

# HOW THEY LINE-UP TODAY



## WEALDSTONE

Royal Blue/White/White



## ALDERSHOT TOWN

Yellow/White/White

- G Sam HOWES 13
- G Dante-Astor BAPTISTE 1
- Jack COOK 2
- Lewis KINSELLA 3
- Ashley CHARLES 4
- Mason BARRETT 6
- Tarryn ALLARAKHIA 7
- Nathan FERGUSON 8
- Olufela OLOMOLA 9
- Corie ANDREWS 10
- David SESAY 11
- Giovanni McGREGOR 12
- Micah OBIERO 14
- Elijah HEARN 15
- Sonny Blue LO-EVERTON 16
- Dominic HUTCHINSON 17
- Alex DYER 18
- Charlie CLAYDEN 19
- Max KRETZSCHMAR 22
- Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH 23
- Charlie BARKER 24
- Lewis SIMPER 25
- Tarrelle WHITTAKER 27
- Sam HABERGHAM 28
- Tecane SHROWDER 29
- G Eric NEGRARU 30
- Joel TAYLOR 33
- Malachai NAPA 36

- 1 Luca ASHBY-HAMMOND G
- 13 Ryan HALL G
- 3 Ollie HARFIELD
- 4 Joe PARTINGTON
- 5 Tyler CORDNER
- 6 Kodi LYONS-FOSTER
- 7 Justin AMALUZOR
- 8 Tyler FROST
- 9 Tahvon CAMPBELL
- 10 Josh McQUOID
- 11 Harrison PANAYIOTOU
- 14 Francis AMARTEY
- 15 Karoy ANDERSON
- 16 Corey JORDAN
- 17 Jake HUTCHINSON
- 18 Peter ABIMBOLA
- 19 Oliver PENDLEBURY
- 20 Michael KLASS
- 21 Ben SHROLL
- 23 Ryan GLOVER
- 24 Maxwell MULLINS
- 25 Keane ANDERSON
- 27 Tommy WILLARD
- 29 Morgan ROBERTS
- 31 Ben DE LACY-TURNER
- 33 Alex MACALLISTER

RESULT: WEALDSTONE   ALDERSHOT TOWN

FREE Aji Ajibola ASSISTANTS Jonathon Block and David Hutton  
MATCH OFFICIAL Elliott Mayer OBSERVER Michael Russell

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Harrow Windows BALL DONORS 1) Councillor Richard Mills and  
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SEASON 2022-23

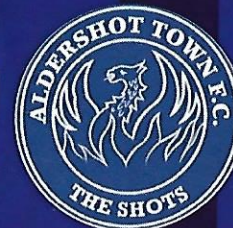
PROGRAMME £3



# WEALDSTONE FC



MUDDY MARVEL! Sonny Blu Lo-Everton wheels away in delight after putting the Stones 2-1 ahead against Oldham at the Vale on Tuesday night. PICTURE: JON TAFFEL



Main club sponsor:



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## V ALDERSHOT TOWN

SATURDAY APRIL 1, 2023, KO 3PM

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# Written in Stone

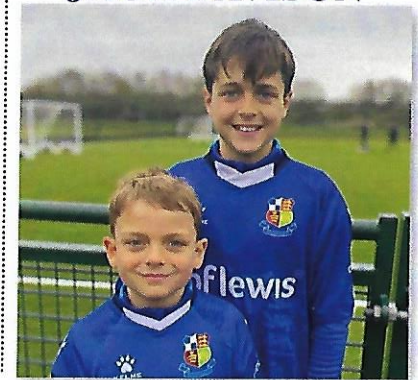
**W**elcome back to Part 3 of the Stones' Home Trilogy and here's hoping for a drier pitch than we experienced for the Barnet and Oldham games.

Adam Rowland and his Turf Doctor colleagues produced a miracle to get Tuesday's game on and we were rewarded with a 2-2 thriller ... Olufela Olomola and Sonny Blu Lo-Everton scored cracking second half goals to put us 2-1 ahead but Joe Nuttall was a constant handful and he grabbed Oldham a deserved point

Now we welcome Aldershot Town, their officials and supporters who are fighting for National League survival and will doubtless give us a tough, tough game. It took two late goals from Rhys Browne to turn the game at the Recreation Ground in our favour last September - chalking up a 2-1 win - so another league double is within our grasp. Let's hope we grab it today when my Grandsons George and Jack Davison are mascots. Do it for them boys! Up the Stones!

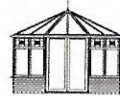
Tim

## MASCOTS GEORGE & JACK DAVISON



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We are delighted to support Wealdstone Football Club and know the tremendous value they bring to our community with many families benefitting from the youth team setups to matchday experiences.

As local Councillors for South Ruislip many of our residents enjoy attending Wealdstone matches at Grosvenor Vale. Our role is about ongoing engagement with our local community to ensure they continue to receive first class services from Hillingdon Council and using our excellent local facilities across the Borough. For us, our work is all about putting residents first.

### ADAM HERNE

"Adam Herne and Rhodri Leach have been school mates since Primary School (Newnham) and are both studying for their A Levels (Bishop Ramsey) this summer term. Both avid Stones fans and celebrating their 18th birthdays this Spring."



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# WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2022/2023

GROSVENOR VALE, RUISLIP, MIDDLESEX HA4 6JQ  
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Academy Coach  
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Club Doctor Monil Karia  
Sports Therapist Michael Owen  
Strengthening & Conditioning  
Rachel Hill  
Performance Analysts  
Yusef Ahmed, Tommy Wilson

## MAJOR HONOURS SINCE 1950

### LEAGUE TITLES

1951 / 1952 Athenian League  
1973 / 1974 Southern League Division One South  
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  
Football Club is Wealdstone  
Football Club (2000) Ltd  
(Registered Number 03953962).  
Shares in excess of 10% are  
held by Peter Marsden Property  
Finance Ltd & Wealdstone FC  
Supporters Club**

