full time squad. 1,405 in attendance too with alot of new faces about. Over 120 under 16s signed up for free season tickets today; plenty of families from our youth set up and local schools.

- BUTE, Stonesnet Forum

On Jack Cook getting into the NL Team of the Week, "Would've kept him if we could – but our back three weren't bad on Saturday!"

-Alan Dowson, Woking manager

THE WHERE &

DATE AND CONDITIONS

ATTENDANCE

**TEAMS** 

CHESTERFIELD

Loach King Kerr Gunning Maguire Miller Weston Khan

5.366 (167 away fans)

v Chesterfield at the Technique Stadium, VNL Matchday Two

Saturday August 28 2021, 3pm

Warm afternoon (20 deg) and a

perfect grass playing surface

Clarke Rowe Tshimanga WEALDSTONE

Wickens Okimo Tavares Eleftheriou Cook Browne Cooper Dyer Fasanmade Umerah Lewis

RESULT

CHESTERFIELD 2 STONES 0 Khan 5, Carline 80

MATCH STATS

POSSESSION

Chesterfield 45% Stones 55%

SHOTS ON TARGET Chest'field 3 Stones 3 SHOTS OFF TARGET Chest'field 5 Stones 6 CORNERS Chesterfield 4 Stones 7

STONES VIEW

Early and late goals meant all the Stones' industry and possession come to nought at this impressive stadium and its 5,000+ crowd. Sadiou Khan caught George Wickens unawares from 25 yards and George Carline headed the 80th min clincher as Stones chased the game. Statistics don't tell the whole story...

SOCIAL MEDIA

"We were made to battle by a
Wealdstone team whose game plan
went out of the window when we scored our
early goal. If they wanted anything they had
to have a go, and credit to them they had a
go, but we stood up to that. I thought the big
crowd brought the best out of them as it was
like a cup tie for them, whilst our lot were trying to satisfy the expectations of the massive
home support."

-Chesterfield Forum

"Thought we were in with a chance of equalising in second half but wasteful use of ball from corners and poor finishing undid us..."

-61663. Stonesnet Forum

## WEALDSTONE 2021-22

v Southend United at the Vale, VNL Matchday Three

Bank Holiday Monday Aug 30, 3pm Overcast but dry afternoon (19 deg) and a perfect grass pitch

2.151 (800 away fans)

WEALDSTONE

Wickens Okimo Cawley Eleftheriou Cook Browne Cooper Dyer Umerah Lewis

SOUTHEND UTD

Arnold White Ralph Hobson Dennis Bridge Ferguson Phillips Egbri Murphy Dalby

THE WHERE & THE WHAT

v Dagenham & Redbridge at Victoria Road VNL Matchday Four

DATE AND CONDITIONS

ATTENDANCE

Saturday Sept 4 2021, 3pm Pleasant afternoon (19 deg) and a

1.735 (270 away fans)

TEAMS

**DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE** 

perfect grass playing surface

Justham Reynolds Ling Wright Weston Vilhete Johnson Robinson

Scott McCallum Walker

WEALDSTONE

Wickens Okimo Cawley Eleftheriou Cook Wishart Charles Fasanmade Cooper Dyer Umerah

STONES 0 SOUTHEND 0

RESULT

DAG & RED 2 STONES 2 McCallum 35 Umerah 8, Lewis 75 Saunders 80

**POSSESSION** 

Wealdstone 52% Southend 48%
SHOTS ON TARGET Stones 4 Southend 1
SHOTS OFF TARGET Stones 3 Southend 4

CORNERS Stones 5 Southend 6

end 4 SHC

MATCH STATS

POSSESSION

Dagenham 49% Stones 51%

SHOTS ON TARGET Dag & Red 10 Stones 2 SHOTS OFF TARGET Dag & Red 4 Stones 4 CORNERS Chesterfield 4 Stones 7

Southend won the toss to foil our usual down-the-hill-second-half plans and were quick out of the blocks, but Stones were determined not to fall behind first again. Southend hit the bar twice (one an overhead from Murphy, once a terrific save from Wickens) while Stones again played keep-ball without ever really looking ike scoring

"Solid performance in front of a big crowd. A draw the fair result but with a little more composure up front we could have nicked the win. We matched them for physicality and pace and apart from a rather slow start, we didn't look over ran at all. Cook probably our best player but the MoM award rightly given to Cawley. Came in and did a great job considering he's not really featured this season. Also thought Cooper was combative in midfield and Dyer showed class throughout" -Attic, Stonesnet Forum

Love the positivity regarding 'the best start to a league season in years' but we're now playing against the collective might of Kings Lynn, Stockport and Wealdstone. Our last season in League One was v Coventry, Lincoln and Blackpool!" -TampaBlue, Southend forum

Dagenham showed why they are top with clear incisive runs from their pacy wide players and expensive forwards. But a poor defensive header gave Umerah the chance to delight the big away following, and though Dag & Red deservedly levelled, Dennon Lewis came off the bench to score. A late leveller was fair.

SOCIAL MEDIA

"Cook, Dyer and Cawley getting the praise, but everyone put in a terrific shift for the whole 90+. A special mention for Umerah - the goal aside he is getting better and better, balls to his feet/lower body stuck more yesterday than before. He knows how to defend our box too. A well earned point at early table toppers but other teams in our mini league are picking up wins."

-John Young, Stonesnet Forum

"After substitute Dennon Lewis had provided the sucker punch second goal, a deathly hush descended on Victoria Road - apart from the area housing the boisterous away supporters. It needed an emphatic finish for 2-2 from Daggers' sub George Saunders to quieten them and the table toppers finished happy with a point" -Dagnificent.com

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or advertise your organisation's support of Wealdstone, match sponsorship packages start at just £495 (fans) or £550+ VAT (for businesses).

