

SEASON 2022-23

PROGRAMME £3



WEALDSTONE FC

Merry Christmas to you all and a terrific 2023!



TERRIFIC, TARRYN!

Tarryn Allarakhia celebrates his stunning goal at Bromley with stand-in skipper Alex Dyer

PICTURE: JON TAFFEL



V MAIDENHEAD U

BOXING DAY, MONDAY DECEMBER 26, 2022, 3PM



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Written in Stone



MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR

A very Merry Christmas to you all and it's a warm Boxing Day welcome to our visitors Maidenhead United. The last two christmases have been blighted by Covid so it'll be good to see a big Bank Holiday crowd inside the Vale - the Magpies were five places below us in the league when this was written just before the FA Trophy trip to Chelmsford. Yes, the curse of early Xmas printing deadlines!

It's not so bad these days of course, with instant access to all the info and league tables on everyone's phones and tablets and this programme will strive to be relevant with the interviews, features and reports you love. Programme Towers received a few emails earlier this month praising this publication - from both home and away standpoints - and it's great to get some feedback. If you get a few moments let us know your thoughts at wfcprogramme@googlemail.com

So I cannot comment on the tricky Trophy tie over in Essex last week and at the time of writing - in the grip of the Big Freeze - it seemed highly unlikely the game would even go ahead on the Saturday. Most likely it was rearranged for Monday 19th or Wednesday 21st and if we went through, we're also unable to bring you the draw for the Second Round!

The snowy weather put paid to the Middlesex Charity Cup trip to Northwood, so look out for news of a new date, while we also have a home Middx Senior Cup tie against Brentford to squeeze in. Following today's game we travel to face Maidenhead again at York Road on SUNDAY January 2nd (3pm) and then have two home NL games in five days against Eastleigh on January 7 (3pm) and Chesterfield on



Tuesday January 10 (7.45).

On the playing front, Malachi Napa and David Sesay have gone out on loan to National League South sides Dartford and Weymouth respectively - and both earned high marks in the NL paper for their debut displays - while Jordy Mongoy is on loan a bit further from home, at South Shields in the North east!

The striker made an explosive start for the side top of the Northern League with two goals on his debut in a 2-1 win over Radcliffe Borough, and then one in the 3-3 draw with Ashton United. His initial month's loan expires next week.

Our last NL outing was the thrilling 3-3 draw at Bromley on December 10.... not many teams put three goals past the powerful Kent side but Stones have now done it twice this season! Following on from the disappointing defeat at Barnet it was a real show of character to take the lead three times, and proves we can score goals playing a slick, quick-passing game. You'd have to go a long way to see better goals than the 20-yarders belted home by Tarryn Allarakhia and Alex Dyer - what a shame that the England quarter final game and the lure of watching the live stream at least halved our travelling fans. You missed a real treat!

It seems a while ago now but our last home NL game saw a comprehensive 3-1 defeat of Scunthorpe United in front of a 1,674 crowd boosted by 25-odd Norwegians from Stavanger. The party were on a World Cup weekender in London and said they had a brilliant time - they certainly sparked a terrific atmosphere all afternoon so let's have a repeat today from the all-Wealdstone boys and girls!

Up the Stones and here's to a winning end to 2022.

Tim

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WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2022/2023

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01895 637487

PERSONNEL

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Dominic Whyley
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LIAISON OFFICERS

James Klarfeld

MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

Programme Editor Mark Hyde
Production Martin Read,
Tim Parks, Martin Lacey
Printing People for Print Ltd.
www.peopleforprint.co.uk
wfcprogramme@gmail.com

MATCH DAY OPERATION

Match Day Operations
Manager Richard Hopwood
Safety Officer Amar Zaman
Boardroom & Hospitality
Carol Carter, Lori Gale-Rumens,
Sarah Woolley, Lynn Evans

COMMERCIAL/ MARKETING

IT Consultant Neil Rands
Commercial Richard Hopwood
(07799 077816)

FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT

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MAJOR HONOURS SINCE 1950

LEAGUE TITLES

1951 / 1952 Athenian League
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1981 / 1982 Southern League Southern Division
1981 / 1982 Southern League Championship
1984 / 1985 National League Premier (Gola League)
1996 / 1997 Isthmian League Division Three
2013 / 2014 Isthmian League Premier Division
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 Charity 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
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held by Peter Marsden Property
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GROUND REGULATIONS

People are only allowed entry to The Vale on match days subject to the following rules and regulations:

- 1) The club reserves the right to eject from the ground any person who is considered to have committed any of the following 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
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 - Using obscene or bad language likely to cause offence to others
 - Hitting the side or back panels of the Bulla stand
- 2) No spectator ball games.
- 3) The consumption of alcoholic drinks is permitted INSIDE the social club bar, garden and boardroom areas.
- 4) Vehicles parked on the Grosvenor Vale site are at the owners' risk.
- 5) Wealdstone Football Club supports the FA's 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.
- 6) No Smoking or Vaping inside the ground.

Wealdstone FC Board of Directors

From the Gaffer

STUART MAYNARD

Seasons Greetings

Good afternoon and a warm welcome to The Vale.

Due to the early Christmas deadline I am doing these notes off the back of the Bromley game and it seems like a good time to do a round up of how the season has gone so far and what we want to achieve moving into the 2nd half of it.

For us as a management team, it's been an incredible first half of the season. We are currently sat on 30pts from 22 games, which is 6pts more than we had at this stage last season. That in itself is huge progress for a club like ours, but it's even more impressive when you delve even deeper.

It is widely known that as a club we have by far the smallest budget in the league and alongside Dorking we are the only part-time teams in this division. That in itself creates a plethora of challenges for us to overcome just to stay at this level. But this season we've had to deal with a few challenges that we didn't have to face last season.

Firstly, we had a huge injury crisis a few weeks ago where we had 6 or 7 key players out. Coping with this as a club in this division with 2 key players out is tough enough but 6 or 7 out it does just become insurmountable. Then on top of that between us and the board, we took the tough, but 100% correct decision to sell Josh Umerah and Rhys Browne. Selling one striker that is your primary source of goals at that time would cause hysteria and panic at any other football club in this league, but we were confident enough to sell both of them. Most clubs would resign themselves to defeat, or at least a big dip in form as a result, but we've continued to progress and it's given us an opportunity to put faith in other players and help them to show their full abilities. That's why we are incredibly proud of what we've achieved as a club so far as it has been done by



a collective effort from the board, fans, players and everyone in between.

We are only halfway through our 46 league games though so we know we need to stay focussed and make sure we achieve the points tally that we've set ourselves as a group. First and foremost, we need to complete our primary target which is securing our place in this division for a 4th consecutive season. For a club like ours, in what is now a professional league, that would be some achievement and one we should be proud of as a management team, players, fans and as a board.

The thing I'd like to end with is just a massive thank you to the fans. There's a huge amount going on in the world currently and we appreciate every time you turn up and support us whether it be at home in a friendly, or whether it's away to an Oldham. You've made the sweet moments even sweeter and picked us up through the tough moments. There's a genuine feeling of togetherness now and hopefully we can share a few more special moments with you before the season ends.

UTS

Stuart

NEXT HOME GAME **Saturday 7th January WEALDSTONE v EASTLEIGH KO 3PM**

BY DARREN LINDEN



From the

Darren provides a seasonal update from the boardroom.

It's been another year of significant growth for the football club, on and off the pitch. Life in the National League continues to be exciting but challenging, however, we try to meet those challenges head on, striving to make Wealdstone FC the best it can possibly be.

We've consolidated our status as a National League club, finishing last season in 16th place despite the constraints as a part time club. Stuart, Matt, Craig, Rachel, Jason, Michael, Kenny and Brett have done an incredible job with the first team squad, delivering memorable performances and days, creating momentum that has carried on into this season where we go into the Christmas period in 12th place, just 3 points off the play offs.

It was a real boost for everyone across the club when Stuart and Matt signed new 2 year contracts, committing their futures to Wealdstone FC at a time when their stock is high and there was real interest in their services from other clubs. Rory and the rest of the board enjoy strong working relationships with all of the management team and we're delighted this partnership continues to grow from strength to strength.

Huge thank you to all of the playing staff too, you've worn our shirt with pride and have been fantastic representatives for this football club.

Whilst the situation with The Vale lease remains one of our most critical challenges to solve, we have spent time and money improving the facilities in the meantime to make it a much better and safer place to watch football. I think we have all seen the impact of those changes since the summer and we would like to thank everyone who has played a part in this.

Despite the challenges with water supply and

drainage, we can't thank Adam Rowlands and the Turf Doctor crew who go above and beyond to deliver a fantastic playing surface at The Vale. The transformation of the pitch since we arrived here has been remarkable.

This summer we launched an Official Club Shop with a new kiosk outside The Vale Social Club, selling our official Kelme branded kit, training gear and merchandise. This has been a roaring success and provides the football club with an invaluable and growing source of revenue thanks to our commercial deal with Kelme.

We made the strategic decision to invest in our Academy this year and appointed Cameron Mawer as its Head Coach to drive major improvements and growth. We now have 50 players training full time and studying in higher education in our partnership with The Harefield Academy school. We also introduced a programme for 19-23 year olds in partnership with Brunel University and have 25 players training full time there too. We will continue to invest and grow these schemes with the aim of attracting the best local talent outside of the pro club academies, developing a realistic pathway into our first team.

It's vital that this club plays an active and valuable role in the local community and we've seen our programmes continue to develop over the last year. We've delivered Health and Wellbeing assemblies in local schools led by our management team and players, developing new relationships that we are looking forward to growing over the coming months and years. We've reintroduced our match day mascots,

Boardroom



gifting the chance for young fans to meet the players and lead them out onto the pitch on match-days. We have delivered the Soccer in Schools programme to 8 local schools and ran 22 mixed walking football sessions. Our community activities extend beyond a football focus; we will have hosted 48 tea dances by the end of this year too! Nick Symmons, Olufela Olomola and David Sesay attended the Lady Bankes School Christmas fair recently where the players were a real hit! We have received a number of fantastic thank you letters from all the year 3 pupils at Lady Bankes and Bishop Winnington schools for the work the club has done with them.

Running this club would be impossible if it wasn't for the hard work and dedication of our loyal volunteers. It's amazing just how far people will go to help this club be successful and we couldn't do it without you. In particular we want to thank Club Secretary Paul "Fingers" Fruin and Social Club Manager Sarah Gowdy

for their tireless efforts to keep the main club and social club ticking over.

Finally, a huge thank you to our supporters for your unwavering loyalty to this club. The National League has now seen what we've all known for years, there really isn't a fanbase like ours. Hundreds of our supporters make their way to away games up and down the country to roar the team on despite a cost of living crisis. Our home attendances

continue to grow, with an average of 1,677 so far this season, up from an average of 1,407 last season - a 19% increase. Our aim is to achieve an average of 2,000 and we'll continue with our pricing strategy that has attracted a huge number of new younger supporters through the gates at The Vale.

As your board, we are very proud to represent you and this football club and will continue to do everything we can to achieve success. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

UTS.

Darren

'There really isn't a fanbase like ours'



BY SUDHIR RAWAL



The Elmslie

The National League's eagerness to take the TV dollar means most of the streaming will be away from the turnstiles



The National League announced plans for a new streaming service which launched the same day as we travelled to Bromley.

The messaging from the League isn't overly clear, but the indication is that the 3pm blackout is still in place and the new service is only available for midweek matches in the UK, whilst overseas all games will be screened. So, many would have been surprised to find that the matches on 10th December were being aired as part of a two-week trial. Apparently, this is due to the World Cup and the fact that the blackout isn't in place at the moment.

I don't think ANYONE Thinks that after the two-week trial is concluded that matches will not continue to be aired, and any evaluation will only occur at the end of the season.

Whilst the League have brought forward their own plans, much of the media hype surrounding streaming has come from the American Hollywood owners of Wrexham who want to tap into the new fans that they have acquired from the TV documentary series aired on (ironically) a streaming channel.