## GROUND REGULATIONS

There are only allowed entry to The Vale on match days subject to the following rules and regulations:  
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  
Using items which may be considered a danger to others, including cans, bottles, or glasses containing alcoholic beverages  
Throwing any article onto the field of play • Climbing floodlight pylons, fences, stands or any structure or building  
Using obscene or bad language likely to cause offence to others • Hitting the side or back panels of the Bulla stand  
Spectator ball games.  
The consumption of alcoholic drinks is permitted INSIDE the social club bar, garden and boardroom areas.  
Vehicles parked on the Grosvenor Vale site are at the owners' risk.  
Wealdstone Football Club supports the FA's campaign on pyrotechnics (e.g. flares and smoke bombs). Any misuse of such items around the Ground will result in those responsible being asked to leave the ground and, in line with football authority, 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



## Wealdstone FC Executive Club

### Club, Kit, Travel & Stand

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NHS Lung Health Check

Hughes Pie & Mash

Rameet Kennels

Rolfe East

BY SUDHIR RAWAL



# The Elmslie Ender

WEALDSTONE  
2022-23

Average attendances since 1979/80

Season	Division	Average	Ground
1979/80	APL	653	Lower Mead
1980/81	APL	646	Lower Mead
1981/82	SLS	700	Lower Mead
1982/83	APL	828	Lower Mead
1983/84	APL	667	Lower Mead
1984/85	GL	826	Lower Mead
1985/86	GL	700	Lower Mead
1986/87	GMVC	631	Lower Mead
1987/88	GMVC	741	Lower Mead
1988/89	SLP	555	Lower Mead
1989/90	SLP	482	Lower Mead
1990/91	SLP	523	Lower Mead
1991/92	SLP	441	Watford
1992/93	SLS	256	Watford
1993/94	SLS	196	Yeading
1994/95	SLS	192	Yeading
1995/96	IL3	295	Edgware
1996/97	IL3	342	Edgware
1997/98	IL2	377	Edgware
1998/99	IL1	394	Edgware
1999/00	IL1	351	Edgware
2000/01	IL1	257	Edgware
2001/02	ILN	275	Edgware
2002/03	ILN	302	Edgware
2003/04	ILP	264	Edgware
2004/05	ILP	307	Edgware
2005/06	SLP	337	Northwood
2006/07	ILP	241	Northwood
2007/08	ILP	289	Northwood
2008/09	ILP	412	Vale
2009/10	ILP	415	Vale
2010/11	ILP	438	Vale
2011/12	ILP	514	Vale
2012/13	ILP	548	Vale
2013/14	ILP	680	Vale
2014/15	NLS	758	Vale
2015/16	NLS	668	Vale
2016/17	NLS	732	Vale
2017/18	NLS	850	Vale
2018/19	NLS	908	Vale
2019/20	NLS	1,014	Vale
2020/21	NL	bcd	Vale
2021/22	NL	1,403	Vale
2022/23	NL	1,628	Vale

## Stones' crowds getting ever younger... and yet ever bigger! We are doing something right

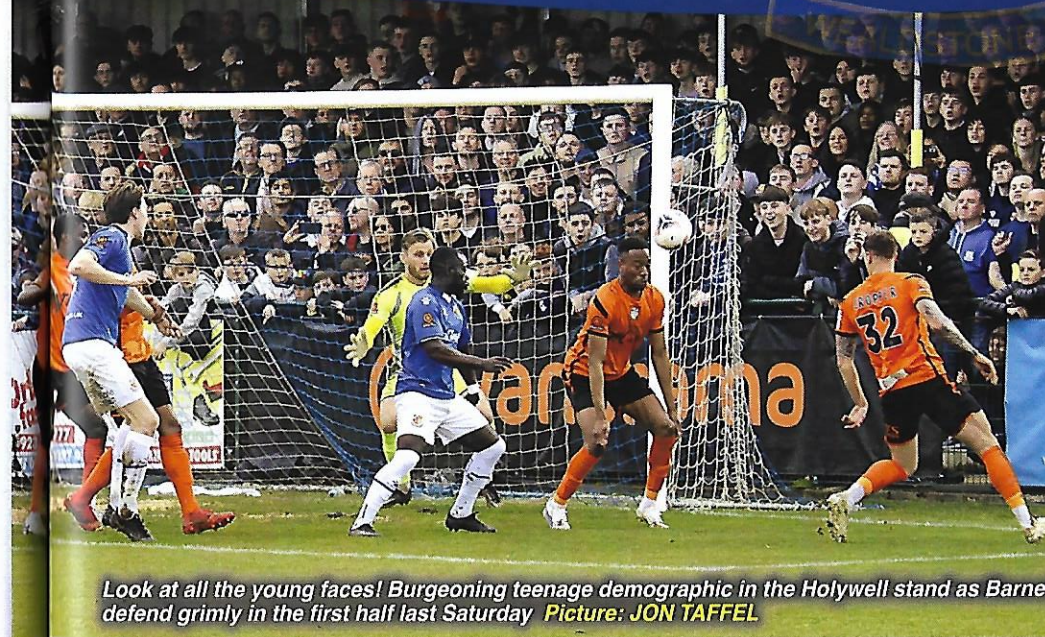
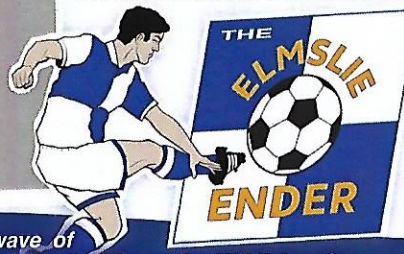
Okay, we lost to Barnet but think of the positives: Our first league match at the Vale, back in 2008, attracted a crowd of 387 and we averaged 408 in that first season in HA4.

Last Saturday, we had over 3,000 for a league game for the first time since 1975 - with a mediocre away support and Stones are now averaging 1,628, the best since our amateur days.

Losing a home derby in front of live cameras is never a great look, but the club and ground looked splendid packed to the rafters. The Holywell/Bulla stand was teeming with youth... remember how we craved to bring down the average age of our supporter base? The bars were heaving from well before two o'clock, struggling to cope with the numbers of people wanting a drink, and it continued until late into the evening, despite the defeat.