As match day sponsor you will enjoy:

- Match tickets for four people (inc. prime main stand seats if required)
- A fantastic advertising package, including publicity over the PA system, website and social media together with a piece in the programme
- Boardroom hospitality including a pre-match hot meal with wines together with half-time refreshments courtesy of in-house caterer Lynn Evans
- Match-day programmes for all in your party
- Naming and presenting the 'Man of the Match' award
- · A souvenir memento of your day

Our match sponsors and their guests are all entertained in surroundings befitting such a special occasion be it a birthday, anniversary or any other special event!

We will work with you to ensure you and your guests get to enjoy a truly memorable experience. If you or your organisation are interested in sponsoring a match here at The Vale, please contact Club President, Paul Rumens (paulrumens59@gmail.com or call 07710 929692) to discuss.

Please note that we can accommodate multiple match sponsors and can tailor the experience to whatever your requirements are. (eg. we can cater for as many as 10, 20 or 30 people in your group.)

• A sou	venir memento of your day		The second of th			
MATCH		SPONS	SPONSORS			
<b>(#)</b>	WOKING Salunday, 25st August Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows				
Sortiego partio	SOUTHEND UNITED  Monday, 30th August Vanarama National League	Ray Corner and Peter Carter				
	ALTRINCHAM Salunday, 11th September Vanarama National League	Wealdstone FC Supporters Club				
	ALDERSHOT TOWN Saturday, 18th September Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Your name or business here			
	SOLHULL MOORS Tuesday, 5th October Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here			
	EASTLEIGH Saturday, 9th October Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East In memor O'Conno	y of John Dorset Stones			
	GRIMSBY TOWN Tuesday, 20th October Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	ADWConnect			
VON	BARNET Saturday, 13th November	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here			



A top drawer experience that League clubs to shame. Nothing was too much trouble highly recommended."

- Colin Walklate. **Harrow Windows** 

the Vale and watch the Stones."

Robert Barrett. Rolfe-East

"The parents and boys of AFC Lightning had a great day sponsoring the mighty Stones: great food, hospitality, football, a proper crowd and meeting the Raider! We will do it again this season."

- Keith Davies, AFC Lightning

MATCH	SPONSORS			
STOCKPORT COUNTY Sabrdoy, 77th Hovember Vanarama National League	AFC Lightning	Your name or business here		
FC HALIFAX TOWN Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Your name or business here		
MAIDENHEAD UNITED Sunday, 26th December Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
YEOVIL TOWN Saturday 6th January Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
NOTTS COUNTY Treadily 25th annualy Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here		
WREXHAM Saturday, 19th February Vanarama National League	Union Athletic	Your name or business here		
TORQUAY UNITED Saturday, 26th February Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
WEYMOUTH Saturday, 12th March Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Your name or business here		
DOVER ATHLETIC Tuesday, 22nd March Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
BROMLEY Saturday, 26th March Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here		
CHESTERFIELD Saturday, 9th April Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
BOREHAM WOOD  Norther With April Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
DAGENHAM & REDBRIDG Saturday, 30th April Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		
KING'S LYNN TOWN Salarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here		



20 Wrexham

DECEMBER

18 TBD

22 Woking

**Bromley** 

11 FC HALIFAX TOWN

28 Boreham Wood JANUARY

25 NOTTS COUNTY

29 Grimsby Town FEBRUARY

**26 MAIDENHEAD UNITED** 

Maidenhead United **YEOVIL TOWN** 

23 Dover Athletic 27 STOCKPORT COUNTY

## **RESULTS** 2021/2022

Andrew ELEFTHERIOU **Nikola TAVARES** Jack COOK

> 12 17

> 12 17

12

12

17(34)6

George WICKENS

2

2

2

2

ONING ON MO	Craig FASANMAD	Matt BUSE	Joshua UMERAH	
,	7	8 8(18)	9	
;	7	8(18)	9 9	
i	7(10)		9	

AUGUST	Comp	Score	(Total)	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
21 WOKING	VNL	1-2	1,405	400	16	Umerah
28 Chesterfield	VNL	0-2	5,336	167	18	
<b>30 SOUTHEND UNITED</b>	VNL	0-0	2,151	800	18	
SEPTEMBER	WNL		100	u uniono -		
4 Dagenham & Redbridg	e VNL	2-2	1,735	170	18	Umerah, Lewis
11 ALTRINCHAM	VNL					- 22
14 Notts County	VNL					
18 ALDERSHOT TOWN	VNL					
25 King's Lynn Town	VNL					
OCTOBER	WNL					
2 Torquay United	VNL					
5 SOLIHULL MOORS	VNL					
9 EASTLEIGH	VNL					
16 TBD	FAC4	1				
23 Weymouth	VNL					RAGE
26 GRIMSBY TOWN	VNL					KAOL
NOVEMBER						The same of the sa
13 BARNET	VNL					Auto ammuniti

VNL

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VNL





12 Barnet	VNL
19 WREXHAM	VNL
22 Solihull Moors	VNL
26 TORQUAY UNITED	VNL
MARCH	
5 Eastleigh	VNL
12 WEYMOUTH	VNL
19 Stockport County	VNL
22 DOVER ATHLETIC	VNL
26 BROMLEY	VNL
APRIL	
2 FC Halifax Town	VNL
9 CHESTERFIELD	VNL
15 Southend United	VNL
18 BOREHAM WOOD	VNL
23 Altrincham	VNL
30 DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE	VNL
TO THE OWNER OF THE OWNER OWNE	7