From public announcements from many clubs, consultation has been patchy at best.



2021

250 Stones fans on Bromley's away terrace salute Josh Umerah's goal in December last year...

Many only knew about the details from social media. If we accept that streaming is here to stay, most clubs will look to see how the money raised from the service will be split.

Ollie Bayliss, the BBC reporter who was at the forefront of information on non-league football during the pandemic, tweeted that the money would be split 15% to the League, 25% to be split across all 72 National League clubs and a staggering 60% to the club that the viewer supports. So, if by some unfathomable reason, you support Maidenhead United and are watching Chesterfield v Eastleigh, the home club receives no funds directly from your purchase, whilst Magpies would receive 60% of the ticket

2022

While there were less than three figures for the 3-3 last month



The 'Elmslie Ender' was among the first wave of football club magazines when it replaced 'Long Ball Down the Middle' as the Wealdstone fanzine in the mid-1980s. LBDTM's forerunner 'Wealdstone Whispers' was famously the THE very first football fanzine in Britain when it was published in 1971

Ender

WEALDSTONE FC
2022-23



Pictures: JOHN TAFFEL

price. It has been stated that the Football Supporters Association, the fans organisation, were part of the group that came up with the income split. The Wrexham owners were advocating that all clubs should share the funds equally.

Of more concern to home clubs will be how much income they will lose through streaming. We have two of the bigger clubs visiting us in midweek in January, with Chesterfield and Oldham travelling to the Vale. Money is tight as it is, and will be worse after Christmas and in normal circumstances, you'd expect at least 300 away fans from both midweek. Yet if the game is being streamed, and 60% of the money your £9.95 streaming ticket

going to your club, it may be quite an easy decision not to travel... and Wealdstone at best would get a 1/72nd share of £9.95 instead of all of £17. I suspect that neither will bring much more than 200 fans each. Clubs have set their budgets already based on a full ticket price, there's a lot of trimming that is going to be needed.

I don't have an issue at all with overseas streaming which the Wrexhams of the world will benefit greatly from. My brother lives in Amsterdam and he can now catch all of our games should he wish, as opposed as seeing one game a season in the flesh, but the economics of the steaming service doesn't help clubs like Wealdstone.

Let's have a look at what happened at Bromley. Last season, at the same time of year, the actual gate was 1,747, so slightly down this year at 1,674 (Ravens third lowest gate of the season) but more pointedly our away support was down from 250 to 64 (yes, 64 officially,

though those at the game said it was around 100). As a percentage of our home crowd, we have one of the best away followings in the league, our last two away games saw 260 at York and 836 at Barnet, yet we were only at 40% of the same game last season on the unofficial figure and even less on the official number.

Of course, not all of that was down to streaming, England's World Cup quarter final would have had a significant impact as getting back to this part of London from Bromley was tough and go whether by road or public transport - and the abject surrender the previous week in the derby didn't help either. But with a stream available it made life easier for those that thought twice about going. There were below average gates across the board, none starker than Maidenhead not breaking 1,500 for the visit of league leaders, Notts County, with away support well down at all games.

I didn't engage in streaming even during Covid, so won't bother with it now, even for a midweek away game that I can't make. During the Bromley game, I relied on my usual bedfellows in these circumstances, Twitter and Flashscores. Streaming doesn't cut it for me, and this skewed sharing of its financial windfall is suspect to say the least.



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"I wrestled that No.9 off the ball when he went in late on Sam.. I wouldn't have done it if I'd realised how big he was!"

Charlie Barker



Charlie Barker is back on loan with the Stones and loving it.. but he admits he was a little apprehensive about how many different faces there were in the squad after his first stint in August 2021.

The Charlton defender, who is now 19, only played three games of his loan spell last season after damaging a knee in the live BT Sport 0-0 draw with Solihull at the Vale.

"It was a mixed spell for me because we won 1-0 at Kings Lynn in my first game, then got smashed 5-0 at Torquay. We were 4-0 down at half time! Then came the Solihull game and the slight injury I was carrying got aggravated when I went down awkwardly... so I was recalled for rehab at Charlton" said Charlie, who now has ten first team appearances to his name at The Valley.

"But the striking thing was how much the team had changed when I started this current loan spell (which is due to end on January 1st). There was a whole raft of changes but I have to say that this



Jumping and dominating Paul Mullin: Charlie in action in the 0-0 draw with Wrexham at The Vale

group are really solid... it's very hard to score against our defensive unit and we use the ball so well right across the team that our opponents get tired and lose concentration.

"I think the club have done really well to get this much talent together... it says a lot when you've got quality players like Gio McGregor and Nathan Ferguson sitting on the bench".

I spoke to Charlie after the 3-1 home win over Scunthorpe (yes, I know, weeks ago but that's the problem with Christmas deadlines!) and he was right in the eye of the storm after the sending-off of The Iron's Joe Nuttall just before half time. The strapping striker lunged dangerously at Sam

Charlie shows his soft spot for the Stones players when he helps out Malachai Napa during the pre-season friendly when he turned out for Charlton... and (far right) he faces up to the torment of Tarryn Allarakhia in the same game



Howes - and Charlie's furious reaction as he wrestled Nuttall away from the scene led to referee David Marsden waving his red card at the Scunthorpe man.

"Sam took one for the team there and it all kicked off. But I didn't think I'd have grabbed Nuttall if I'd realised how big he was!"

Charlie's contract at Charlton is up at the end of the season so he's very keen to impress over the next few months - hopefully having his Stones' loan extended - and certainly his performances have made him an automatic pick for gaffer Stuart.

"My first game back at Wealdstone wasn't great, losing 4-1 at Dagenham and playing at right wing back but Stuart and Matty tweaked the shape for the next game at Altrincham and we looked much better (winning 1-0).

"Then came the home draw with Wrexham, and then the late win at York and that has to be my highlight so far. We defended very well and Cookie's late goal was fantastic... he gets

his big head on everything in the box and he should share the goals around a bit!"

Charlie, who was brought up in Sheffield until the age of ten, actually saw himself as a striker in his youth team days but that might have just been him trying to emulate his dad Richie who scored a bucketload of goals in his Football League career.

Richie, now 57, was at his most prolific at Mansfield Town (40 goals in 95 games) but he also played over 150 games in two spells at his home town

club Rotherham. Hence Charlie's upbringing in Yorkshire - but the family moved to Brighton (close to his mum Tracey's family) in 2013 when Richie was managing Crawley Town and then Portsmouth. He is now a coach at Derby County.

"Our family home is in Brighton but dad has a flat in Derby, while I'm living in digs in Sidcup near the Charlton training ground. So a lot of travelling!"

His schedule is definitely tiring but, as Charlie says, there can be no better life for a 19-year-old. On Monday he joins Charlton for training; Tuesdays see an early session for Charlton before the drive over to Harefield for Wealdstone training (or a match); Wednesdays is back at Sidcup with Charlton; Thursdays at Wealdstone in the evening and then Fridays back with the Valiants. Saturday is of course the Stones game.

"I think I'm an improved player since that first loan spell... I've got a bit bigger and stronger and I've worked on my heading. I'm not the biggest centre back but there are strategies and timing that can win you the ball!"

Charlie has three first-team appearances to his name for Charlton in League One: A 2-0 win at Crewe, and defeats at Lincoln City (0-1) and at home to Doncaster (1-2) when he was unfortunate enough to score an own goal, deflecting a whipped-in cross past his own keeper.

But he has also made seven appearances in various cup competitions - with a headed goal to his name in the 3-1 FA Cup win at Swindon last season before the Addicks exited at Plymouth in Round Two. Charlie's highlight was playing in the Carabao Cup tie at West Ham, behind closed doors sadly, in September

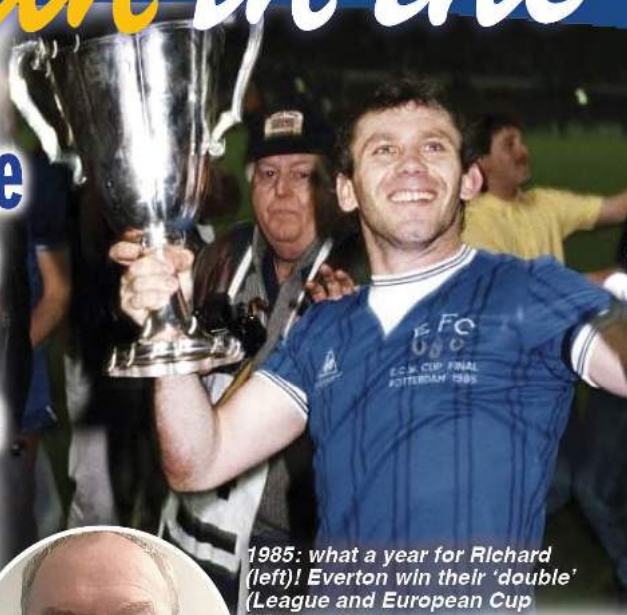
2020 which ended 3-0. Although with the Hammers fielding a £99m front three - Fellpe Anderson, Sébastien Haller and Andriy Yarmolenko - that was no real surprise.

Although Charlie faced up to the similar financial might of Wrexham recently and kept a clean sheet!



The Fan in the

Richard's had a fabulous lifetime of watching the Mighty Blues: Everton and the Stones. And he loves 'em both



1985: what a year for Richard (left)! Everton win their 'double' (League and European Cup Winners Cup).....



Your name and age? Richard Worrall – nearly three score years and ten – a legitimate 'concessionary' ST holder and share holder for several years!

Whereabouts do you live and have you always lived in that area? I've lived a fairly peripatetic (pathetic?) life since leaving school in 1971. Born in Liverpool – hence my 'first team' affiliation to the city's original club, Everton. Moved to Widnes at an early age and schooled there; started watching the Rugby League team regularly at the age of ten. However, I have lived and worked away from Merseyside for over 50 years. Spent spells in Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester before 'emigrating' to London in the early 1980s and finally settled in Harrow in Marlborough Hill in 1987, only a 'stone's throw' (groan) from Lower Mead. Moved again in 1994 to a bigger home in Harrow with two young kids in tow. Returned north in 2015 to the Newcastle area to help my wife to care for her elderly father. He died early

this year, so we decided to move back to be closer to grown up offspring and chose Maidenhead to be near our daughter Lucy, who moved there in 2020. Have lived here since September so I can at last use my ST regularly and watch more away games!

When was your first Stones game? Despite living so close to Lower Mead, I only went there on a few occasions before it was sold off. My interest at that time was focused on my 'first team' (Everton) and watching them whenever I could, mostly away from home. My first game unfortunately coincided with the relegation season from the Conference - I was actually in the away end with less than 20 Runcorn fans, as I used to watch them play in the Cheshire League and NPL now and again in the late 1960s. Runcorn won 1-0 in a drab, scrappy game. It confirmed the prejudices I held at the time – non league football was an 'inferior' product compared to first division football. It was

Stand



...while Wealdstone win the even-better non-League 'double' (Conference and FA Trophy)

also fairly clear to me that Wealdstone were in serious decline. My next visit six months later as a 'neutral' witnessed the 0-6 defeat to deadly rivals Barnet. I did, however, feel a degree of sympathy for the home fans being taunted by the large away following. Relegation was definitely beckoning on the basis of this humiliation.