The first thirty minutes or so we were by far the better side. Dominating proceedings, hitting the bar, but as seems to be so crucial for us, we needed to get the first goal to set up the game. Despite our dominance, that goal never came as the team from HA8 came back into the game as the half wore on. All square at the break with everything to play for, but all the plans set in the interval were thrown away as the away side took the lead just moments into the half. The ball was sloppily given away and then a clinical bit of finishing. It was a half chance but also shows what a forward on bundles of money can do for a team. Their second was again sloppy defending but clinical finishing. Ultimately the difference between the teams was that ability to put

the ball in the onion bag and their greater physicality. I thought the new lad from Cambridge, Lewis Simper, did well, but our international absentees,



Look at all the young faces! Burgeoning teenage demographic in the Holywell stand as Barnet defend grimly in the first half last Saturday Picture: JON TAFFEL

together with the loss of Brooklyn Ilunga (whose pace and drive got the team much further forward at speed) and Miguel Freckleton who returned to his parent club on the off-chance that he might have had to sit on the bench v Spurs (now joining Yeovil on loan) have been crucial.

The play-offs are gone, but it is important that the season doesn't just slip away. We have a tough run in for sure, but can we fashion a few wins to ensure a top half finish that we deserve?

In this feature in the Barnet programme you will have seen the mention of Stones fan 'Big Dave' Jones taking an overnight commercial coach to and from Torquay to keep his run of consecutive Wealdstone games going. What is even more remarkable is that Dave (pictured below) doesn't drive, long ago picked up his bus pass, but still manages to keep his long 'unbeaten record' which by the end of this season will have reached 450 games! (excluding the behind-closed-doors season of course).



Has anyone else done so many games on the spin? I know "Drill Bits" might have done something similar. The Gods have

been sometimes on David's side - such as when he was having his pacemaker battery renewed he would have missed the trip to Yeovil but for the game being postponed. He then managed to get to the re-arranged fixture in midweek. Remarkable stuff.

There was a recent announcement by the FA that contracted players in the National League would no longer be paid - or at least very least have reduced income - if they suffer an injury. Under the new rules, players suffering an injury will only receive their full wages for a few weeks in the national division and six weeks in the regional division, thereafter they will go onto statutory sick pay of £99 a week..

Football has always had different rules. In the real world of employment, almost all businesses will have sick policies that have restricted payments after a period of time... they span from generous provisions to statutory sick pay kicking in as soon as it is allowed. Whilst clubs may find the new rules, as there is an opt-in whereby clubs can disregard the new contracts provisions, I see players only signing for clubs that will waive the new provisions. I am not sure these new contracts will have much teeth.

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

## SUPPORT YOUR CLUB 2023-24 >>>

Season tickets for 2023-4 are on sale NOW.. with prices **FROZEN!**

Support the Stones and save yourself money with an Early Bird Season Ticket for matches at The Vale next season. Season ticket prices are unchanged from 2022-23 but hurry...the terrific offer ends on June 2nd.

With matchday admission prices set to rise, why not invest in a great-value season ticket for just £275 (adult), £185 (concession), £100 ('Next Generation' 19-23 year-olds), £50 (17-18

year-olds) and just £10 for under-16s. That will be a saving of 30%, 33%, 57%, 69% and 94% across those categories on matchday prices! Supporters now have the option to select Google Pay or Apple Pay or spread the cost over three instalments and there is now the option to hold the season ticket electronically rather than have a physical card.

To purchase your season ticket go to [www.wealdstonefc.ktckts.com](http://www.wealdstonefc.ktckts.com)

	2023/24 Season Tickets		Season ticket cost per game		Individual match tickets	
	Early Bird	Standard	Early Bird	Standard	Online	Pay on the Gate
Adult £	275	325	11.96	14.13	18	20
Concession £	185	225	8.04	9.78	13	15
Next Gen £	100	150	4.35	6.52	11	13
16-18 £	50	80	2.17	3.48	7	8
Under 16* £	10	10	0.43	0.43	7	8

\* £10 season ticket will be donated to the Wealdstone FC Charitable Foundation



## Wealdstone FC Membership 2023/24

### SUPPORT YOUR CLUB - OWN YOUR CLUB

The Wealdstone FC membership programme gives supporters the opportunity to not only support the team on the pitch but financially support the club through the purchase of shares in Wealdstone FC.

There are four levels of membership **Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze**, all with benefits that reflect YOUR involvement with the club.

Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze
# Adult Season Ticket	# Adult Season Ticket	# Adult Season Ticket	# Adult Season Ticket
# £700 Wealdstone Shares	# £200 Wealdstone Shares	# £100 Wealdstone Shares	# £50 Wealdstone Shares
# League Home Programmes	# League Home Programmes	# League Home Programmes	# League Home Programmes
# 4 Home Pre-season Tickets	# 2 Home Pre-season Tickets	# 2 Home Pre-season Tickets	# 1 Home Pre-season Ticket
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# On Field Parking (when available)	# 20% Discount Hall Hire	# 20% Discount Hall Hire	# 20% Discount Hall Hire
# 2023-4 Team Photograph	# 2023-4 Team Photograph	# 2023-4 Team Photograph	# 2023-4 Team Photograph
<b>£1000 : Concessions £925</b>	<b>£500 : Concessions £425</b>	<b>£400 : Concessions £325</b>	<b>£300 : Concessions £225</b>
All Members will also be entered into Christmas and Easter Prize Draws to win a signed Home or Away Shirt			
Tick box to select <input type="checkbox"/>	Tick box to select <input type="checkbox"/>	Tick box to select <input type="checkbox"/>	Tick box to select <input type="checkbox"/>

For more information or to join up simply go on-line [www.wealdstonefc.com/membership](http://www.wealdstonefc.com/membership) or email the your name and contact details to [memberships@wealdstonefc.com](mailto:memberships@wealdstonefc.com). Alternatively post your details to The General Manager, Wealdstone FC, Grosvenor Vale, Ruislip, HA4 6JQ.

Payments can be made in one lump sum or in staged payments (online purchases) or by standing order of five equal payments to the following Wealdstone FC (2000) Limited Sort code 09-06-66 Acc 43154786 Ref WFC Membership.

Join up and be part of the Wealdstone FC story next season as we take on all-comers in front of record crowds here at Grosvenor Vale.



# Lewis Simper

## It was almost a Simperly sensational debut against Barnet for lively Lewis



Lewis gets on the ball on the very wet Grosvenor Vale surface as we took on Oldham on Tuesday night  
PICTURE: JON TAFFEL



Lewis (left) in EFL Div One action this season and (right) in United colours as a 7-year-old

I'm afraid we can't claim Lewis Simper as One of Our Own. That honour belongs to Ely, in Cambridgeshire, where our new loan midfielder was born and Cambridge United whom he's supported since childhood.