Yeovil Town KING'S LYNN TOWN

15 Aldershot Town

#### **RESULTS** PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY

17th July Hayes & Yeading Utd A W 2-1 Charles, Fasanmade 20th July Okimo St Albans City D 1-1 24th July **Bedford Town** D 2-2 Cook, Fasanmade 27th July **Chesham United** W 4-1 Fasanmade, Buse, Browne, Elito 31st July Colchester United A D 1-1 Umerah (Pen) 7th August **Dorking Wanderers A** 2-1 Browne 2 Watford Under 23s H W 3-0 Fasanmade, Dronfield, Wishart 10th August 14th August Hungerford Town H W 3-1 Umerah 2, Lewis

In Black = Started match

In Blue = Substitute (with number of player replaced in brackets)

Rhys BROWNE	Dennon LEWIS	Charlie COOPER	Dan WISHART	Ashley CHARLES	Alex DYER	Medy ELITO	Jack CRAWLEY
10 10	11				18(8	3) 20(7	)
10	11	24		4(24)	18	20(7	Ó
100	100.00				CONTROL OF		











Abover: pictures from last weekend's battling draw away to league leaders Dagenham & Redbridge. An excellent travelling support of officially 170 saw Stones take the lead twice and ultimately draw in a confidence-inspiring display. Pictures courtesy **Jon Taffel**.

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## On this day with 41 years between...a pasting of Poole, and a real walloping by Wimbledon

FOOTBALL CLUR

## SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 11 2017, NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH: WEALDSTONE 4 POOLE TOWN 1

uestion marks were being raised about new Stones boss Bobby Wilkinson. His first three games in charge were draws against East-bourne, Hemel and East Thurrock... and the fourth a 5-1 thrashing at Weston-super-Mare.

Next up were two home games in three days against Bognor Regis and Poole - and Bobby was feeling the heat as we were struggling to 0-0 at half time against the Rocks. But then Danny Green struck a trademark (I) freekick and the confidence flowed back to register a 3-0 win. Monday night saw

more of the same with Abobaker Eisa finally handed the role of dangerman down the left flank - and Matty Whichelow capitalised on the space to fire in two fine goals - and Eisa roared in to blast a third goal from an impossible angle (see picture above)...all in the final seven minutes of the first half. The Bulla was rocking!

Warren Bentley scored against his former Hungerford boss Wilkinson to keep the second half interesting but Dan Fitchett sealed the game (after great work by sub Stephane Ngamvolou) just before stoppage time was announced.

WEALDSTONE: North, Oshodi, Sellers, Hill, Day, Wellard (Ngamvoulou 70), Whichelow, Okimo, Fitchett, Green (Godfrey 89), Eisa (O'Brien 70). Subs not used: Benyon, Osei.

## SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1976, SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION: WIMBLEDON 5 WEALDSTONE 1

he Wealdstone of early season 1976-77 drew a few parallels with the Bobby Wilkinson era of 2017... A new, expensive managerial team of Geoff Coleman and Alan Fogarty had been parachuted in from Nuneaton Borough in April 76 as the Stones looked set for relegation from the SL Prem (in those days the top division outside the Football League).

The Stones stayed up - thanks mainly to the bankruptcy of Dunstable Town - and then expectations were high through the summer as two of

Dartford's 1974 SL title-winners, Danny Light and Kenny Halliday, signed on at Lower Mead. We still had stars like George Duck, Bill Byrne and Bobby Moss but the rest of the squad fell well short of their benchmark. Leading to the comment after this 5-1 collapse at eventual champions

Wimbledon that the
Stones were kicking off
their relegation struggle in
September!

In front of a 1,300 crowd at the Dons' old Plough Lane ground, I remember our pre-match misgivings when local sports shop owner Ray Bullen was announced as our keeper, standing in for the injured John Morton. Bullen was a bit of a

What follows a sun ounced as our keeper, standing in for the injured John Morton. Bullen was a bit of a CONTD ON NEXT PAGE

## Wealdstone demolished in Wimbledon debade

## by Daragh Croxson

Wimbledon 5, WeakIstone 1

Wealdstone weren't so much beaten as bludgeoned into oblivion in this humiliating massacre of a Southern League game at Plough Lane on Saturday.

The story behind this misleading scoreline — Wimbledon should have had eight — is that the visitors virtually disintegrated as a team under a merciless pounding.

Sucked into an error ridden quagmire of their own making Wealdstone finished drubbed and demoralised at the end of their heaviest ever Premier Division defeat.

Their time-table for disaster began after nine minutes when Arnold hobbled off with twisted knee ligaments.

#### STRETCHED

Then a side already without the honeymooning Byrne at the back fell behind against the run of play after 22 minutes before the Dons stretched their lead seven minutes before half-time.

At this stage 'Stones still possessed enough bounce to reduce the arrears but were shocked again before half-time as Wimbledon made the score 3.1.

Immediately after the restart the home side notched their fourth and it was then that Wealdstone dismantled piece by piece—all but capitulated.

As a torrent of crosses and shots rained into the visitors box only Light, Duck and Halliday, footballers among fumblers, kept their heads above water.

But if makeshift centre-back Edmundson, centre-half Lawrence and 'keeper Bullen made a mess of most things they tried they did at least try.

Several of their colleagues avoided becoming incriminated in a second-half debacle, that somehow only produced one more goal, simply by remaining well clear of the action.

An hour earlier it had looked very different. Wimbledon, without a league

Wimbledon, without a league goal in three games, started tentatively as Light, creating space from the tighest corners, and Halliday, wriggling down both flanks, fired 'Stones forward before 1,356 fans.

At the other end Prince seemed to have the measure of Marlowe as Bullen in the early stages was barely tested.

stages was barely tested.
When Guy acrobatically tipped Halliday's swirling cross away for a corner after 17 minutes the danger signals appeared to be flashing for the home side.

But five minutes later it was Wealdstone who found themselves a goal behind.