So who 'introduced' you to the Stones? You could say I was 'converted' to the Stones when they were at their lowest ebb. In 1994, my son, Chris (then aged 6) joined the Junior Stones run by Dave Albert at the Old Lyonians Sports Club, located just round the corner where we had just moved. Next year Chris was chosen to be a mascot for one of the first games in Wealdstone's new home at Edgware: it was the FA Vase game against East Ham Utd., which ended in a memorable 10-0 victory. You could say that was the day I became a Stones fan. The fact the Stones play in blue was critical. I could - and would never - support a team with red as their primary colour. However, my attendance only became regular both home

and away the following year when the Stones won promotion from the bottom rung (Step 9) of the Isthmian League. The following 20 years I was able to witness all the stages of their gradual ascension to the National League. I had become more embedded with the club as Chris was playing on Sunday mornings for various Junior Stones teams managed at the time by Richard Bird, another well-known Stones fanatic

What was the first football match you saw live, or on TV? My parents got their first tv in 1961 - I have a hazy recollection of my mother sticking up for Leicester in the televised final v Spurs because they were playing in blue. Not that you could see that much on a 14in black and white screen. The first live game I ever saw in person - not on television - was in 1966 when Everton beat Fulham 3-2 at Goodison.

Do you follow any other team? I was born a fourth generation Evertonian. The family has been 'Blue' for nearly 150 years. My great grand parents had STs in the 1900s. My late father as a youth watched Dixie Dean in his pomp in the 1930s. I still have my own first ST bought for £5 and five shillings for the 1969-70 league winning season and I have been present when they have won other titles and cups. The season 1984-85 was similar to Wealdstone's - a title and ECWC winning double.

What's the most memorable game you've EVER seen? And the best Wealdstone game? The latter ECWC final which ended in a 3-1 victory against Rapid Vienna in Rotterdam is my most memorable game. In the pantheon of memories, it sits along side seeing the Stones 'giant killing' victory in the FA Trophy at Cambridge Utd in 2012. The away support that day of over 400 was incredible - the sound never stopped for virtually the whole game. The play-off away wins at Dulwich to get into the ILP, together with the away win at Margate which guaranteed the ILP title are equally memorable. though I had to miss the celebrations at the end of the Margate match to catch the train home.

What level of football do you prefer? Truth to be told I enjoy watching ALL football, be it watching / running the line for my son's Sunday junior,

CONTINUED OVERPAGE

SUPPORTER PROFILE: RICHARD WORRALL

The Fan in the Stand

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

youth and adult Sunday league games for nearly 20 years, or paying to attend professional matches at either Premier League or the National League. However, I do strongly resent the growing commodification of football at the highest level, both for international tournaments and the attempt to create a separate European Super League. FIFA have a lot to answer for allocating the World Cup final to Qatar. And the greed and avarice of the so called big European clubs to create a monopoly has to be properly controlled.

How big a part of your life is the game? If you ask my wife, she'll say I must be 'obsessed' for how much time I spend watching live football and the lengths I am willing to go to get to games. For example, for the recent York game I was up at 5:45 a.m. to get the first of four trains there - and I got home at 11:00 pm. All well worth it at the end of the day.

Have you bumped into any interesting people in your footballing life? Well, a few years ago I was privileged to spend a good hour or so in the pub after an Arsenal Everton game with a certain ex-referee by the name of Abraham Klein. Those of a certain age will recall he refereed one of the most famous England World Cup games that involved the 'Pele save' by Gordon Banks in the 1970 group game v Brazil. I strongly recommend fans to Google Abraham to read his fascinating personal history A Romanian Jewish survivor of Nazi concentration camps who became a world class referee from Israel. I've never met a fitter-looking guy who was then in his 80s. He also outlined the pressure he was put under by the Argentinian junta in 1978 to ensure they got to the final. My invite to meet Abraham and his wife came about because my son has married into the Polish refereeing 'aristocracy': His step-father-in-law is Michal Listkiewicz who refereed in the 1990 World Cup and actually was a linesman for the 1994 World Cup final. He has been head of the Polish FA and a UEFA representative. Michal has also shared many stories of his football life. His world wide football network is immense - hence the meeting with AK. His son Tomas has followed in his foot steps: he is one of the Polish FA professional assistant referees and was part of the VAR team in Qatar that Alan Shearer was berating for calling the offside decision which negated the Ecuador



The astonishing rise of Jermaine Beckford from celebrating a Richard Jolly goal for the Stones in the mid-Noughties....

'goal' in the opening minutes.

How do you fit watching football in with your family / working days? As I am retired and children grown up and fled the nest years ago, it's more an established fact that Saturdays for nine or ten months are primarily reserved for watching football. Even when I was living in the north east and could only attend a few Stones games a year, I would be watching Morpeth progress to the NPL Premier (Step 7) via the Northern League (Step 9) - their leading goal scorer was a certain Liam Henderson, ex Watford and loaned to the Stones in 2008.

What was your line of business? I ended up before retirement as a 'middle level' manager working for various inner London local authorities and housing associations.

Did the Stones flying start surprise you this season? I doubt very few Stones fans expected such a start and such a convincing victory at a

contd....



... to his amazing solo match-winner for Everton against Chelsea In May 2011

Oldham, which regrettably I missed as I was in the process of moving back south. If someone had told me even five years ago we would be winning away from home against an ex-Premier League club, my reaction would have been one of disbelief! It just shows how far the club has progressed in my time as a supporter. I did not realistically expect such form to be maintained, but having said that we could and should have got more out of most of our home games to date. Nevertheless our away form has been really good. I especially enjoyed my final 'home' game in the north east when we beat Gateshead away; getting home before 5:30 pm was an added bonus.

Who are the best Wealdstone players you've ever seen? Could you name a best-ever Stones side? For this season Jack Cooke has been absolutely immense. Every opposition supporter invariably picks him out as our MOTM and he is definitely the best defender I've ever seen in a Stones shirt. The

cameo performances by Glenn Little in mid field in the promotion IPL season puts him in the list. The finishing of Richard Jolly and Jermaine Beckford makes them 'no brainers' for inclusion in the top four players ever seen. I have omitted loan players and with the exception of Glenn Little only considered players who served us more than a single season.

The best side would be the following at their peak and ability to entertain and General consistency are...

North; Cooke Parker Cronin Sterling; Little, Ash, Pett, Jones; Jolly, Beckford

What do you think of the overall match experience at The Vale? I think there is some truth in noting the atmosphere at home games can be quite flat at times. It may be down to the team on the day not playing well enough to inspire fans. I think it is also do with the higgledy piggledy lay out of GV despite the numerous improvements in the past 14 years. This is in complete contrast to our away support. Much credit has to be given to the growing number of younger fans whose enthusi-

asm and vocal support has been fantastic at the away games I have been to this year.

What's the best away day you've experienced so far? The Cambridge Utd in FAT 2012 as mentioned earlier... Would like to also crowbar in seeing Jermaine Beckford score a late equaliser for Everton at Chelsea in the late Noughties..... a slightly surreal experience as I recalled his early days as a Wealdstone teenager at Edgware, usually coming on as a late sub in an IL game and invariably getting booked.

And finally, where do you think Stones will be in five years time? The realisation of the club's ambitions are restricted until there is some resolution of our lease of Grosvenor Vale. We are paying a substantial rent which could be used to fund to fund a proven striker which we desperately need to progress. So if this impasse continues for another five years, becoming a recognised and established NL club which has on occasion progressed to the FAC3R will be fine by me.

Opposition in focus



THE MAGPIES

The origins of senior football in Maidenhead can be traced back to October 1870 with the formation of Maidenhead Football Club, who subsequently played their first ever fixture on December 17th, 1870 against Windsor Home Park at Bond's Meadow near Maidenhead bridge.

On Thursday, February 16th 1871 the club played their first game on the York Road site against Marlow. This ground, which was then shared with the cricket club, is now officially acknowledged as the oldest continually used football ground in the world by the same club, eclipsing Northwich Victoria's old claim by five years. Maidenhead were one of the original 15 entrants for the first ever FA Cup competition in 1871-72 and the following season reached the last four before losing to Oxford University. Maidenhead reached the quarter-finals in the next two seasons, but in 1876 did not enter, although this was the only season they failed to participate. They also entered the first ever Berks & Bucks Cup competition in 1878 - winning the competition for the first time in 1895 - and the first FA Amateur Cup in 1893. The adopted club colours were Red & Black, initially worn as halved shirts, but changed to stripes in 1904.

Maidenhead FC merged with three sides before the Great War. Maidenhead Excelsior were founded in 1877 and joined forces with the Red & Blacks in 1885. Maidenhead Temperance - originally known as Maidenhead Band of Hope - amalgamated with the club in 1891 and Boyne Hill FC did likewise later that year. After many seasons of playing friendlies and Cup matches, Maidenhead FC were founder members of the Southern League in 1894 but competing in Division 2 with the likes of Watford, Brentford, Fulham and Brighton proved too demanding and the club consistently

struggled.

Eventually in 1902, after eight years of membership, they resigned and joined both the West Berkshire League and the Berks & Bucks League. In 1904 Maidenhead became members of the Great Western Suburban League where they remained until the outbreak of the Great War.

Spartans and Corinthians

After the Great War the two remaining town clubs - Maidenhead and Maidenhead Norfolkiens (founded 1884) - decided to join forces. The conflict had meant that it was unrealistic to run two senior clubs, so after a meeting in April 1919, the Norfolkiens were incorporated into the Maidenhead club, and soon afterwards a kit of black and white was adopted as club colours. There was immediate success in the first season of structured league football as Maidenhead FC won the Great Western Suburban League. In August 1920 the suffix "United" was added but, more importantly, the freehold of York Road was purchased for £1,450 from William Grenfell, later to become Lord Desborough. Two years later the club joined the Spartan League and the 500 seater grandstand - at the time considered one of the best of its kind - was opened by Club President, Ernest Dunkels.

Maidenhead United won the Spartan League title three times during their nineteen year stay. In 1929-30 season the club's goal-scoring record for a season was set when Jack Palethorpe notched 65 goals in 39 games, including an individual post

OUR RECORD AGAINST MAIDENHEAD UNITED

P54 W15 D10 L29 F66 A111 GD -45

MAIDENHEAD UNITED

HOME GROUND - YORK ROAD

CAPACITY - 4,500 (550 SEATED)

MANAGER - ALAN DEVONSHIRE

2021/22 - 17TH NATIONAL LEAGUE



THE HISTORIC YORK ROAD Pic: footballtripper.com

1919 record

of seven in one game against Wood Green Town. Jack went on to play for Sheffield Wednesday and scored in the Owls FA Cup win in 1935. In 1936, Maidenhead reached the semi-final of the FA Amateur Cup losing 4-1 to Ilford at West Ham in front of 18,000 spectators. It was during that season that the record attendance for a Maidenhead home match of 7,989 was set when Southall visited York Road in the quarter-final. During the Second World War, the club competed in the Great Western Combination.

In 1945 the club were founder members of the Corinthian League. After many seasons of relative mediocrity, fortunes changed under the guidance of ex-Brentford forward, Len Townsend, and then former Slough Town manager Jimmy Price, and the Magpies enjoyed the first real "purple-patch" in their history. In seven seasons between 1956 and 1963 the club won the league three times, were runners-up twice and also reached the third round of the FA Amateur Cup in 1960, losing to West Auckland at York Road in front of a post-war record attendance for a Maidenhead game of 5,597. As well as County Cup, County Benevolent Cup and League Memorial Shield successes during this period, the 1st round proper of the FA Cup was reached in 1960 (losing 5-0 away to Colchester United), 1962 (losing 3-0 at home to Wycombe Wanderers) and 1963 (losing 2-0 to Bath City at York Road).

Athenians and Isthmians

In 1963, United joined the Athenian League finishing a

best

placed 3rd in 1965-66. In 1973, the Magpies were elected into the newly created second division of the Isthmian League. They made a concerted effort to achieve promotion to the Premier Division in 1979 and 1980 when managed by Geoff Anthony (finishing 3rd on both occasions), and then again in 1985 under Brian Caterer and Colin Lippiatt, when they finished 4th. They remained in this division until 1987 when the Club suffered relegation for the first time in its history, and the dark days were made worse with the destruction of the main grandstand by an arson attack in December 1986. It took four seasons to get out of Division Two South, and this was achieved under the guidance of Martyn Spong in 1991. An Isthmian League record of 13 straight wins at the start of 1990-91 season was the springboard to success, but the club lost out on the title to Abingdon Town on the last day of the season. During this season, however, the team established a club record of 19 league games without defeat. Following the unexpected departure of Spong to Enfield in the summer of 1991, Gary Goodwin, John Clements and then John Watt took on the manager's job with generally moderate results and the club regularly finished in or around mid-table.