In fact, if I was writing this for the Cambridge programme I'd be very, very proud of the youngster who first pulled on a United shirt at the age of seven... and whose family have followed United for over 50 years.

"Yes, I've been involved with the club forever" laughed the 21-year-old as he recounted being talent-spotted playing youth football in Ely. "I went to St John's Primary School and then Ely College and went on trial 14 years ago when I was a kid. Then I progressed through the development centre and the Academy... which was very exciting as I've been watching games at the Abbey Stadium with my dad and my brother since I was a kid".

Lewis's dad Karl played for Ely City and also Southern League Cambridge City in the 80s and 90s while his brother Jamie also plays for Ely. And Karl's dad Eric also turned out for Ely and Cambridge City in the past!

Cambridge obviously think a lot of their locally-born star as he signed a new three-year-contract last summer. It will keep him at the League One club until 2025.

"I've played 11 times for the first team, mainly in League One and a few in the EFL Trophy and Papa John's trophy... and got my first goal for United in that competition when we beat Ipswich 1-0 at The Abbey earlier this season".

How did that go in? I asked him. "Well, I came off the bench at half time and had a go from the edge of the box... a low skidding shot that went in off the post. That's right up there in my stand-out moments!"

He came close to a goal on his Stones' debut again Barnet last Saturday, a dipping 25-yarder that beat Bees' keeper Laurie Walker but bounced back into play off the crossbar. "That would have been a great time to score, just before half time, but I really enjoyed the game. The difference in standard between the National League and League One is not that pronounced.. the main difference is that if you lose the ball or make a mistake it's instantly punished in the EFL."

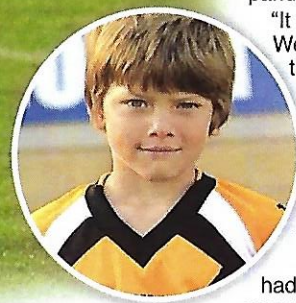
Lewis thought his breakthrough moment in the United first team was at the start of this season

when he had a run of half a dozen games.

"I made my League One debut at the end of last season, a 2-1 win over Morecambe, but before Christmas 2022, I felt like I was a genuine part of the first team. It was really beneficial for me. I also hit the crossbar in the game at Sheffield Wednesday in front of 26,000 but we lost 5-0 and began to struggle a bit. The manager brought in a couple of players and I went out on loan to Woking early this year to get a bit of game time".

But with Woking galloping along in the National League there wasn't a chance of establishing himself in Darren Sarll's side.

"Within four days of me returning to Cambridge I had a call from the gaffer here, Stuart Maynard, who was keen to add me to the squad... it was a no-brainer as I know the sort of football that Wealdstone play and my strength is keeping the ball and



looking for openings to score".

What did he know about the Mighty Stones? "Hahaha, very little really although I went out on loan to Concord Rangers in the National League South in 2021 and Ashley Charles was also on loan there... and they also had Danny Green who was of course at Wealdstone for a long, long time. He is a very good technical player".

Lewis's travels also took him to Yeovil on loan for a short spell - where he played alongside Sonny Blu Lo-Everson - but it was the half-season at Concord that brought about the 'weirdest' moment in his football career.

"It was a strange one, but the season before I was at Concord - the Covid-curtailed season - they had reached the FA Trophy final against Harrogate but it was postponed because of the pandemic.

"It was then played 12 months later at Wembley but still behind closed doors, and the club were allowed to field three players who hadn't helped them reach the final. I was one of those chosen. I didn't feel I'd done much to warrant a place in that side but it was still a great experience to play in that stadium, on that pitch even if you couldn't have any family or friends along to watch."

Concord also fielded Jack Cawley (who had just completed the National League season as pretty much ever-present in the Wealdstone team) as he had signed for the club from the Essex side the previous summer and was a bona fide member of the team who had reached the final.

And here's a little Fun Fact: Because Harrogate had won the National League title in the Covid-affected season, they became the very-first Football League club to play an FA Trophy match, let alone the final. And they won it, 1-0!

And here's (maybe) another Fun Fact: Lewis Simper was in the stands at the Abbey Stadium as a disappointed 10-year-old, watching with his family, when Wealdstone pulled off that FA Trophy quarter-final giant killing in 2012. Two goals from Richard Jolly sealed the 2-1 win.

"Is that true?" asked Lewis. "That Wealdstone won at the Abbey 11 years ago? Well I don't know if I was there but I saw all the games at that time. Maybe I've wiped it from my memory"

# The Fan in the Stand

## Ah, the enthusiasm of youth! 16-year-old Matthew on why he switched from Foxes to the Stones.. and why clappers are a bad, bad idea

**Your name and age?** Matthew Spreadbury, 16 years old. I am currently in year 11... so that all-important GCSE year!

**Whereabouts do you live?** I currently live in Uxbridge which is just 3 stops on the tube from Ruislip so not too far to get down to the Vale.

**Have you always lived in that area?** I originally lived in Ruislip and have since moved from there to Ickenham and then now Uxbridge. So I've actually moved away from the Vale but that hasn't stopped me from coming of course.

**When was your first Stones game?** My first Stones game was towards the beginning of last season, Southend at home on August 30th which ended as a 0-0 draw. A friend and I found ourselves at a loose end at the end of our summer break and so we went down to the Vale - his dad had brought him a few times when he was younger. I think also I was introduced by a friend, but what drew me in was the friends I also made



just supporting the club and seeing them regularly at the Vale and then on the trips away. Since that, it didn't take long for me to go to my first away game where the atmosphere really got me hooked: Wrexham away.

**What were your first impressions of the club?**

The fan base initially drew me in. Everyone was so welcoming and it really felt like everyone knew everyone. It didn't take long to start recognising people and starting to know familiar faces and feel like a genuine part of the football club. It was also great to see the club match up well to other football

teams I knew from the football league.

**What was the first football match you ever saw Live?** I'm not 100% sure because I was quite young but I'm pretty sure it was QPR vs Leicester City when I was 7-years-old, at Loftus Road. I was in the away end as my dad grew up in Leicester and so I've always grown up supporting Leicester like him. Leicester won 1-0 so that was a good way to start off watching live football.