Bullen punched the ball off Marlowe's head out to Leslie who volleyed straight back into the net over Prince from the edge of the area.

Capitalising on the uncertain disarray between Edmundson and Lawrence, compounded by the confusing decision to switch Kinnear onto Marlowe, Wimbledon then powered forward in a 15 minute burst that culminated in a 40 yard interchange between Aitken and Connell ending in Aitken cracking a flashing drive into the net from just inside the box.

#### ERROR ATONED

Three minutes later Halliday finally eluded his defender and poked the ball back to Fulton whose well struck drive was deflected past Guy off Aitken's head.

Having scored at either end

Aitken atoned his error almost immediately with a 20-yard drive from the obliquest of angles that Bullen failed to hold giving Marlowe the casiest opportunity to open his Plough Lane account.

Seconds before the break Duck, feasting on crumbs up front, came close to putting his side back in the game with an alert overhead kick that looped inches the wrong side of the bar.

But two minutes into the second half the game finished as a competition when Comell, stooping to conquer, glanced Aitken's corner past a slumbering defence.

With Wealdstone surrendering acres of space in the middle Wimbledon spent the rest of the game charging down on goal almost at will.

Marlowe was unlucky to see his tap in after Bullen dropped Aitken's scorcher disallowed for foot up.

Cook nearly grabbed a hattrick in as many minutes, Tilley all but got onto the scoresheet and Marlowe, with another two efforts, headed a long list of Wimbledon misses.

For WeakIstone, now reduced to Light's deft touches and some hard running from substitute Fulton, the only consolation stemmed from Wimbledon's inability to pile up the eight or nine goals that went

begging.
With 15 minutes of this agony to go Leslie, skating past
three mesmerised defenders,
rifled home another disallowed
effort — the referee this time
blowing for offside against
Connell.

laughing stock after his clownish antics at the end of the previous season and it was a huge relief when experienced gloveman Chris Lightfoot was signed from Romford as cover for Morton, And indeed the Stones bounced back from this horrible defeat by whipping AP Leamington 7-2 at Lower Mead just three days later ... and then cracked give past Clapton in an FA Cup tie the following Saturday. In truth, it was a patchy season that ended with the Stones 14th out of 22 in the table. Wimbledon won a 3rd successive title and were elected to the League...

But it was Leslie who grabbed the chance of giving the scoreline a less unrealistic air after 84 minutes.

Lawrence completely misjudged a harmless looking through ball leaving Connell

After having seeing three shots blocked by Bullen and a desperate Lawrence the strapping striker was still able to give Leslie a fourth bit of the cherry and the winger obliged from two yards.

Thankfully the final whistle soon brought the curtain down on this embarrasing demolition iob.

But unless Wealdstone can swiftly salvage something from their worst performance in a long time they could achieve the rare distinction of kickingoff their relegation struggle in mid-September. Wealdstone: Bullen, Kinnear,

Wealdstone: Bullen, Kinnear, Lawrence, Edmundson, Prince, Light, Woolgar, Moss, Halliday, Duck, Arnold (Fulton 9



# Altrincham turned up to play was my boyhood hero



#### Saturday Dec 8, 1979: Alliance Premier League: Wealdstone 1 Altrincham 4

here's a whole world of memorabilia in the Stones Megastore,

his week's rewind is not so much about today's opponents, but more about the marvellously unexpected appearance of a European Cup winner at Wealdstone in the very first season of the Alliance Premier League.

Back in the 1970s and 80s it was not unusual to see household names turning out in the

autumn of their careers in non-League circles. Jimmy Greaves (for Barnet), Geoff Hurst (for Telford), Derek Dougan (for Kettering) and even cricket hero lan Botham (for Yeovil) were commonplace events and of course the Stones fielded famous ex-Spurs Cliff Jones and Terry Dyson along with England's Johnny Haynes soon after we turned professional. These days, for a top-flight player to still want to perform in

> non-League is more a sign of charming enthususiam rather than one last (small) payday.

But for me the sight of Manchester United goalkeeping legend Alex Stepney appearing from the tunnel at our old Lower Mead ground was the stuff of dreams.

For I was one of the millions of schoolbovs who fell head over heels for football after watching United end the heartache of manager Sir Matt



## **WEALDSTONE 2021-22**

# Stones 42 years ago.. and the keeper (and 'Subbuteo man') Alex Stepney!



Busby by winning the European Cup night on that balmy night at Wembley in May 1968. The first English club to do so.

It was a night that had everything: Glamour, drama, redemption and breathtaking skill, topped by a terrific save from the man my grandfather had warned me to watch, United keeper Stepney.

randad lived in Tooting and was a Chelsea fan, and he had seen young Stepney play for Tooting & Mitcham (and then Millwall) before Chelsea snapped him up in 1966. He thought Stepney was even better than the Blues' No.1, Peter Bonetti, and was aghast when United stepped in with a record £55,000 bid to sign him just a few months later.

Stepney went on to wear the United gloves for 12 years, but despite winning leagues and FA Cups with them, this one match against the Portuguese Champions Benfica was the defining moment of his career. I was 11 years old, and totally captivated by the match (accorded

the rarity of live coverage on BBC1) long before the keeper made his dramatic interception. Watching with me was my Subbuteo-playing pal from over the road, Mark, who was a Chelsea fan and who derided Stepney for "being about as agile and flexible as a Subbuteo goalkeeper".

I was about to remark on how Subbuteo goalkeepers were remarkably bendy and covered the goal really well, when he said "No, not the normal goalkeepers, the ones that just stand upright".

I knew what he meant. I had one in my collection and always left him in the box when there was an important match to be played. And Stepney was known for being unflashy and staying on his feet.