In 2016-17 Maidenhead won the renamed National League South, earning promotion to the National League with 98 points and remain at National League level to this day.

Maidenhead finished the 2021/22 season in 17th place.

Opposition in focus

MAIDEHEAD UNITED



ALAN MASSEY



WILL DE HAVILLAND

1. DANIEL GYOLLAI - GOALKEEPER

25 year old Dan has represented Hungary at U21's and his former clubs include Honved, Stoke, Nantwich Town, Wigan & Peterborough from who he joined in 2021.

2. ZICO ASARE - DEFENCE

21 year old Zico's former clubs include Oxford City & Fulham

3. SAM BECKWITH - DEFENCE

21 year old Sam joined from Luton Towns U21's.

4. WILL DE HAVILLAND - DEFENCE

Will De Havilland is a 26-year-old centre back who has joined us from Dover Athletic. Will has had a career packed with experience playing for the likes of Millwall and Wycombe.

5. COLE KPEKAWA - DEFENCE

Cole's former clubs include Hemel Hempstead Town, Chelmsford City, Billericay Town, Colchester United, Barnsley, Leyton Orient & Queens Park Rangers

6. REMY CLERIMA - DEFENCE

Born: 20/09/90 Cultured French defender signed in November 2016. Used principally as a right back but is equally at home in the centre of defence or midfield. Last season Remy often played further up the pitch, scoring five times. Combines his football with a successful career as a male model. Has National League experience with Braintree and has also played for Histon, Brackley and Lorient. 2017/18 Manager's Player of the Year.

7. SAM BARRATT - MIDFIELD

Born: 25/08/95 Prodigious talent who returned to York Road in the summer after two years at Southend United. Sam originally signed for the Magpies from Bracknell Town in the summer of 2014. He is a left sided striker who was initially used as an impact sub. Has an eye for goal, particularly at set pieces. An England C Cap, his time at Roots Hall was marred by a serious injury in training at the start of his first season with the Shrimpers, having made his Football League debut on the opening day. After a long recovery, Sam successfully returned to the first team in January 2020.

8. ADRIAN CLIFTON - FORWARD

Adrians former clubs include Boreham Wood, Dagenham & Redbridge, Bromley, Staines Town, Havent & Waterlooville, East Thurrock United, Waltham Forest & Romford

9. SHAWN MCCOULSKY - FORWARD

Clarke joined the Spireites on loan from Aston Villa in January 2021. The young midfielder started out with Villa's U9s and had a spell on loan at Yeovil Town before arriving at the Technique Stadium. He was signed permanently last summer.

10. KANE FERDINAND - MIDFIELD

Kane Ferdinand is a 28-year-old centre midfielder with experience in the championship, League 1 and 2. He is a player who can bring composure under pressure and even the odd goal to the team.

11. DAN SPARKES - MIDFIELD

Born: 20/09/91 Left winger signed in the summer from Barnet to reunite with manager Alan Devonshire for whom he played at Braintree. Dan started his career at Histon and has also played for Torquay United and Dagenham.

12. BRADLEY KEETCH - MIDFIELD

Born: 19/09/00 (Midfield) Exciting teenage prospect who signed a senior contract in October 2018 and went onto score on his full debut at Holmer Green in the County Cup. A leading light of the youth team that made a record-breaking run to the FA Cup 3rd round in 2019. Part of the club's fledgling academy programme, and the first to graduate to the first team. Spent time on loan at Farnborough last season.

14. EMILE ACQUAH - FORWARD

Emile Acquah is a familiar face at York Road after a loan spell at the club. The 21-year-old striker has made the loan deal permanent and is keen to start his new journey with Maidenhead in the 2021/22 season..

16. SAMSON ESAN - FORWARD

Sam's former clubs include Brimsdown, Potters

THE PLAYERS TO WATCH



SAM BARRATT



ALAN DEVONSHIRE

Bar Town & Enfield Town.

17. REECE SMITH - MIDFIELD

Youth team graduate who impressed with his attacking play in the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup last season, and was named on the bench in the National League.

19. RYAN UPWARD - MIDFIELD

Born: 19/05/92 All action local central midfielder who joined the Magpies from Burnham in the summer of 2014. Also has experience with Flackwell Heath and Beaconsfield SYCOB. Now the longest serving player at the club he enjoyed his best season for the Magpies in 2017/18 passing the hundred full appearance mark and capping the campaign by scoring the winner at Leyton Orient. Always makes his presence felt on the pitch, chipping in with the occasional goal.

20. KOBY ARTHUR - MIDFIELD

Koby's former clubs include Dover Athletic, Kidderminster Harriers, Macclesfield Town, Cheltenham Town, Lincoln City & Birmingham City

21. TEMI EWEKA - MIDFIELD

Temi's former clubs include Bracknell Town, Staines Town, Hastings United, Kingstonian, VCD Athletic & Dartford

24. ALAN MASSEY - DEFENCE

Born: 11/01/89 Inspirational captain who joined manager Alan Devonshire in moving from Braintree Town to York Road in May 2015. Alan is a commanding centre back who was at Cressing Road for almost three seasons, making over 100 appearances. He has also played for Wealdstone and Wycombe Wanderers. Club captain, Alan gained national fame when he gave the Magpies the lead live on BT Sport in the FA Cup 1st Round replay against Port Vale at York Road. Ever present in the title winning season, leading the parsimonious defence by example, he reached the hundred appearance mark for United early on

LAST SEASON

Tue 8th March 2022- (A) W2-0

Tue 5th April 2022 (H) D 0-0

last season. 2017/18 Supporters' Player of the Year Runner-Up. Passed the 200 appearances mark last season.

27. CHARLEE ADAMS - MIDFIELD

Adams began his football career in West Ham United's youth system, and moved in to Birmingham City in 2011. He made his first-team debut for Birmingham in the FA Cup in January 2014, appeared 28 times in the Conference Premier in two spells on loan at Lincoln City, and spent the first half of the 2016-17 campaign on loan at Scottish Premiership club Kilmarnock, before being released at the end of that season. He then played National League football for Dagenham & Redbridge (two spells) and Barnet before joining Maidenhead United in 2021

31. ALEXIS ANDRE - GOALKEEPER

Alexi's former clubs include Dover Athletic, Folkestone Invicta, Salisbury, Truro City, Tiverton Town & Bristol Rovers

MANAGER. ALAN DEVONSHIRE

Alan returned to York Road in May 2015 for his second spell as United manager, leading to great success, winning the Vanarama National League South in 2017. This echoed his earlier time in charge of the Magpies, his first senior managerial post, over seven seasons from 1996-2003, which saw an historic promotion to the Isthmian League Premier Division, and the end of a twenty seven year silverware drought with wins in the Isthmian League Full Members Cup and four Berks & Bucks Senior Cup triumphs. On his return to United his team brought Port Vale back to York Road for an FA Cup 1st Round replay in November 2015 after an unforgettable draw at Vale Park. A final league position of 7th in 2016 served notice of a tilt at promotion And after topping the table in August the Magpies held on to beat off the challenge of Ebbsfleet to win the title on the final day of the season, securing the Vanarama National League South Manager of the season award for Alan. As a player Alan was a much loved midfielder at West Ham United where he made over 400 appearances including the famous 1980 FA Cup Final win.



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BY MARTIN READ



World of Bal

Despite the Southgate revolution, it's time for England's cycle of perennial rebuilding to begin yet again

So, then - that was the weird, wonderful and ultimately underwhelming World Cup of Qatar. (I say this on the Friday before the final, so it's possible that Messi scored a double hat-trick in a 6-5 defeat to France, but let's just assume that didn't happen.) Yes, the venues were extraordinary, the supporters sensational and at least some of the football fabulous. But underwhelming, though, because, you know, England. As Adele might say, we could have had it all. And indeed, we nearly did. But for fine margins and a genuinely strange refereeing performance, we could have all been dancing in the streets last Sunday night.

Every year in the Peanuts cartoon strip, the character Lucy would hold an (American) football and invite Charlie Brown to run up and kick it. Every year, she'd then pull the ball away at the last minute leaving Charlie Brown to kick out at fresh air, falling to the ground in a heap. Aaugh!

Despite it all, the two of them would continue to play out the same routine, returning to the spot each year to see whether or not Lucy would, this time, hold on to the ball. And no matter what she said, no matter what was promised, no matter how certain it seemed that things would be different this time around, Lucy would always, always pull the ball away. Every year. Every. Bloody. Year.

This year's England defeat felt a bit like that. It's not like we haven't waltzed into tournaments high on expectation before, all superstar players, WAGs et al. But we all know that following Sam Allardyce's extensive tenure in the role, Gareth Southgate has done what no England manager in generations has managed to achieve: give England's players back their pride, strip away the pressure and create a protected, welcoming, in-it-together environment that has allowed young players to thrive. We saw Southgate's credo in full effect in 2018, again at the

Euros in 2021, and to all intents and purposes it was present in Qatar 2022. The trouble is that no matter how much the management does to ensure the team performs, two things are impossible to manage: the expectation amongst us fans that can never be adequately tamed, and the chance that something entirely random will throw out the best laid plans. All that respect for the team, all that new generation of English players stuff, all that growing tactical nous, all that recurring 'we're growing as a unit' malarkey - all of it had us hoping that this time, surely this time, when England ran up to reach for the prize in true Charlie Brown style, we'd kick for glory. It was coming Home for Christmas for goodness' sake. A semi-final, a final and... a win? Yet here we are again, like Charlie Brown, flat on our backs. Every bloody tournament. And as much as anything else, it came down to luck - bad luck, in that Harry Kane had to take two penalties in a single match, and that both the referee and VAR alike were unable to see the obvious.

World Cup? What World Cup?

The English response to losing is, of course, to hardly mention the fact. Aside from all the screaming in the national media, to the 'man in the street' the Sunday after the France games was as if the World Cup had ended there and then at that final whistle. We were all suddenly back to the cold and grey, the strikes and Christmas. Ho ho harrumph.

As for the final, well that was a case of which would you prefer, food poisoning or the flu? At time of this going to press - the Friday before the final - I'd probably prefer Argentina. Their ugliness in victory over the Netherlands in their quarter final should perhaps make me think otherwise, but to my mind it would be too painful

Right: it's a nice trophy, for sure - but never expect English hands to be holding it.
Top right: Gareth Southgate has turned England's fortunes around. Or has he?



for our friends across the channel to have gone from zero to three World Cups in the blink of an eye. (I mean, 'My Heart Will Go On' topped the charts when the French first won the sodding thing. Mobiles were being used. iMacs existed. Tony Blair. The Spice Girls in the charts. Sol Campbell robbed in extra time versus Argentina. All of it feels pretty much like yesterday.)

Let's be honest, though: a sizeable number

of us thought that a quarter final against France would be where it would end for England this time out. That was certainly the view from the folk who took part in the predictor competition I ran alongside the tournament. What's different is that this time it feels like a sense of happy, forward momentum has been brutally checked. So what next?

In 2022 tournament football there is no certainty, no divine right. However you prepare, luck is always a critical element. Should Harry Kane have taken that second pen? Perhaps not, but then what if someone else had done so and also missed? It's fine, fine margins as ever. The Brazilian shoot-out penalty back off the post; that Portuguese deflection that nearly went in; the Moroccan bicycle kick against the post in the semi-final; we saw plenty of fine margin stuff on display over a remarkable knock-out stage.

What this particular World Cup has done is confirm what we all surely already know: England winning the World Cup is something we have to steel ourselves to realise we may never see - and that we simply care about winning football's ultimate prize far too much.