**Do you follow any other team?** As I said, my dad grew up in Leicester and so that's his team, and I've followed Leicester both home and away. I do just enjoy watching live football in general so I also quite regularly watch games at QPR, Watford and other non-league clubs like Rayners Lane.

**How devotedly?**

**Home and away?** With Leicester I have been a member since I was about 7. Obviously living in London has meant I could never go to every game but I've definitely given it a good go! In the

title-winning season I went to Spurs and Crystal Palace away as well as a few home games. More recently, away tickets are harder to get but I've been to Everton, West Ham and Chelsea. Prior to this season Leicester were also in European competitions so I went to most of the home Europa and Conference league games and, most notably, PSV Eindhoven away - the day before Southend away!

**What's the most Memorable game you've EVER seen?** On TV, the Euro's final was obviously a brilliant game watching England in the final, despite the result. I think the most memorable game I've ever watched though will be the night of Chel-



sea vs Tottenham where the Premier League title was confirmed to be Leicester's when I was just nine years old. It was honestly just a night I never expected to happen. **And the best Wealdstone game?** One of two. Either Barnet away last year for the obvious reasons with the immense atmosphere and brilliant result. The other game would be Stockport away last year. Despite the full-time result, to us go 2-0 up against the team that had won their last 17 beforehand, really was a feeling that cannot be described.

**Tell me about the clappers at Leicester City?** A very controversial topic amongst the Leicester fan base! There were quite a number of fans who felt the clappers boosted the atmosphere (pictured left). Most of the younger groups of fans, however, thought that the clappers encouraged passive support and overall I think that they probably did encourage people not to sing and just to use clappers.

Not to mention the cost to the club of making clappers for a single fan, every single game. I read one article which said they cost the club £12,000 a match which across six seasons is obviously a lot! This season they stopped providing fans with clappers and I think it has improved the support that we see in the stands.

**What level of football do you prefer?** Without a doubt, non-league. Football is a sport for everyone and I think non-league football gives an opportunity to everyone to affordably support their team. Fans are regularly becoming out-priced at the clubs that they follow in the big leagues as it's brilliant to become connected to a club that is viable to support. It also feels like you become recognisable to the players and Management at the club and they also put the effort in to make you feel involved with consistent interaction.

**How big a part of your life is the game?** Football takes up so much of my life. Every week

CONTINUED OVERPAGE

Main image above: The Stones fans line-up at Bishops Stortford for a four-team tournament in the early 2000s which we won comfortably. Cookie is second from



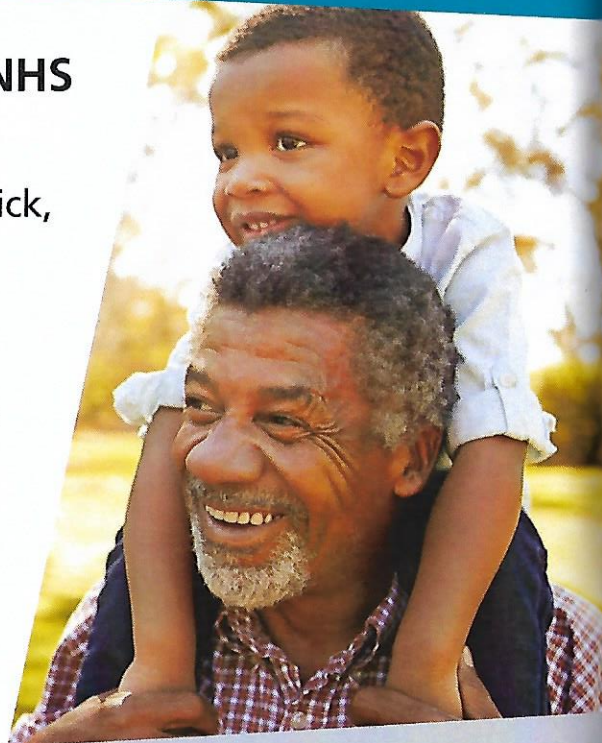


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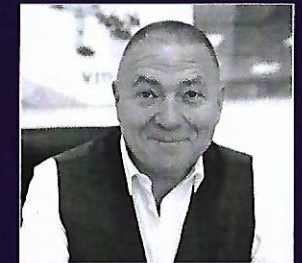
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# Opposition in focus

## ALDERSHOT TOWN

### LUCA ASHBY-HAMMOND - GOALKEEPER

Ashby-Hammond joins the Shots on a season-long loan from Fulham. He has previous National League experience representing Stockport County. Ashby-Hammond joins the club having represented Fulham at youth level, featuring at the European U17 Championships, as well as during the U19 qualification stages.

### TYLER KENLOCK - DEFENCE

Kenlock joined The Shots in March 2023 on a free transfer. Having progressed through the Ipswich youth ranks, the left-back went on to make over 100 appearances for the Tractor Boys, including over 50 Championship games. After being released by Ipswich Town, Kenlock joined Barrow before joining The Shots in January 2023.

### LIE HARFIELD - MIDFIELD

Harfield will be looking to build on previous National League experience having played for Dagenham & Redbridge, Boreham Wood and most recently Havant & Waterlooville. The wide man will now look to link up with fellow AFC Bournemouth graduates Corey Taylor and Tyler Corder in the Shots defence.

### JOE PARTINGTON (C) - DEFENCE

Partington joins Aldershot Town after several seasons' experience at EFL League One, Two and VNational League level represented clubs including AFC Bournemouth, Eastleigh FC, Bristol Rovers and most recently Bromley FC.

### TYLER CORDER - DEFENCE

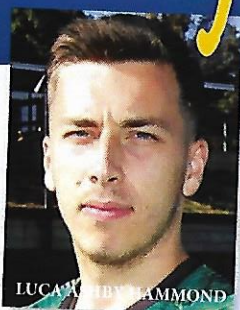
Corder has previous National League experience over the last three seasons, representing Havant & Waterlooville, Ebbsfleet United and most recently Havant & Waterlooville.

### DI LYONS-FOSTER - MIDFIELD

Lyons-Foster has represented England at U16 level and has featured in the Academy's of Tottenham Hotspur and Aston Villa. He joined Bristol City from Villa in 2017 and spent time out on loan at Guernsey. He then joined Whitehawk before joining Braintree Town.