But just then, with the match poised at 1-1 and headed for extra time, the Benfica striker Eusebio (the best player in the World Cup just two years earlier) broke into the United box with just the United keeper to beat. Time stood still.

CONTINUED OVERPAGE

## **WE'VE PLAYED YOU BEFORE...**

#### CONTD FRM PREVIOUS PAGE

Would this be further heartbreak for the genial Sir Matt, who had fashioned a team of potential champions before the Munich air crash a decade earlier?

As the crowd held its breath, Eusebio unleashed a shot of venomous power. But fortunately it was straight at the keeper and Stepney, standing tall and upright (just like the Subbuteo goallie) clutched the ball to his chest and, remarkably, clung onto it as the forwards ran to convert any possible rebound.

"Ha ha, Subbuteo keeper, Subbuteo keeper!" I chanted at my friend Mark, rubbing his nose in it. And this continued right through extra time in which, as we all know, United scored three more goals to write their names into the record books and win the hearts of half the schoolboy population of the country.

leven years later, I was all grown up. Alex Stepney was even more grown up, and - finally replaced in the affections of the Old Trafford management after 546 games - had gone to the NLS to play for Dallas Tornadoes. But he got a bit homesick and returned to his Cheshire home to turn out for Altrincham in the inaugural APL season... with the former Northern Premier League big guns landing the league title in both the 1979-80 and 1980-81 seasons.

In the report of the December 1979 game on this page, Stepney had clearly lost none of his presence and stood firm as Neil Cordice & Co rained shots at the Alty goal. Yet even on the gluepot pitch of Lower Mead he didn't seem to get his knees particularly muddy, and my abiding memory is of the Old Trafford great picking up his glove bag from the Elmslie End goal at half time and smiling as someone called out: "No Eusebio today, Alex". And he replied. "No, not quite Wembley is it?"

# On song crush 'S

#### Wealdstone 1 Altrincham 4

TWO goals each from elegant midfielder Whitbread and flying winger Howard hoisted Alliance Premier League leaders Altrincham to a comfortable and impressive victory over struggling Wealdstone at Lower Mead on Saturday.

The Robins celebrated the choice of manager Tony Sanders as the first winner of the APL Manager of the Month Award with a two goal burst in the opening 15 minutes from the striking firm of Whitbread and Howard.

However, despite their three goal advantage at the end, the Cheshire side didn't have it all their own way, especially in the middle of the first half.

Altrincham can thank their former Manchester United and England goalkeeper Alex Stepney for preserving their two goal cushion.

Veteran Stepney rolled back the years, producing a string of class saves to stop a 'Stones comeback.

Afterwards, Wealdstone manager Ken Payne was understandably disappointed. "Altrincham are not a bad side but I think football

## By Pat

wise, we were not that far behind. We played some good football" he said.

"However, the main difference was the finishing. They were clinical in their finishing while we missed our chances. And Stepney didn't help by making a couple of good saves. Organisation wise they are the best side we have played."

Payne kept his pre-match promise and made changes for this game. He dropped Bobby Moss from the attack, pushed young Stu Pearce up wide on the left, restored player coach Alan Fursdon to the defence and recalled Terry Boyle to midfield.

But changes or no changes, Altrincham proved conclusively they were the better team and one could not really argue with their winning margin at the finish.

The Robins are now six points clear in the Alliance and are many people's tip for the title. In fact, they looked very close to a Football League side on Saturday, turning in a tight and polished performance.

However, it was the Stones who opened in the more aggressive mood and

Above: The Harry O reports on the first-ever meeting between the clubs at Lower Mead in front of an 842 crowd.

Fuasia

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## WEALDSTONE 2021-22

# Robins tones

## Mooney

Stepney was in action early saving from Cordice.

But a mistake by defender Fred Barwick let Whitbread in for Altrincham's first goal after only nine minutes.

## Whipped

Barwick was deceived by he spin of the high ball in he area, missed his kick and Vhitbread whipped the ball hast Cranstone and into the let.

And six minutes later the tobins wre really singing then Howard pounced on nother defensive error to teer the ball past Cranstone and in off a post.

nd in off a post.
But to their credit,
/ealdstone hit back strongand during the next 20
inutes created several
bod chances. But they
oundered on the rock of
repney.

First he pushed a drive om Watson out for a orner; kidded Cordice to oot straight into his arms a one-on-one confrontaon; anticipated Nigel H. hnson's close-in flick and nerally frustrated the ones.

In fact, Altrincham could ve snatched a third right on half-time when another defensive muddle allowed Davison to dispossess Cranstone but he pulled his shot across the face of the open goal.

The second half was barely eight minutes old when Altrincham gave another demonstration of their clinical finishing. Howard breezing through to roll the ball under Cranstone's body and into the net.

Wealdstone came back and Cordice scored the best goal of the match after 60 minutes, digging a blistering drive out of the mud which left Stepney motionless on his line as it arrowed into the top left corner. A beauty.

And shortly afterwards Wainwright was denied a goal when Stepney pulled off another diving save at the base of a post. The evergreen Fursdon saw a great run and shot fall in the hands of Stepney.

However, the Robins completed the scoring after 76 minutes when Whitbread beat Cranstone from close range following a knock down.

Payne sent on substitute Robinson for Boyle in the last few minutes and Altrincham also took the opportunity to exercise their 12th man, Wilson, but by then it was all over.



Above: Proof that
the young Stepney faced the
Stones in the FA Cup match
at Cold Blow Lane (the Old
Den) 56 years ago. Millwall were top of Division
Three but Stones gave
them a decent game in
front of the 11,794 crowd.
Right: Alex Stepney now,
set to celebrate his 79th

birthday next Saturday



## **WE'VE PLAYED YOU BEFORE...**

# Graves buries Robins

#### Altrincham 0 Wealdstone 1

WEALDSTONE made a triumphant return to the Alliance Premier League on Saturday with a goal from new signing Mark Graves giving them their first ever win against Altrincham.