Matthew Syed in The Times summed up the England experience nicely in his post-match piece: "To care too much about trivial things is what it means to be alive. The tragedy is not to lose. The tragedy is not to feel." And he's right. We should embrace the pain of watching England. Here's to 2024. And 2026. and 2028...





1ST TEAM RESULTS SEASON 2022/2023

Comp | Score | (Total) | (Away) | Lge | Goal scorers

6 BROMLEY	VNL	3-2	1,090	162	5	Olomola, Browne (P), Cook	13	2	10 (7)	4		17 (19)	7	22	3	15
13 Eastleigh	VNL	0-1	1,814	189	12		13	2	10 (9)	4		17	7	22		15
16 Oldham Athletic	VNL	2-1	6,869	152	4	Browne, Allarakhia	13	2	10	4		17	7	22		15
20 FC HALIFAX TOWN	VNL	1-0	1,197	72	2	Browne	13	2	10	4		17	7	22		15
27 Gateshead	VNL	1-0	1,104	135	1	Browne	13	2	10	4		17	7	22	3 (7)	15
29 YEOVIL TOWN	VNL	0-0	1,714	251	2		13	2	10	4	18 (22)	17 (7)	7	22	3	15

SEPTEMBER

4 WOKING	VNL	1-1	1,638	269	6	Kretzschmar (Pen)	13	2	10	4	18 (4)	17	7	22		15
13 Maidstone United	VNL	1-1	1,799	110	6	Cook	13	2	10	4		17 (9)	7 (22)	22		15
17 TORQUAY UNITED	VNL	1-1	1,366	208	6	Browne	13	2	10 (18)	4	18	17	7			15
24 SOUTHEND UNITED	VNL	0-1	2,391	TBD	7		13	2	10	4	18 (4)	17	7	22 (17)		15

OCTOBER

1 Aldershot Town	VNL	2-1	1,702	175	7	Browne (2)	13	2	10	4		17 (23)	7		3 (9)	15
4 Solihull Moors	VNL	1-2	1,326	TBD	8	Olomola	13	2	10	4		17	7		3 (2)	15
8 BOREHAM WOOD	VNL	1-2	1,386	TBD	8	Akinola	13		10		18	17	7			12 (18)
15 Boreham Wood	FAC4	3-5	1,011	315	9	Olomola (2), Akinola	13	2		4	18	17	7			12
22 Dorking Wanderers	VNL	1-3	1,416	228	12	Allarakhia	13	2		4	17	7				12
25 NOTTS COUNTY	VNL	1-6	1,710	513	12	Obiero	13	2			18	7				12
29 Dagenham & Redbridge	VNL	1-4	1,503	147	13	Habergham	13	2			18 (20)	17			3 (23)	12

NOVEMBER

1 Altrincham	VNL	1-0	1,262	80	13	Olomola	13	2			18		7		3	12
12 WREXHAM	VNL	0-0	2,817	1,100	14		13	2		4	18		7	22 (9)	3	12
19 York City	VNL	2-1	4,770	260	13	Freckleton, Cook	13	2		4	18		7	22 (12)	3	12
26 SCUNTHORPE UNITED	VNL	3-1	1,460	129	13	Kretzschmar, Obiero, Olomola	13	2		4	18		7	22	3	12 (18)
30 Edgware & Kingsbury	MSC	2-1	73	TBA	13	Mundle-Smith			2				17			12

DECEMBER

3 Barnet	VNL	0-2	2,494	836	12		13	2		4	18 (4)		7	22	3	
10 Bromley	VNL	3-3	1,674	100	12	Olomola, Allarakhia, Dyer	13	2		4	18 (2)		7	22	3	12
17 Chelmsford City	FAT3															
26 MAIDENHEAD UNITED	VNL															

JANUARY

1 Maidenhead United	VNL															
7 EASTLEIGH	VNL															
10 CHESTERFIELD	VNL															
17 OLDHAM ATHLETIC	VNL															
21 FC Halifax Town	VNL															
24 Yeovil Town	VNL															
28 GATESHEAD	VNL															

FEBRUARY

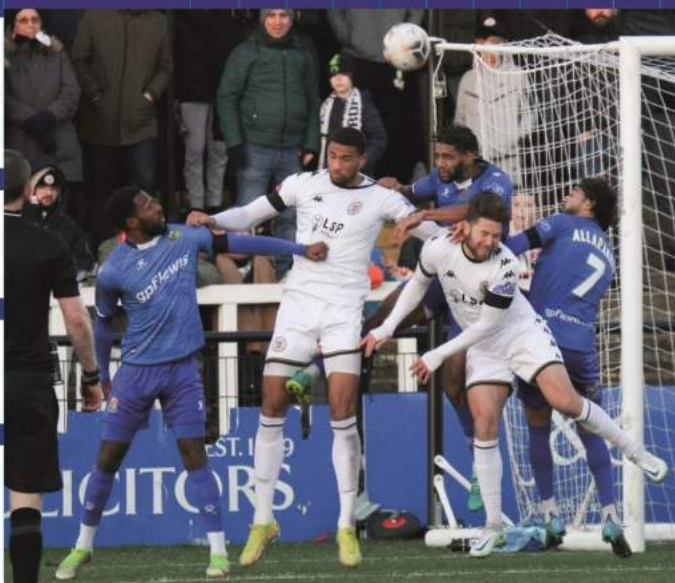
4 DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE	VNL															
11 Wrexham	VNL															
18 YORK CITY	VNL															
21 Chesterfield	VNL															
25 Woking	VNL															

MARCH

4 ALTRINCHAM	VNL															
7 MAIDSTONE UNITED	VNL															
11 Torquay United	VNL															
18 Scunthorpe United	VNL															
25 BARNET	VNL															

APRIL

1 ALDERSHOT TOWN	VNL															
7 Notts County	VNL															
10 SOLIHULL MOORS	VNL															
15 Boreham Wood	VNL															
22 DORKING WANDERERS	VNL															
29 Southend United	VNL															



FRIENDLY RESULTS

5th July	Hendon	A	W	4-0	Allarakhia (2), Trialist G, Trialist I	=
9th July	Slough Town	A	W	2-1	Umerah, Trialist	
11th July	Beaconsfield Town	A	D	4-4	Hutchinson, Allarakhia, Trialist E, Trialist B	

Malachi NAPAJ	Jordy MONGGOY	Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH	David SESAY	Nathan FERGUSON	Elijah HEARN	Tecane SHROWDER	Ojufela OLOMOLA	Mason BARRETT	Eric NEGRARU	Deje ELEREWE	Sam HABERGHAM	Dante-Astor BAPTISTE	Simeon AKINOLA	Micah OBIERO	Sam MATTHEWS	Charlie BARKER	Miguel FRECKLETON	Dante-Astor BAPTISTE	Dante-Astor BAPTISTE	Kyle BROWN	Makai WILSON-BRAITHWAITE
		23 (3)	8				9	6		5											
(23)		23	8				9	6		5	28 (5)										
		23 (7)	11 (7)					6		5	28										
(7)			8					6		5	28										
(22)			11 (7)					6		5	28										
			8					6		5	28										
		21 (10)	11	8				6		5	28										
(22)			11	8			9 (10)			5	28										
(11)		23	11	8			9			5	28										
(4)		23	11	8			9			5	28										
(8)			11	8			9	6		5	28										
		23	11	8			9			5	28										
			11	8			9	6 (11)		5	28										
			11	8			9	6		5	28										
		23	11 (5)				9	6 (2)		5	28		20 (7)	14 (11)							
		23	11 (6)				9	6		5	28		20 (17)	14							
		21 (14)	23 (16)	11 (25)			9	6		5	28		20 (17)	14	25 (9)						
		23					9			5	28		20	14	25 (17)	24					
		21 (9)	23 (3)	11 (24)			9			5	28		14		24						
		23 (3)					9			5	28		14		24	5					
			8 (18)				9			5	28		20 (9)	14	24	5					
			8 (22)				9			5	28		20 (14)	14	24						
		23	8	15(8)	29		6			5	28		20	14	24				1	X (15)	31 (17)
			8				9			5	28 (8)		20 (9)	14	24						
			8				9	6		5	28		20 (9)	14	24						



Pictures from our battling draw down at Bromley courtesy of Jon Taffel

16th July	Charlton A U23s	H	L	0-1
20th July	QPR	H	L	2-8
23rd July	Bedford Town	A	W	4-1
27th July	Billericay Town	A	W	5-1
30th July	Chelmsford City	H	L	0-3

Ferguson, Trialist A
 Trialist B, Kretschmar (2), Hutchinson
 Napa, Olomola, Allarakhia, Kretschmar, Ferguson

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Wednesday, 20th July
Pre-Season Friendly

Robert Barrett



BROMLEY

Saturday, 6th August
Vanarama National League

Harrow Windows



FC HALIFAX TOWN

Saturday, 20th August
Vanarama National League

Ruislip Windows & Doors



YEOVIL TOWN

Monday, 29th August
Vanarama National League

Russell Grant, Patron of Wealdstone FC & Middlesex Heritage

Wealdstone FC Supporters Club



WOKING

Sunday, 4th September
Vanarama National League

Keith Walklate



TORQUAY UNITED

Saturday, 17th September
Vanarama National League

Raine & Kevin Robb



SOUTHEND UNITED

Saturday, 24th September
Vanarama National League

Rolfe-East



BOREHAM WOOD

Saturday, 8th October
Vanarama National League

Harrow Windows

Steve Ford's 50th



NOTTS COUNTY

Tuesday, 25th October
Vanarama National League

Rolfe-East

Richard Finch



WREXHAM

Saturday, 12th November
Vanarama National League

Keith Davies

Optera Ltd



SCUNTHORPE UNITED

Saturday, 26th November
Vanarama National League

Rolfe-East

Michael Nutt

Sunde I.L



MAIDENHEAD UNITED

Monday, 26th December
Vanarama National League

Your name or business here

Your name or business here



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- We will work with you to ensure you and your guests get to enjoy a truly memorable experience.

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 EASTLEIGH Saturday, 7th January Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	In Memory of John O'Connor
 CHESTERFIELD Tuesday, 10th January 2023 Vanarama National League	Ruislip Windows & Doors	
 OLDHAM ATHLETIC Tuesday, 17th January Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here
 GATESHEAD Saturday, 28th January Vanarama National League	Rob Millington	Your name or business here
 DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE Saturday, 4th February Vanarama National League	Coach Forever Ltd	Lower Mead 4
 YORK CITY Saturday, 18th February Vanarama National League	Oldfield Construction Ltd	Your name or business here
 ALTRINCHAM Saturday, 4th February Vanarama National League	Raine & Kevin Robb	Your name or business here
 MAIDSTONE UNITED Tuesday, 7th March Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 BARNET Saturday, 25th March Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Your name or business here
 ALDERSHOT TOWN Saturday, 1st April Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 SOLIHULL MOORS Tuesday 10th April Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here
 DORKING WANDERERS Saturday, 22nd April Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here

BY JON TAFFEL



The Stones

All the **indications** are here for yet another **irresistible** episode of the **irritating**, often quite **irascible** but always **inspirational** Wealdstone alphabet



Good afternoon all, and welcome to another Incredible edition of the alphabet. Today it's the turn of the letter I, and I've been racking my brains trying to think of original content not already covered in seasons 1 & 2. I've pretty much given up as we haven't played many teams or had players beginning with I. So, whilst some headlines may be repeated, I write afresh with hopefully a different slant.

On the back of our visit to York last month, I must start with **INDICATOR** signs. In the case of the Indicator sign for the No 9 bus at Stonebow, then this wins an award for the most useless Indicator sign of the year. Many Stones fans would have read the information on York's website and decided this would be the best option to travel to their new out of town ground, 'The most frequent First Park and Ride service 9 departs every 10 minutes from York City Centre'.