### JUSTIN AMALUZOR - FORWARD

Amaluzor has represented Maidstone United, Motherwell and Dundee United. Justin moves back to the National League after a season in the Scottish Championship with Motherwell, featuring over 100 appearances and scoring once in both the league and cup competitions.



LUCA ASHBY-HAMMOND



JOE PARTINGTON

competitions.

### 8. TYLER FROST - MIDFIELD

Frost signed for The Shots in February after leaving Harrogate Town. The 23-year-old brings with him Football League experience, having made 50 League Two appearances with Crawley Town and Harrogate.

### 9. TAHVON CAMPBELL - MIDFIELD

Campbell signed for the Shots from Rochdale on a loan until the end of the season in March. The 26-year-old arrives with over 100 League Two appearances and over 60 games in the National League. Campbell's most recent spell in the National League came with Woking.

### 10. JOSH MCQUOID - MIDFIELD

Josh has international experience with Northern Ireland under his belt representing his country at u19, u21, 'B' and first-team stages. He has played for a number of clubs in League Two, League One and Championship.

### 11. HARRISON PANAYIOTOU - FORWARD

Harrison returned to the club in 2022 & will be looking to build on his previous experience with the Shots which him finish last season as our joint top-scorer. He is a Saint Kitts and Nevis international.

### 12. MARCEL ELVA-FOUNTAIN - DEFENCE

Elva-Fontaine started his career progressing through the youth ranks at Reading before a move to Burnley in August 2020. His latest spell was at Hayes and Yeading United where the 21-year-old made 10 appearances last season.

### 14. FRANCIS AMARTEY - FORWARD

Francis joined after a stellar season with Hayes & Yeading, scoring 29 times as he picked up the Player of the Year award with United as they

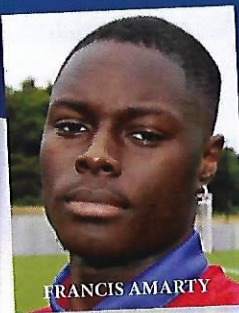
# THE PLAYERS TO WATCH

## LAST MEETINGS

Sat 1st Oct 2022 - (A) W 2-1  
Sun 15th May 2022 (A) W 3-1



JOSH MCQUOID



FRANCIS AMARTY

narrowly missed out on promotion. After signing a professional contract with Championship side Birmingham City at the start of his career, the pacey forward joins The Shots after representing Sutton Coldfield Town before moving to National League South side Slough Town in 2019.

### 16. COREY JORDAN - DEFENCE

Corey joins having spent time with Eastbourne Borough, Weymouth FC & Gloucester City. He graduated through AFC Bournemouth's academy.

### 17. JAKE HUTCHINSON - FORWARD

Jake joined The Shots in January on a loan deal from Colchester United. The 20-year-old joined Colchester from Brighton and Hove Albion and has had loan spells at Tonbridge Angels, Grays Athletic, Brightlingsea Regent, Eastbourne and Hitchin Town.

### 18. HENRY OCHIENG - MIDFIELD

Ochieng came through the youth ranks at West Ham United, before moving to Leyton Orient where he racked up a number of Football League appearances. Eligible to play for Kenya, Ochieng received a call-up for an African Cup of Nations match vs Sierra Leone. He has also represented Kenya at Under-23 level.

### 19. OLIVER PENDLEBURY - MIDFIELD

Pendlebury signed for The Shots in January from Farnborough. Oliver started his career at Reading, gaining a number of England youth appearances, before a move to Wycombe Wanderers. He made four appearances in League 1.

### 20. MICHAEL KLASS - MIDFIELD

Klass is a 23-year-old midfielder and was most recently at Lewes. He came through the youth ranks at QPR before signing for Southend United,

gaining Football League experience.

### 21. BEN SHROLL - DEFENCE

Exciting academy prospect Ben Shroll has committed to the club for the 20/21 season as he joins the first-team squad!

### 22. HAJI MNOGA - DEFENCE

Haji has made a number of senior appearances for Portsmouth and has even received three caps for Tanzania. He spent the first half of this season on loan at Gillingham in League Two where he made five appearances.

### 23. RYAN GLOVER - MIDFIELD

Ryan started out at Southampton before moving to Bournemouth at age 11. Glover was on loan with the Shots last season and now signs a two-year deal having been released from Bournemouth in May.

### 24. MAXWELL MULLINS - FORWARD

Maxwell has come through the ranks at the club and has played for both the Under-18s and Under-23s over the past couple of years. Mullins also spent time in the Isthmian League Premier Division with Leatherhead FC this season to continue his development.

### 25. KEANE ANDERSON - MIDFIELD

Keane has come through the ranks at the club and has played for the Under-23s over the course of the year.

### 27. TOMMY WILLARD - FORWARD

Willard joins the first-team squad having graduated through our academy system, having previously been a part of Barnsley FC's youth system.

### 30. JACK BARHAM - FORWARD

Jack Barham signed for the Shots in March 2023 from Maidstone United. The 27-year-old fired the Stones to promotion from the Vanarama National League South in 2021/22 with 18 league goals and has had spells with Dorking Wanderers and Barnet.

### 31. BEN DE LACY-TURNER - MIDFIELD

### NEW. JAI ROWE - DEFENCE



# Opposition in focus



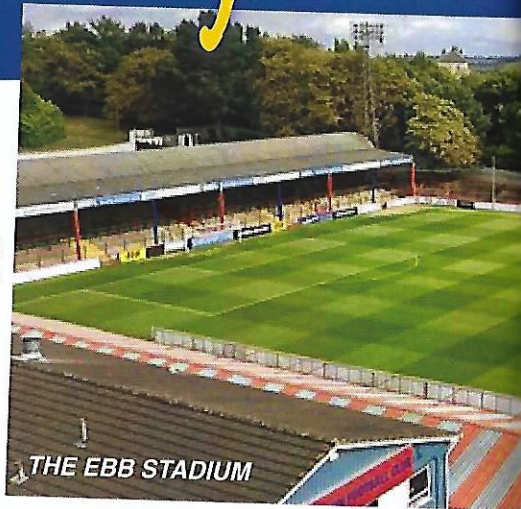
## THE SHOTS

**O**n March 25th 1992, Aldershot FC became the first Football League team to fold during the season since Accrington Stanley in 1962. From the ashes came phoenix club Aldershot Town, who were formed on April 22nd 1992 and managed by ex-Aldershot FC centre back Steve Wignall.