The Stones showed little respect for the current FA Trophy finalists' reputation as they took control of the game from the start.

In fact for the first half-hour it was all one-way traffic with Ray Goddard a spectator in the Wealdstone goal. Graves came close to opening the scoring in the 13th minute when he narrowly shot wide and Neil Cordice saw a fine effort saved after he had jinxed past the home defence.

Wealdstone continued to press forward but had to wait until the second half to see the fruits of their labour. The game had barely restarted when a neat pass from Johnson put through Graves who ran through to clinically slot the ball past the Altrincham keeper.

Minutes later a similar move saw Johnson on the break but the keeper did well to parry his shot. Johnson was again in the thick of the action seeing a powerful header saved from a Cordice cross.

The home side launched a series of counter-attacks in an attempt to avoid defeat, bringing out a string of fine saves from Goddard. His defence held out determinedly until the final whistle carning their side a well-deserved victory.

victory.

Wealdstone: Goddard, Perkins,
Pearce, Byatt, Bowgett, Barwick, Davies,
Wainwright, Cordice (N), Graves, Johnson. Sub Churchouse.

## 'I made my Stones debut Allen Batford said: "This and you're the only new

ark Graves was in the live stream commentary box for Altrincham's visit last season and the former Stones striker had very clear memories of the day he made his club debut... at Altrincham on the opening day of the 1982-83 Conference season.

He was 21, and the club's only new signing that summer with boss Allen Batford putting faith in the team that had won everything on offer in the Southern League the previous season. "I had been a pro at Plymouth Argyle" said Mark, "so was a bit taken aback when the manager told me not to let him down. But I didn't do too badly... I got the only goal in the second half (see report, left) and we had a flying start to life back in the top division".

Mark went on to score 138 goals in 234 games for the Stones but was unlucky to lose his place through injury to talismanic striker Andy Graham in the run-in to the historic 'double season' in '85. He was plagued by a hip injury towards the end of his career and the now-60-year-had had another hip replaced - having had the first one 'updated' five years ago.

Altrincham must have hated the sight of him though... in September 1983 he scored a hat trick as the Stones won 3-1 at Lower Mead (right).

## Graves' treble strike

Wealdstone 3 Altrincham 1

MARK Graves celebrated a hat-trick as Wealdstone became the only unbeaten team left in the Alliance Premier League on Saturday.

It was his second goal from the penalty spot two minutes into the second half that changed the course of the match, writes Paul Jacques.

the match, writes Paul Jacques.

Altrincham had battled back to level the scores at 1-1 at half-time, but Graves' early strike after the break opened the door for a host of Stones' chances.

And really, Wealdstone should have run up a healthy total. Nigel Johnson was guilty of a catologue of misses and Alan Cordice missed two golden opportunities that he should have buried,

But team manager Brian Hall was happy enough with the three from Graves, and was particularly satisfied with Stones' second half display — 45 minutes of probably the best football they have played all season.

Stones opened at a gallop, winning three corners in the opening five minutes. Their early pressure was rewarded when Graves found the mark in the 19th minute. Stuart Pearce cut inside from a short corner and his low, near post cross was forced home by Graves.

A rare error from keeper Bob Iles let Altrincham in for an equaliser after 28 minutes. He somehow let the ball bobble from his grasp and grateful Jeff Johnson stabbed home the gift.

## **WEALDSTONE 2021-22**

## at Altrincham and the manager team won me the title last year player. So don't let me down'





IUMBER THREE ... Mark Graves is on target with a header to complete his hat-trick at Lower Mead on Saturday.

PICTURE: DOUG AVENT.

On the stroke of half-time keeper Gareth Smith nade a remarkable point blank save o deny Gary Donellan.

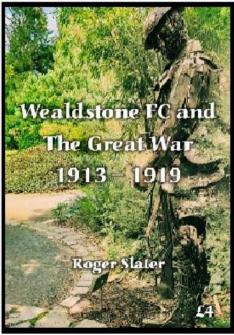
The teams had barely drawn breath fter the interval when Paul Johnson tripped Cordice for a penalty. Graves' spot kick was blocked by the keeper but the Wealdstone striker fired home the rebound.

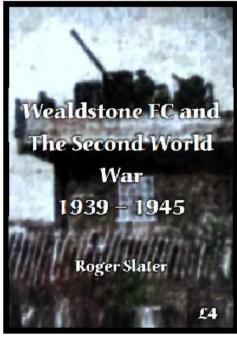
Graves completed his hat-trick in the 66th minute when he met Dennis

Byatt's cross with a powerful header that Smith could only palm into the roof of the net.

Wealdstone: Iles, Perkins, Pearce, Byatt, Bowgett, Price (Wainwright 45), Greenaway, Donellan, A. Cordice, Graves, Johnson.







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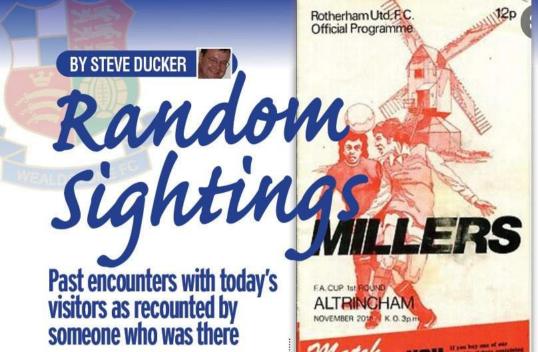
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## Saturday 20 November 1976

Few football clubs have ever been asked to form two new leagues within the space of barely a decade, but Altrincham have that distinction. A second place finish behind Macclesfield Town in the Cheshire County League of 1967-68 meant they would go into the seventies as members of the shiny new Northern Premier League, as a reward for their consistency, get an invitation to the Alliance Premier League revolution in 1979.