Now, I had planned to get the ground a bit early as club photographer to capture some of the home fans' wrath following the sacking of John Askey... but an extra pint scuppered that. Nonetheless, having arrived at said Stonebow bus stop at around 1.50 pm I thought I'd be OK.

I'd just missed one bus and although it was full

and a few people didn't get on, I was near the front of the queue and didn't envisage a problem. After all, there were plenty of home fans joining the queue too. The Indicator was still showing regular buses, but perhaps the alarm bells should have rung, as the ones due 'now' simply dropped off the board one by one.

Lots of twitchy fans were hastily trying to arrange non-existent taxis to compound their woes, some simply gave up and returned to the ale. I eventually decided to walk the two and a half miles at about 2.50 p.m. I was resigned to missing most if not all of the 1st half, and laden with my camera equipment this was not in the plan.

However, a rare moment of **INSPIRATION** and I bowled into a hand car wash to see if one of the workers was free to provide a lift in return for £20. Bingo, 5 minutes later he had downed his rags and was transporting myself and the Lloyd brothers to the match. I have no idea of his name, but to him a huge 'thank you' – he even refused to take any money (if you're reading this Mark & John then you can apply to me for the refund of your £10 contribution). So, I arrived in the ground half an hour late after what seemed to be a leisure centre tour, but it could have been

Alphabet



No buses for 50 minutes! The indicator from hell at York's Stonebow bus stop a few weeks ago. But it didn't spoil a great afternoon



Left: It's February 1974 and Ilford (wearing red) take on Dulwich Hamlet at Lynn Road in the quarter final stage of the Amateur Cup. Ilford had already put out Kingstonian, Brockenhurst and Highgate Utd and are defending the Ley Street end. Left: that end ten years later. Above: the cavernous main stand at Lynn Road, now long gone

worse. To those who gave up, the moral of this tale is don't!

Anyway, back to the point of this: Thanks again to York City Council or whoever is responsible for the Indicator sign. The Indicator sign used by the 4th official showing four minutes of added time was much better received.

Of all the clubs swallowed up by the Dagenham and Redbridge monster, the one ground that I never visited was the old **ILFORD** club's home in Lynn Road. Ilford were hugely successful and notched up 4 FA Amateur Cup wins, as well as losing in a few finals – the last of which was the very last Amateur Cup final in 1974. Stones played Ilford 23 times mostly in the 1960's, with our last match at Lynn Road in April 1971 as our amateur years came to an end. The crowd of 250, was a far cry from their record of 17,000 (see pictures above). The ground also hosted a couple of matches during the 1948 Olympics, including France beating India 2-1 with a late goal. Interestingly, matches were also played in that tournament at Walthamstow and Dulwich – both great non-league grounds of the day, alongside the larger Football League grounds and Wembley.

A familiar tale for Ilford: it all went wrong when they sold their ground for redevelopment. There

wasn't enough money left for their planned new ground and they ended up ground sharing and then merging with Leytonstone in 1979.

Leytonstone & Ilford then merged with Walthamstow Avenue before changing their name to Redbridge Forest in 1989 and the famous Ilford name was lost. A new Ilford FC was formed in 1987, their website club history would suggest they are the same club as that founded in 1881, but we know the truth....

I**NJURIES** can make or break a team as we found out during our poor run of form leading into November. There is no doubt about it, any run of games with such little return including the inevitable F A Cup defeat was bound to attract the attention of some knockers.

In our case, missing such influential players such as Max, Ashley and Nathan was never going to be easy to absorb with our relatively small squad. Nonetheless we still should have done better regardless. We have had our fair share of regular sicknotes over the years which just adds more pressure to a club on a tight budget. The very unlucky Connor Stevens and Rhys Browne are just two that spring to mind, typically more unavailable than available - so much as I loved them both when playing it was very frustrating

CONTINUED OVERPAGE

The Stones Alphabet contd...

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

when they weren't. None falls into this category more for me personally than Andrew Eleftheriou who never played again after I sponsored him. Lesson learned so I've sponsored Rachel this year, but even she keeps disappearing to go to weddings, and we always lose when she does!

Moving on, and another honourable mention for Bob ILES, featured again despite having appeared in the 2004 version of this alphabet - this by virtue of him making a reappearance at our infamous FA Cup tie at Brockenhurst in 2015.

Iles was of course our keeper in our 1984-85 double winning side, but he graced us that day with his presence for one of those rarest of things, a Wealdstone FA Cup win. He wasn't the only ex-Stone there that day, Johnny 'H' Henderson from our 1973-74 Southern League Championship winning team was also chatting away to fans.

In truth I remember more about talking to those two than I do the actual match, which was extremely high on the scale of the very best boozy Stones awaydays. Two lovely guys. Iles was not my No 1 Stones keeper in fifty-something years as a supporter, that accolade has to go to Ray Goddard, but Iles was not far behind. Bob, you must come to another cup tie some time.

Something that caught my eye this week (written two weeks ago) was the detail released about the new National League streaming deal. The revenue distribution model adopted appears to be very odd, but we should be re-assured by the fact that it was recommended to the National League Board by an 'Independent Revenue Committee' that included a representative from



Above: Bob Iles (left) and John Henderson, now in their 60s, take in the FA Cup game at Brockenhurst. Below left: the pair in action for Stones



the Football Supporters Association.

In theory, Independence is a good thing, but like in so many situations, what does this mean in reality? Who are these people, who appointed them, what are their backgrounds, what do they know about football, what was their remit, and do they have any club affiliations? A bit of transparency wouldn't go amiss here. Given the criticism levelled at the method used to allocate lottery grants to the National League during COVID (highlighted again in the recent 'Gate Money' documentary), one would have thought that some lessons might have been learned by those in authority.

It all seems rather rushed, so as a supporter I want to know more about the committee, more about whether the recommendations were accepted in full or in part and why? And how do I put myself forward for this committee?

Enough of this nonsense, early programme deadlines for the New Year means I have to start on J forthwith. Hope you've all had a great Xmas!

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Boxing Day ups and downs...from the batterings of Boro to depths of Maidenhead 2020 and Slough Town

I seem to recall a light-hearted argument in these pages with Stones associate director Pete Worby after I had asserted that we always have rubbish results over Christmas.

From memory, that was just before we faced league leaders Maidenhead in the National League South here at the Vale on Boxing Day five years ago... and of course we edged a terrific game 2-1 with a late Elliott Godfrey winner at the (now) Holywell Stand end.

Pete had responded to my Xmas gripes by recalling a 4-0 win over Bromley and some decent results in the 1970s, and he was rightfully smug as we passed each other by the beer garden, with Mr Godfrey being hugged by all and sundry.

But since then (and I hate to say this) we have had some TERRIBLE results on this afternoon in the last few years.

We got a 1-1 at Hampton & Richmond in 2017, true, but on the last few Boxing Days we have been trashed at home 3-0 by Slough in 2018, 2-1 again by Slough the following year just before Covid exerted its grip and were then mullered 4-0 at Maidenhead in 2020 in the behind closed doors season.

A grim watch indeed on the live stream for the vast majority of our fans. Although it was one of those afternoons when everything went in for the home side while we committed hari kiri with some calamitous defending.

Anyway, it sent me thinking about the highs and lows of December 26, football wise. That one day when we escape the family, er, disappointingly have to leave the family at the fireside amidst all that Christmas excess yet have to traipse home a few hours later feeling more like kicking the cat.

HIGHS

THE TRIPLE WHAMMY:

Boxing Day 2005: Wealdstone 4 Harrow Borough 1

Boxing Day 2007: Harrow Borough 1 Wealdstone 5

Boxing Day 2011: Wealdstone 4 Harrow Borough 0

Having never before beaten our local rivals in a league game (okay, there had only been one before and that was a bile-laden 0-3 home defeat in September 2003) can you imagine the joy when we flattened the Reds at our Chestnut Avenue home this Boxing Day 17 years ago?

Two goals apiece from our celebrated strike partnership of Richard Jolly and Jermaine Beckford saw 400 home fans streaming out of the Northwood ground with big, daft grins ready to tackle the left-over turkey.

But what we didn't know was that this one-sided clash provided the spark for a dramatic swing in fortunes across to the blue side of the borough. Between 1985 and 2005 we had beaten Borough just once in 15 competitive games. Since this Boxing Day tipping point the Stones' record in 16 league meetings is an astonishing Won 11 Drew 4 and Lost 1! And even better than winning





Celebrations for Ashe, Gray and Keiron Forbes

It's derby delight for Wealdstone

Stones goal aces leave Boro' blue

Wealdstone 4 Harrow Borough 1

SUPER strike duo Jermaine Beckford and Richard Jolly shared the goals on Monday as Wealdstone wiped out the bitter memory of last season's double demise at the hands of Borough and gained their first ever league win over their arch rivals.

On a day when the defending of both sides gave a clear indication as to why they are struggling at the lower end of the Ryman Premier table, the razor sharp Beckford and Jolly took full advantage of Harrow's error near as clinical.

However, it was the visitors who opened the scoring as early as the fourth minute when the Wealdstone defence failed to close down Daniel McGonigle and the Harrow forward let fly from 20 yards, the ball skimming past diving keeper Luke Woods into the corner of the net.

Borough might have added to their lead as Chris Zoricich stopped another McGonigle effort, then Elliot Onochie got round the home defence and, when McGonigle dummed his cross, Kwasi Frempong's shot was blocked.

Harrow were inches away from doubling their lead in the 37th minute, Daniel Blanchett's corner was cleared by Ross White, but Frempong latched on to the ball 35 yards out and hit a blistering shot which crashed off the underside of the bar with Woods grabbing the loose ball off Onochie's toe.

Wealdstone had enjoyed plenty of possession but created little until, a minute before the break, they drew level. White's free kick was floated to the near post where Jolly beat Nielsen in the air and sent a twisting header past Keita Karamoko.

Borough were on top at the start of the second half

and thought they had regained the lead after 53 minutes when Wayne Walters headed in Blanchett's corner, but referee Haines disallowed it, deeming the Borough skipper to have fouled a defender in the act of scoring.

That let off seemed to spark Stones into life and, after 57 minutes, they went in front. Following a sweeping move down the right, involving Lee Chappell and Kenny Beaney, Beckford picked up the ball and, with superb piece of skill, twice dummed his marker before firing a shot across Karamoko into the far corner.

Borough were close to an equaliser with their best move of the match when Onochie found James Beni who put Daniel Leech through for a goalbound shot which was pushed away by Woods.

However, with 65 minutes gone, Stones stretch their advantage. Beckford headed on a long clearance from Woods and Jolly ran through to fire and Karamoko into the net.

The final quarter saw Stones well on top and, with three minutes to go, the points were sealed with fourth goal. Jolly's released Beckford, whose shot was parried by Karamoko but rebounded off Walters back into the path of Beckford and he slotted home.

The local bragging rights had moved from one side of the borough to the other.

For Harrow it was their sixth successive league defeat away from home. For Stones it was their heaviest win over their neighbours since 1981 and saw them climb above Borough in the league table.