The "new" Shots began life in Isthmian League Division 3 and opened the 1992-93 season in a carnival atmosphere at the Recreation Ground against Clapton. Braces from Mark Butler and Steve Stairs secured a 4-2 win in front of 1493 fans, which was more than watched their predecessors' last home game at the same ground. The campaign finished with the Shots as champions by a commanding 18-point margin, whilst strikers Mark Butler and Steve Stairs scored a combined total of 62 goals in all competitions.

A second successive promotion (via a third-place finish) followed in 1993-94 together with a run to the FA Vase quarter-finals.

Steve Wignall departed in January 1994 to take charge of Division 3 side Colchester United and was replaced by ex-Nottingham Forest winger Steve Wigley. Despite a strong finish to the 1994-95 season, the Shots missed out on a third successive promotion on goal difference. Following fifth- and seventh-place finishes over the next two seasons, Wigley left to take up a post in (former club) Forest's youth set up in the summer of 1997.

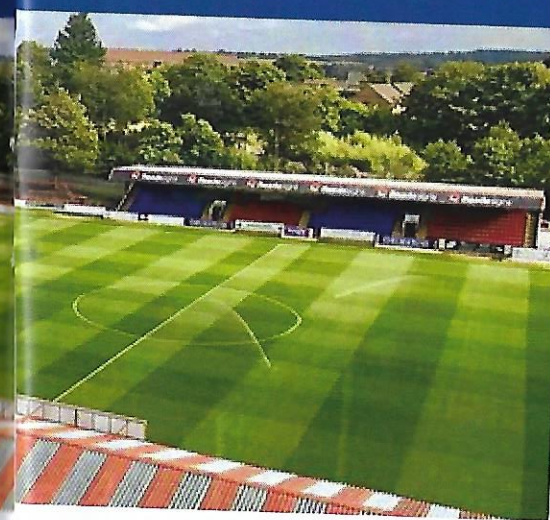


THE EBB STADIUM

Following a spell under the caretaker management trio of Andy Meyer, Mark Butler and Joe Roach, Enfield boss George Borg was appointed in September 1997 and his first season yielded increased crowds and the Isthmian League Division 1 title. In 1998-99, the Shots won both the Isthmian League Cup and the Hampshire Senior Cup. In 1999-2000, they retained the latter trophy, won the Isthmian League Charity Shield and ended the campaign as runners-up to Dagenham and Redbridge in the Isthmian League Premier Division.

A fourth-place finish was claimed in 2000-01, whilst November 2001 saw a club record crowd of 7500 fill the Rec for the 6-2 defeat by Brighton and Hove Albion in the FA Cup first round. Following a run of poor results and pressure from fans, Borg resigned in mid-January 2002.

Borg's assistant Stuart Cash took temporary charge before Terry Brown left his post at Hayes in late March to come to North East Hampshire, thus beginning a five-year love affair with the Shots fans. Following a third-place finish and a third Hampshire Senior Cup win in 2001-02, the squad was overhauled and, having attained top spot in mid-November 2002 the Shots remained in top spot to claim the title and, with it, promotion to



# ALDERSHOT TOWN

**HOME GROUND - THE EBB STADIUM**  
**CAPACITY - 7,100 (2,000 SEATED)**  
**MANAGER - ROSS MCNEILLY**  
**2021/22 - 20TH NATIONAL LEAGUE**

hastily-assembled squad (some of whom were signed in the hotel the night before the season opener at Grimsby Town)

On July 31st 2014, Aldershot Town announced that they had paid off all of their debts, which enables them to exit the auspices of the CVA after just 12 months – a massive years ahead of the required date! The icing on the cake came with the additional news that the club had made "a modest profit" in the first year of trading under the new owners.

The 2015-16 season was another one of disappointing performances with the Shots finishing the campaign having scored just 23 home league goals, equalled the club record for fewest home league wins (7) and most home league losses (12) as well as setting new club records for most league losses in a season (1607); the season was also the fourth in succession in which the aforementioned crowd figure had dropped.

A new-look side for 2016/17 secured fifth in the table and a Play-Off semi-final against Tranmere Rovers. Unfortunately, The Shots lost the home leg 3-0 but at least restored a great deal of pride with a battling 2-2 draw in the Prenton Park return.

In 2017-18 the squad picked up where they left off and spent the majority of the season challenging for the title eventually finishing 5th in the table losing to Ebbsfleet in the play offs.

2020/21 saw the Shots placed 15th & 20th in the table.

Over the summer of 2022, Mark Molesley took over the squad for the coming season and his wins were garnered over Boreham Wood, Boreham United and FC Halifax Town before the team began to slide down the table, ending in Molesley's dismissal after a 2:0 FA Cup qualifier defeat at Chelmsford Town. Academy manager Ross McNeilly was put in caretaker charge and after a run of five wins from eight, was given the role on a permanent basis, until the end of the season.

the Football Conference; they also retained the Hampshire Senior Cup.

Disappointment followed in 2003/04, when the Shots were beaten on penalties by Shrewsbury Town (after a 1-1 draw) in the play-off final at Stoke City's Britannia Stadium.

More play-off heartache was experienced in 2004-05, this time in the shape of a shoot-out defeat at Carlisle United in the semi-finals. The next two seasons were disappointing for the Shots (13th and ninth places respectively being secured).

In March 2007, Terry Brown resigned to take care of his wife, who had been ill for some time. Assistant Manager Martin Kuhl took caretaker charge for the remainder of the season.

In 2012-13 Former Rotherham United boss Andy Scott was brought in but couldn't stem the tide and relegation back to the Conference Premier (the club's first such event) was confirmed at end of the season as the Shots eventually finished rock-bottom of the table.

On May 2nd 2013, just five days after their relegation from League 2, Aldershot Town officially entered administration with reported debts of £1.4 million.