For all that it was in the FA Cup where the Robins really made the nation sit up and take notice. In just five seasons they reached the third round and were drawn away from home to teams from the first division - Everton, in 1974-75, and then Tottenham. And each time they went back to Cheshire with a 1-1 draw. They lost the replays, but public interest was such that they had to borrow the grounds of the two Manchester giants to fit in everyone who wanted to see them.

- 1 Cavanagh
- 2 Crossley
- 3 Brooke
- 4 Flaherty
- 5 Allen
- 6 Owens
- 7 Morris
- 8 Davison 9 Hardwick
- 10 Dickinson
- 11 Moore
- Att: 5,969

So it was kind of apt that my first sighting of Alty was on the road to Wembley, and that it fell between their two stellar results at Goodison and White Hart

But this was the first round. and for Altrincham there was no fairy tale in any sense of the phrase. Sent away to face a Rotherham team pushing for promotion to the second tier and with just one home defeat all

season, they conceded to Richard Finney (twice), David Gwyther and a rocket from left back John Breckin before half time. Alan Crawford's penalty after the break merely confirmed the formalities.

Nobody thought much of the result, a routine home win in a fixture between teams who now would be classed as two divisions apart. But Altrincham would be back another day, and that would be rather different.

#### Saturday 15 December 1979

That day was just over three years later, and this time it was in the second round. The positions had reversed - now it was Altrincham setting the pace

in their league, while Rotherham were midtable and sliding.

It ended 0-2, with both goals in the second half. Malcolm Bailey struck for the non-leaguers from close range, before Barry Howard wrapped it up with a screamer after cutting in from the right wing. And nobody in the 6,000-plus crowd - Rotherham's biggest of the season outside the

1 Stepney

2 Allen

3 Davidson

4 Howard

5 Owens 6 Bailey

7 Barrow

8 King 9 Whitbread

10 Heathcote

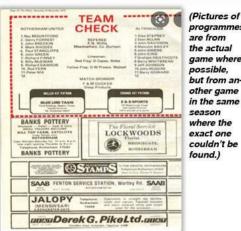
11 Johnson

Sub Wilson for Heathcote

Att: 6,083

## ALTRINCHAI





programmes are from the actual game where possible. but from another game in the same season where the exact one couldn't be found.)

local derbies against the two Sheffield teams and Chesterfield – could argue it wasn't deserved.

Predictably, the 'shock' result was the subject of what passed for a media pile-on at that time. Except the news angle was not the two goals that Altrincham scored, but the one they kept out. Rotherham had been awarded a penalty with the game finely balanced, and winger Richard Finney the two goal man from 1976 – stepped up to take it. Saved!

Alty's keeper was Alex Stepney, formerly of Millwall, Chelsea and, most famously, Manchester United. An FA Cup winner himself as recently as 1977, he had fallen out of favour at Old Trafford and gone to play in the North American Soccer League. With a spare winter on his hands, he returned and joined the Robins. And, on a Saturday evening 10 days before Christmas, found himself on Match of the Day recounting his heroics from

> 12 yards to millions of people.

The week before this game. Stepney had been at Wealdstone helping Altrincham to a 4-1 win. There can't be many European Cup winning goalkeepers who have appeared at Lower Mead and Millmoor on consecutive Saturdays. Even allowing for the fact that

it's now The Vale and the New York Stadium, his record is probably safe for all time.

#### Saturday 7 April 2007

Itrincham went on to win the first Alliance Premier League at the end of the 1979-80 season. There was no automatic promotion and relegation in those days, but election to the Football League looked nailed on. Sadly, what happened next has passed into legend, with stories of representatives of league clubs messing up the AGM by getting stuck in traffic and/or going into the wrong queue. Altrincham missed out by one vote, and have never made it to the 92 since.

They did however achieve one feat their famous predecessors could not quite manage. and won an FA Cup tie away to a top division side. Unfortunately it was against Birmingham City. who were little short of abject at the time, and it was in the post-Heysel, post-Bradford season of 1985-86, so statistically the percentage of the population who gave a monkey's about football was the smallest since the game passed from the public schools to the public consciousness over a century earlier.

My random sightings close with a trip to see Altrincham at St Albans City's Clarence Park. Both teams were in the conference, but at the wrong end. The 5-1 win that Altrincham produced that day went a long way to keeping them on the right side of the relegation zone, three points above their opponents.

My apologies to Robins fans, but I have no record of your scorers (though I have dredged a team line up off the web; hope it's correct). So let's just retrospectively celebrate your win, and the fact that 15 years on the club still competes, in an area of the country that has not been kind to its lesser footballing brethren in recent times, at the top table of the non-league game.