Wealdstone: Woods, Palmer, Keapercio (Ryan), White (Cooper), Zurich, Montgomery, Beaney, Hall, Beckford, Jolly, Burnell, Chappell
Other subs: Ashton, Turner

Harrow Borough: Karamoko, Nielsen, Blinzhart, Walters, Nyong (Hauke), Frempong (Fitzsimon), Bent, Goggin, Onochie, McGonigle, Leech, Omer
Other subs: Brydon, Hamill, Nicholson

Attendance: 460



Ryan Ashe crashes a 25-yarder past Boro keeper Andray Baptiste to open the scoring in the Dec 27th Massacre



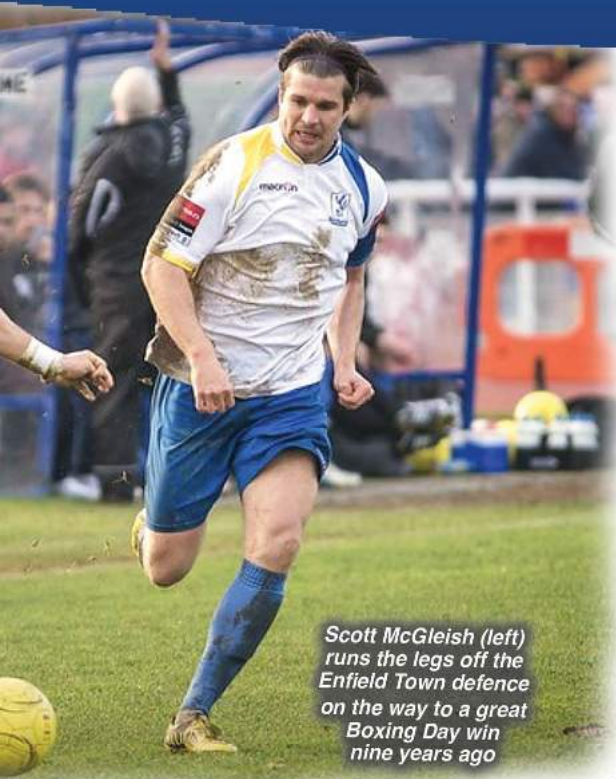
James Gray, playing as an emergency striker, coolly converts for 2-0 in the crushing 6-0 victory

Above: the Harrow Observer reports on the Stones' sensational 4-1 win on Boxing Day 2005. Little did we know it would become de rigeur in Boro games

the 'Triple Whammy' as described above, our first clash with Harrow since moving into The Vale (which wasn't actually on Boxing Day but on December 27th) ended in a 6-0 whitewash ever since known as **The Borough Massacre**.

A mammoth crowd of 780 - twice the average so far in that first Ruislip season - noisily greeted the goals as James Gray (preferred to Greg Ngoyi) rattled in two,

CONTD OVERPAGE...



Scott McGleish (left) runs the legs off the Enfield Town defence on the way to a great Boxing Day win nine years ago



2016: Our last win on Boxing Day as Godfrey pops up with a belter!

December 26, 2016, Vanarama Conference South: Wealdstone 2 Maidenhead Utd 1

The Stones' last Boxing Day win came six years ago ... but what a win it was! With Gordon Bartlett's side now in the Conference South, we faced league leaders (and eventual runaway champions) Maidenhead United at the Vale in front of a bouncing 1,109 crowd.

This time it was the experienced Elliot Godfrey who netted a heroic late winner at the Bulla End to settle a terrific game - Elliot Benyon had put us ahead from a low Ciaran Brown cross but the expectations were on a Magpies win when the outstanding Dave Tarpey levelled from the penalty spot.

But with Matt Whichelow and Ricky Wellard in great prompting form, Godfrey latched into the ball 25 yards out to fire past Carl Pentney into the roof of the net (celebrating above).

Six years... isn't it time we won again on Boxing Day?

CONTD OVERPAGE...

celebration that afternoon but he was a huge component in the team that romped to the Ryman title by 11 points.

Scott stayed with Gordon Bartlett for five seasons, more than any of his previous 19 clubs, and his current tally stands at 1,077 appearances and 357 goals. Unbelievable.



George Duck makes it a Happy Christmas

By Colin Pope

Barnet 1, Wealdstone 1.

If Father Christmas arrived early for Wealdstone at Dover last Saturday, he came late for Barnet on Boxing Day, and Wealdstone were most unlucky not to win the two points they so richly deserved after a smooth performance which gave Barnet's biggest gate for a long time full value.

It needed just a little more finish by Wealdstone's forwards for Barnet to have been well and truly hammered, and there were commiserations all round afterwards for Wealdstone from the sporting Barnet directors.

After Barnet had taken a shock lead, entirely against the run of play, midway through the first half, it was fitting that the equaliser should stem from the finest move of an entertaining match. The ball moved with precision down Wealdstone's left flank for Eglite to put over a crisp low centre, and Moss cunningly let the ball run under his feet to the waiting George Duck who crashed it into the roof of the net leaving McClelland with no chance.

Most unusually, both sides fielded two players each who previously played for the opposition. Barnet had the Evans twins, while Wealdstone fielded ex-Underhill men in Godfrey and Moss. To add to the irony, not one of the four

some excellently timed tackles and interceptions, and has the twin assets of youth and mobility.

Watson returned after his

thought he had a magnificent game.

But for much of the game Wealdstone were in pedestrian mood, and I still think the urgent need is for a midfield

clubs from 16 to 20 and cherry picked four of the top Athenians to join: Enfield, Hitchin Town, Sutton United and Hendon.

If the Stones felt a bit miffed, having finished third behind Enfield and Barnet, imagine how the Bees reacted having been perennial champions and regular Amateur Cup finalists.

And the next summer when Wealdstone, finishing a distant fifth in the table, found themselves invited to the Isthmians while Barnet were again Champions!

It led to the Hertfordshire club - then based at Underhill in the centre of town, regularly pulling in 4,000 crowds - finally despairing of progressing in the amateur game and deciding in 1965 to turn professional and join the Southern League.

The 'Ambers' (strange now that they play in bright orange) quickly won promotion to the SL Premier Division and thus, when the Stones joined the semi-pro ranks in 1971 to follow in Barnet's footsteps, we were a lowly Division One side while they were a powerful outfit glorying in cup runs (losing in a replay to QPR in 1973 and reaching the FA Trophy final the previous season).

When we finally won the Div One South in 1974 one of the thrills was that we'd be facing Barnet once again in league games for the first time in ten years. And the Boxing Day trip to Underhill was as enticing as recent visits to The Hive to face the club's 21st century reincarnation.

This was an 11.30am kick off and as exciting as Christmas Day itself for this 17 year old... my first visit to Underhill apart from that

1974: It's Duck on the Xmas menu!

Boxing Day 1974, Southern League Premier Division: Barnet 1 Wealdstone 1

Another memorable Boxing Day to throw in the mix was this first 'professional era' visit to face Barnet who (to my mind) will always be the Stones' fiercest rivals.

Even older fans than myself will recall the clubs' contests in the Athenian League of the 1950s and 60s when the Bees invariably finished top of the pile but were endlessly snubbed by the administrators of the Isthmian League - regarded as the top amateur league in the South. No such thing as automatic promotion in those days but it defied logic that Barnet were so regularly passed over while lesser clubs got the nod to join the Isthmians. It came to a head in the summer of 1963 when the IL decided to increase its member

HIGHS

my first visit to Underhill apart from that



George Duck in the thick of it

LOWS 1975: Dismal Christmas as Stones hit the buffers big time

QPR 3rd Round replay the previous year when 10,000 crammed into the sloping ground and witnessed an emphatic 3-0 win for the top-flight side featuring Bowles, Givens and Thomas et al.

The Stones were showing up well in our first season in the SL Prem, playing a brand of smooth flowing football and we should have taken Barnet apart on a gluepot pitch. Since we'd turned pro we'd faced the Bees four times - two 1-1 draws -and a win in friendlies, plus a 4-1 London Challenge Cup win at lower mead in '73 - so the Stones had nothing to fear.

But all we had to show was a single point thanks to George Duck's leveler ... and the return game at Lower Mead at Easter also finished 1-1 in front of a 1,700 crowd.

Barnet were actually relegated that season while Wealdstone ended up in 8th place. And the two clubs' fortunes fluctuated over the next decade - Stones as top dogs in the mid-80s until the Bees sparked into life to dominate the Conference in the early 90s and thence to the Football League and the heights of League One.

The Stones were in the doldrums by the mid-90s, effectively SEVEN divisions lower! Which makes the recent parity between the clubs all the more remarkable.

Boxing Day 1975, Southern League Premier Division: Wealdstone 0 Wimbledon 2

I think we've concentrated FAR too much on the Christmas lows in this programme in past years, so let's just revisit the dismal Xmas of 1975.

It came just a year after the exuberance of the 1974 festive period - when the Stones followed up the highlighted Barnet draw with a 1-0 win over champions Wimbledon at Lower Mead in front of a heaving 3,400 crowd - and even more disappointingly, it came just a few weeks after a thrilling autumn in which we had been edged out of the FA Cup 4-3 at Third Division Aldershot and were realistic contenders for the Southern League title.

Eddie Presland's Wealdstone side were third in the table heading into the Christmas period, with just that one Aldershot defeat in 13 games until we were surprisingly hammered 3-0 at misty, mid table Grantham on December 20.

Never mind we thought, we've got Wimbledon at lower Mead on boxing Day, another big crowd and another dramatic win... but sadly, that was way wide of the mark.

CONTD OVERPAGE...

Bobby Moss (left) wins the ball to head into the Wimbledon net... moments later a terrible decision alters whole mood of the Boxing Day game



Wealdstone never look like potential champs

By Daragh Croxson

Wealdstone 0, Wimbledon 2

The Dons would end up as league champions again (and a 3rd successive title the next year meant that even the Football League were forced to let them in) and on a dank, cold afternoon the Stones were misfiring again and we subsided to a 2-0 defeat.

There was one moment in the game I'll never forget, though. With the game evenly poised at 0-0 in the first half, Bobby Moss rose brilliantly to meet a right wing cross moments before Dons' celebrated keeper Dickie Guy and headed into the Cinema End net to set off wild celebrations. Then we noticed Guy rolling around in mock agony clutching his head.

Imagine the howls of anguish when referee Taylor signalled the expected goal but a free kick for a 'foul' on the keeper!

This was a travesty of a decision and of course, the Dastardly Dickie was quickly up on his feet again with a not-too-subtle wink at the physio that sent the crowd into paroxysms of fury.

It didn't help that the match report in the Harrow Observer (shown on previous page) actually had a picture of the incident which clearly shows Guy to have come off second best.

WEALDSTONE's title pretences to Wimbledon's Southern League crown looked sicker than a Christmas reveller the morning after as they sadly surrendered their unbeaten home record at Lower Mead on Boxing Day.

And as they woke up in the cold light of day after the earlier euphoria of their Cup run to find themselves trailing 0-2 they sent most of the biggest crowd of the season — 2,167 fans — home disappointed and dispirited.

For 'Stones self-proclaimed heirs apparent to the Premier Division championship, never looked capable of shortening Wimbledon's reign in this scrappy, fraught affair.

And as alarming as the ease with which the Dons picked them off at the back was their lack of thrust up front as they played out their third game on the trot without finding the net.

Top scorer George Duck did get on to the scoresheet but at the wrong end, after a horrific mix-up in the defence, to put Wimbledon on the road to victory.

And after Cooke had bundled home the visitors' second early in the second-half Wealdstone were unable to make any real impact as they struggled to retain that home record.

And nowhere was their lack of firepower more obvious than in midfield where John Lewis, in

midfield with Ray Fulton and Bobby Moss, substituted for the second game running, never showed the sharpness or cohesion to breach Wimbledon's back line and set Duck, Byrne and Henderson free.

Fulton looked completely lost out on the left and was only able to produce a handful of telling passes throughout the 90 minutes.

SLAPDASH

Time and time again the front three were played into trouble by slapdash passing from the middle and if John Henderson on the wing had not made a least out of crumbs 'Stones impotence near goal would have been even more marked.

They started brightly enough forcing early saves out of Guy in the opening minutes as first Henderson and then Duck tried to prise a way through.

But the first real chance came at the other end after 11 minutes when Bassett's free kick caught the defence napping and found Cooke free in the area.

The number eight shot straight into Morton's arms but it was a warning Wealdstone should have heeded.

At this stage, however, they were still charging forward for the vital breakthrough and from Byrne's pass Duck was only foiled after 22 minutes by Guy's diving save down at the post.

Back came Wimbledon in fluctuating but rarely fluent first-half and Mahon missed; sitter after Morton could only parry Holmes' shot across the face of goal.

But for all their deficiencies 'Stones all but snatched the lead after 26 minutes when Moss with a well timed run and neat headed emphatically home over Guy's raised fists from Fulton's corner.

But referee Mr. Taylor ruled that the mid fielder had fouled the keeper and from that moment the balance of power swayed dramatically Wimbledon's way.

And the beginning of the end for 'Stones when it came, five minutes later, was of tragically comic proportions as they gave away a goal plucked straight from the annals of the Keystone Cops.

Bassett tapped a free-kick over the edge of the area to Mahon who made up for his earlier lapse by clipping a deceptively lazy ball across the goalmouth.

Morton came scurrying over to cover the cross but hesitated when it seemed destined to go wide and was left stranded as it rebounded off the inside of the post and bounced invitingly back into the six yard box.

Amid all the confusion Duck, racing back to cover, wildly sliced the ball into the back of

his own net off the legs of centre-half John McCormick.

Despite a spirited rally that saw Guy pull off fine saves from Duck, Henderson and Lewis 'Stones faced an uphill struggle from then on.

PUNCHES

And before half-time the tension showed when Watson started swopping punches with Tilley in the worst of a series of confrontations. Both players were lucky not to be sent off let alone escape without a booking.

Three minutes after the interval Cooke seemed to put the result beyond doubt when he crashed the ball home but his effort was disallowed, apparently because a colleague had strayed onside.

Desperate to retrieve at least a point Wealdstone then put on Egilte for Moss after 50 minutes but seconds later found themselves two down when Holmes headed on a corner that ricocheted off Bryant before Cooke put the ball away.

And with so many passes going astray flustered Wealdstone never looked like closing the gap.

But the moment of magic was not repeated and even the tactic of flinging McCormick into the forward line and pulling Byrne back into defence failed to bring any crispness to their play.

And after the earlier triumphant march up the table manager Eddie Presland now faces a long, dour winter's campaigning if the side are to recapture the aggression and power that hauled them up the table.

Wealdstone: Morton; Watson, Kinnear, McCormick, Fairclough; Lewis, Fulton, Moss (Sub: Egilte 50 mins); Duck, Byrne, Henderson.

APPEARANCES



2022/2023

CORRECT AS AT 12/12/2022	VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE			FA CUP			FA TROPHY			MIDDLESEX CHARITY CUP			TOTALS			WEALDSTONE CAREER		
	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G
Akinola, Simeon	1	5	1		1	1				1			2	6	2	2	6	2
Allarakhia, Tarryn	21	1	3	1									22	1	3	39	2	7
Baptiste, Dante										1			1			1		
Barker, Charlie	6												6			6		9
Barrett, Mason	9	1			1					1			10	2		10	2	
Brown, Kyle										1			1			1		1
Browne, Rhys *	10	3	7										10	3	7	30	13	13
Charles, Ashley	18			1									19			82	15	1
Cook, Jack	21		3	1									22	3		64		7
Dyer, Alex	7	6	1	1									8	6	1	178	32	36
Elerewe, Ayodeji *	13				1								14			14		
Ferguson, Nathan	15	2								1			16	2		33	2	1
Freckleton, Miguel	5		1										5		1	5		1
Habergham, Sam	15	2	1	1						1			17	2	1	17	2	1
Hearn, Eli										1			1					3
Howes, Sam	22				1								23			30		
Hutchinson, Dominic	11	4			1					1			13	4		13	4	
Kinsella, Lewis	8	4											8	4		8	4	
Kretzschmar, Max	11	3	2										11	3	2	11	3	2
Matthews, Sam *	1	2											1	2		1	2	
McGregor, Giovanni	7	2			1					1			9	2		9	2	
Mongoy, Jordy		3											3					3
Mundle-Smith, Jaydn	6	5			1					1	1		8	5	1	32	12	3
Napa, Malachi	2	7								1			3	7		3	7	
Obiero, Micah	8	1	2										8	1	2	8	1	2
Olomola, Olufela	17	1	5	1		2							18	1	7	18	1	7
Sesay, David	8	6			1					1			9	7		19		10
Shrowder, Tecane										1			1			2		2
Wilson-Braithwaite, Makai											1		1			1		1



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*All above subject to current COVID restrictions.

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	FC HALIFAX TOWN Saturday, 20th August Vanarama National League	Toby Jackson (Lapels)	
	YEOVIL TOWN Monday, 29th August Vanarama National League	Duncan & Sandra Towell In memory of Arthur Rogers	Sardi's Law Firm
	WOKING Sunday, 4th September Vanarama National League	Mike & Val Weston	
	TORQUAY UNITED Saturday, 17th September Vanarama National League	Stuart Kane	
	SOUTHEND UNITED Saturday, 24th September Vanarama National League	In Memory of Kat Kelly	
	BOREHAM WOOD Saturday, 8th October Vanarama National League	Nick Woolford	
	NOTTS COUNTY Tuesday, 25th October Vanarama National League	The Rawden Family	



 WREXHAM Saturday, 12th November Vanarama National League	In Memory of Kat Kelly	Jim Kane
 SCUNTHORPE UNITED Saturday, 26th November Vanarama National League	Tony Platt	
 MAIDENHEAD UNITED Monday, 26th December Vanarama National League	In Memory of Roy Couch	Mike Pullin & Graham Clark
 EASTLEIGH Saturday, 7th January Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 CHESTERFIELD Tuesday, 10th January 2023 Vanarama National League	Glencar Construction	Tony Paulley
 OLDHAM ATHLETIC Tuesday, 17th January Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 GATESHEAD Saturday, 28th January Vanarama National League	Graham Clark & Mike Pullin	Your name or business here
 DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE Saturday, 4th February Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 YORK CITY Saturday, 18th February Vanarama National League	In Memory of Kat Kelly	Your name or business here
 ALTRINCHAM Saturday, 4th March Vanarama National League	Toby Jackson (Lapels Badges)	Your name or business here
 MAIDSTONE UNITED Tuesday, 7th March Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 BARNET Saturday, 25th March Vanarama National League	Alan Couch	Your name or business here
 ALDERSHOT TOWN Saturday, 1st April Vanarama National League	Your name or business here	Your name or business here
 SOLIHULL MOORS Tuesday 10th April Vanarama National League	Mick Fishman	Your name or business here
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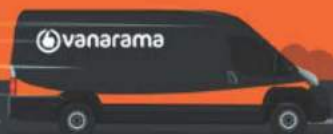
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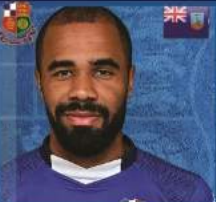
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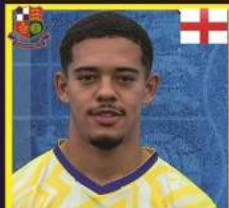
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VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE PREMIER TABLE @16/12/22

	ALL						HOME						AWAY						RESULTS		
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS	(H)
1 Notts County	23	16	6	1	59	21	11	8	3	0	22	4	12	8	3	1	37	17	38	54	1-6
2 Wrexham	22	15	5	2	55	19	10	10	0	0	37	9	12	5	5	2	18	10	36	50	0-0
3 Chesterfield	21	13	4	4	43	25	11	9	0	2	24	12	10	4	4	2	19	13	18	43	
4 Woking	22	12	4	6	37	22	12	7	2	3	22	13	10	5	2	3	15	9	15	40	1-1
5 Barnet	21	11	3	7	40	38	11	7	1	3	17	15	10	4	2	4	23	23	2	36	0-2
6 Southend United	22	9	7	6	30	20	11	5	4	2	15	8	11	4	3	4	15	12	10	34	0-1
7 Solihull Moors	21	9	6	6	35	24	11	5	4	2	20	12	10	4	2	4	15	12	11	33	1-2
8 Boreham Wood	21	8	7	6	25	21	10	3	4	3	12	12	11	5	3	3	13	9	4	31	1-2
9 Eastleigh	23	9	4	10	26	29	12	8	2	2	17	10	11	1	2	8	9	19	-3	31	0-1
10 Halifax Town	22	9	4	9	21	27	11	7	1	3	13	11	11	2	3	6	8	16	-6	31	1-0
11 Bromley	21	8	6	7	31	29	11	5	4	2	16	11	10	3	2	5	15	18	2	30	3-2 3-3
12 Wealdstone	22	8	6	8	26	33	10	3	4	3	11	14	12	5	2	5	15	19	-7	30	---
13 Dagenham & Redbridge	20	8	5	7	34	36	11	6	3	2	24	18	9	2	2	5	10	18	-2	29	1-4
14 Altrincham	23	7	8	8	33	42	11	5	3	3	16	13	12	2	5	5	17	29	-9	29	1-0
15 Dorking Wanderers	24	8	5	11	42	54	12	6	2	4	23	24	12	2	3	7	19	30	-12	29	1-3
16 York City	23	7	7	9	26	24	11	3	4	4	11	13	12	4	3	5	15	11	+2	28	2-1
17 Maidenhead United	23	8	4	11	25	31	12	5	3	4	15	14	11	3	1	7	10	17	-6	28	
18 Aldershot Town	21	8	2	11	30	33	10	4	1	5	16	15	11	4	1	6	14	18	-3	26	2-1
19 Yeovil Town	22	4	11	7	17	21	12	4	5	3	11	10	10	0	6	4	6	11	-4	23	0-0
20 Maidstone United	24	5	6	13	30	53	12	3	5	4	14	18	12	2	1	9	16	35	-23	21	1-1
21 Oldham Athletic	21	5	5	11	22	33	10	5	1	4	17	17	11	0	4	7	5	16	-11	20	2-1
22 Torquay United	23	4	6	13	27	46	11	1	5	5	20	26	12	3	1	8	7	20	-19	18	1-1
23 Gateshead	22	3	8	11	25	38	11	2	5	4	15	17	11	1	3	7	10	21	-13	17	1-0
24 Scunthorpe United	23	3	7	13	27	47	11	3	2	6	17	25	12	0	5	7	10	22	-20	16	3-1

Stones on the road



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Yeovil Town

National League

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Wrexham

National League

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WEALDSTONE

Royal Blue/White/White



MAIDENHEAD UTD

White & Black stripes



- G Dante-Astor BAPTISTE 1**
- Jack COOK 2**
- Lewis KINSELLA 3**
- Ashley CHARLES 4**
- Miguel FRECKLETON 5**
- Mason BARRETT 6**
- Tarryn ALLARAKHIA 7**
- Nathan FERGUSON 8**
- Olufela OLOMOLA 9**
- David SESAY 11**
- Giovanni McGREGOR 12**
- G Sam HOWES 13**
- Micah OBIERO 14**
- Elijah HEARN 15**
- Dominic HUTCHINSON 17**
- Alex DYER 18**
- Malachi NAPA 19**
- Simeon AKINOLA 20**
- Jordy MONGOY 21**
- Max KRETZSCHMAR 22**
- Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH 23**
- Charlie BARKER 24**
- Sam HABERGHAM 28**
- Tecane SHROWDER 29**
- G Eric NEGRARU 30**

- 1 Dan GYOLLAI**
- 2 Zico ASARE**
- 3 Sam BECKWITH**
- 4 Will DE HAVILLAND**
- 5 Cole KPEKAWA**
- 6 Remy CLERIMA**
- 7 Sam BARRATT**
- 8 Adrian CLIFTON**
- 9 Shawn McCOULSKY**
- 10 Kane FERDINAND**
- 11 Dan SPARKES**
- 12 Bradley KEETCH**
- 14 Emile ACQUAH**
- 16 Samson ESAN**
- 17 Reece SMITH**
- 19 Ryan UPWARD**
- 20 Koby ARTHUR**
- 21 Temi EWEKA**
- 22 Josh KELLY**
- 24 Alan MASSEY**
- 27 Charlee ADAMS**
- 31 Alexis ANDRE**

RESULT: WEALDSTONE MAIDENHEAD UNITED

REFEREE AND OFFICIALS To be announced

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LOANEE WHO JUST KEEPS
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