1 Little

2 Munroe

3 Bushell

4 Peyton

5 Coburn 6 Lawton

7 O'Neill

8 Potts

9 Band 10 Talbot

11 Chalmers

Att: 680



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	ALTRINCHAM Saturday, 11th September Vanarama National League	In memory of Arthur Rogers									
	ALDERSHOT TOWN Saturday, 18th September Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here								
	SOLHULL MOORS Tuesday, 5th October Vanarama National League	Barbara Robson	Your name or business here								
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	GRIMSBY TOWN Tuesday, 26th October Yanarama National League	Mike and Val Weston	Your name or business here								
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MATCH	l)	BALL DONORS									
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	MAIDENHEAD UNITED Sunday, 26th December Vanarama National League	In memory of Roy Couch	Your name or business here								
TOWNS OF THE PERSON OF THE PER	YEOVIL TOWN Saturday, 8th January Vanarama National League	Lew Sheppard	Your name or business here								
WIP .	NOTTS COUNTY Juesday, 25th January Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here								
	WREXHAM Saturday, 19th February Vanarama National League	In memory of Jim Klarfeld	Your name or business here								
A	TORQUAY UNITED Sabirday, 26th February Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here								
	WEYMOUTH Saturday, 12th March Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here								
	DOVER ATHLETIC Tuesday, 22nd March Vanarama National League	Barbara Robson	Your name or business here								
	BROMLEY Saturday, Zéth March Vanarama National League	Alan Couch	Your name or business here								
	CHESTERFIELD Saturday, 9th April Vanarama National League	Mick Fishman	Your name or business here								
	BOREHAM WOOD Monday, 18th April Vanarama National League	'Fans No Longer With Us' Tony Drew & Ron Moore	Your name or business here								
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#### KEY

CS = Coaching Staff

GK = Goalkeeper

CB = Centre Back

RB = Right Back

LB = Left Back

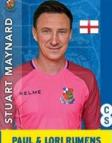
DM = Defensive Midfield

RM = Right Midfield

LW = Left Winger

RW = Right Winger

CG = Centre Forward



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RON MOORE

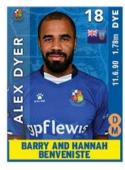






















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Tuesday 5th October 3:00pm



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		ALL				HOME								A	N/A	7		+/- Pts RESULTS					
1	Dagenham & Redbridge	4	3	1	0	11	5	2	1	1	0	6	4	2	2	0	0	5	1	6	10		2-2
2	Chesterfield	4	3	1	0	8	2	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	2	0	0	4	0	6	10		0-2
3	Boreham Wood	4	3	1	0	4	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	3	0	4	10		
4	Notts County	4	2	2	0	10	4	2	1	1	0	4	3	2	1	1	0	6	1	6	8		
5	Grimsby Town	3	2	1	0	5	3	2	2	0	0	5	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	7		
6	Altrincham	3	2	0	1	6	5	1	1	0	0	3	2	2	1	0	1	3	3	1	6		
7	Yeovil Town	3	2	0	1	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	6		
8	Woking	3	2	0	1	8	4	1	0	0	1	2	3	2	2	0	0	6	1	4	6	1-2	
9	Halifax Town	4	2	0	2	6	5	2	1	0	1	3	2	2	1	0	1	3	3	1	6		
10	Maidenhead United	4	2	0	2	8	8	2	1	0	1	5	4	2	1	0	1	3	4	0	6		
11	Wrexham	4	1	3	0	7	5	1	0	1	0	1	1	3	1	2	0	6	4	2	6		
12	Weymouth	4	2	0	2	7	7	2	1	0	1	3	3	2	1	0	1	4	4	0	6		
13	Southend United	4	1	2	1	3	3	2	0	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	5	0-0	
14	Stockport County	4	1	2	1	2	3	2	0	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	-1	5		
15	Bromley	3	1	1	1	7	6	1	1	0	0	3	0	2	0	1	1	4	6	1	4		
16	Torquay United	4	1	1	2	6	11	2	0	0	2	1	7	2	1	1	0	5	4	-5	4		
17	King's Lynn Town	4	1	1	2	5	7	2	0	0	2	0	3	2	1	1	0	5	4	-2	4		
18	Solihull Moors	3	0	2	1	6	7	3	0	2	1	6	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1	2		
19	Wealdstone	4	0	2	2	3	6	2	0	1	1	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	4	-3	2		
20	Eastleigh	3	0	1	2	3	8	2	0	1	1	3	5	1	0	0	1	0	3	-5	1		
21	Barnet	4	0	1	3	4	12	2	0	0	2	0	7	2	0	1	1	4	5	-8	1		
22	Aldershot Town	4	0	0	4	3	8	2	0	0	2	1	4	2	0	0	2	2	4	-5	0		
23	Dover Athletic	3	0	0	3	2	6	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	2	5	-4	-12		



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## **HOW THEY LINE-UP TODAY**

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**Dennon LEWIS 11** Andrew ELEFTERIOU 12 G Alfie MARIGLIANI 13

> Danny PARISH 14 Eliiah HEARN 15

Ira JACKSON 16 Nikola TAVARES 17

Alex DYER 18

Zach DRONFIELD 19 Medy ELITO 20

Charlie COOPER 24

Tecane SHROWDER 29

Jack CAWLEY 34

REFEREE Tom Bishop ASSISTANTS Paul Tomes and Daniel Jarvis FOURTH OFFICIAL

Shaun Barry OBSERVER **Michael Thorpe** 

1 Anthony THOMPSON

2 Shaun DENSMORE

7 Daniel MOONEY

8 Sean WILLIAMS

9 Marcus DINANGA

10 Josh HANCOCK

11 Rvan COLCLOUGH

12 Curtis MILLER

14 Connor KIRBY

15 Matty KOSYLO

16 Brad JACKSON

17 Ben PRINGLE

18 Kennedy DIGIE

19 David FITZPATRICK

20 Andv WHITE

21 Matthew GOULD

22 Will HALL 23 Tom PEERS

24 Joel SENIOR

25 Toby MULLARKEY

27 A-Jay LEITCH-SMITH

28 Dean FURMAN

29 Joe BUNNEY

James BERRY

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#### **NEXT AT THE VALE v ALDERSHOT TOWN**

Vanarama National League, Saturday September 18, 3pm v SOLIHULL MOORS Vanarama National League, Tuesday October 5, 7.45pm

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Dennon Lewis and Ashlev Charles celebrate Dennon's arrival off the bench to put the Stones 2-1 ahead at league leaders Dagenham last Saturday PICTURE: ADAM WILLIAMS