The Shots began the 2013-14 season with a 10-point deduction as a punishment for the aforementioned entry into administration. With a

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<b>YEovil TOWN</b> Monday, 29th August Vanarama National League	Russell Grant, Patron of Wealdstone FC & Middlesex Heritage	Wealdstone FC Supporters Club	
<b>WOKING</b> Sunday, 4th September Vanarama National League	Keith Walklate		
<b>TORQUAY UNITED</b> Saturday, 17th September Vanarama National League	Raine & Kevin Robb		
<b>SOUTHEND UNITED</b> Saturday, 24th September Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East		
<b>BOREHAM WOOD</b> Saturday, 8th October Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Steve Ford's 50th	
<b>NOTTS COUNTY</b> Tuesday, 25th October Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Richard Finch	
<b>WREXHAM</b> Saturday, 12th November Vanarama National League	Keith Davies	Optera Ltd	Peter Jones
<b>SCUNTHORPE UNITED</b> Saturday, 26th November Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Michael Nutt	Sunde I.L
<b>EASTLEIGH</b> Saturday, 7th January Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows		

<b>GATESHEAD</b> Saturday, 28th January Vanarama National League	Beaumont Properties Limited		
<b>DAGENHAM &amp; REDBRIDGE</b> Saturday, 4th February Vanarama National League	Coach Forever Ltd	Lower Mead 4	
<b>YORK CITY</b> Saturday, 18th February Vanarama National League	Oldfield Construction Ltd		
<b>ALTRINCHAM</b> Saturday, 4th March Vanarama National League	Raine & Kevin Robb		
<b>MAIDSTONE UNITED</b> Tuesday, 7th March Vanarama National League	Recycle DNC Ltd		
<b>CHESTERFIELD</b> Tuesday, 14th March Vanarama National League	Ruislip Windows & Doors		
<b>BARNET</b> Saturday, 25th March Vanarama National League	Turf Doctor	In Memory of Darren Hooker	Fenton Civil Engineering
<b>OLDHAM ATHLETIC</b> Tuesday, 28th March Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Bugler Group	
<b>ALDERSHOT TOWN</b> Saturday, 1st April Vanarama National League	DMS Landscapes	In Memory of John O'Connor	Harrow Windows
<b>SOLIHULL MOORS</b> Tuesday 10th April Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Your name or business here	
<b>DORKING WANDERERS</b> Saturday, 22nd April Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	People for Print	



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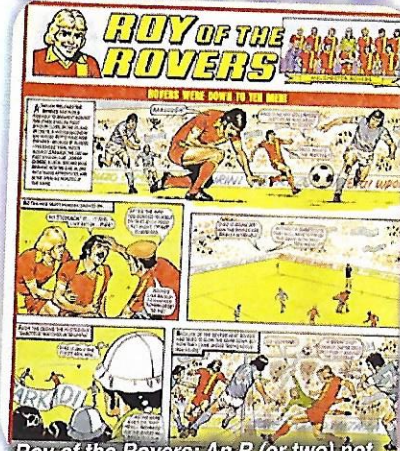
# The Stones

## Re-election and of course relegation! It's the Rs-end of the Alphabet today

**G**ood afternoon all and today it's the turn of R to be put through the alphabetical wringer.

R is for **RE-ELECTION**, the method by which Football League clubs used to preserve their status at the expense of ambitious non-league clubs. That was the case until automatic promotion was introduced in the 1986-87 season. This was of course two years too late for the Stones - I wonder how much our recent history would have differed had this been introduced earlier? As it happened, our Lower Mead ground did not meet the minimum requirements, but would money have been spent had it been in place beforehand?

For the younger audience, the basic principle was that the Football League clubs would vote whether they were happy to vote one of their own



Roy of the Rovers: An R (or two) not to be missed. The Melchester Rovers striker must be in his Nineties now

clubs out of the league in favour of something new and different, in essence it was the classic Turkeys voting for Xmas situation, it was rarely going to happen. Clubs lying in the bottom four of the fourth division would be the subject of the Re-election process.

Much as in the way that Eurovision voting is to say the least suspect, then dodgy deals and handshakes between member clubs to make sure they voted for each-other and harnessed support from elsewhere was the order of the day. The result was that things barely ever changed.

As it happened in our title winning year, neither 2nd placed Nuneaton or 3rd placed

# Alphabet



Dartford met the ground criteria either, so 4th placed Bath City went into battle for **RE-ELECTION** with Northampton, Stockport, Torquay and Halifax. They scored 8 votes out of 208 available and that was that, as predictable as was the case most years.

Roll on to 2022-23 and because Notts County and Wrexham are doing so well, the predictable **BELT** clamour for more automatic promotion places is at fever pitch. If only the old boys voting act was still in place then they wouldn't be here in the first place. You shouldn't have agreed to automatic promotion chaps!

**I**ntrinsically linked therefore to Re-election is of course **RELEGATION**. Wind back to the start of this season, and for some and maybe the vast majority of our supporters, success for 2022-23 would be achieved by avoiding Relegation. For those with long memories, the Relegations that we have suffered from this league are painful. In 1981 we had a very good team, there was no way we should have gone down, but go down we did, on the final day of the season at home to AP Leamington who survived by virtue of the most unlikely of wins at Lower Mead. Compare that with 1988 when we simply very poor, the club was in decline and just five league wins all season tells its own story.

So the fact that we are comfortably safe going into the final stretch of this season has certainly meant a stress-free time for us. Who'd swap places for those involved in the fight at the bottom? It's nice to be looking up! There's still some work to do for our visitors today but I think they'll be OK. The original Aldershot club when in the Football League survived the **RE-ELECTION** process on multiple occasions.

**O**n the subject of **RELEGATION**, it does look as if we are going to be joined in the National League next season by **ROCHDALE**. Ten points

adrift of safety with just eight matches remaining it's looking rather bleak for 'The Dale'. So another new ground tick is on the horizon for the Stones hopefully on a Saturday.

Unlike neighbours Oldham, Rochdale does have a train station and this is a good thing. Rochdale have played at their Spotland ground for over 100 years, and hold some rather interesting records if Wikipedia is to be believed. Firstly, they have played the most seasons of any club in the English Football League without reaching the top two tiers or being relegated to non-league - this is their 95th season. Their run of 36 consecutive seasons in the bottom division between 1974 and 2010 is also a record to be proud of. They survived several Re-elections (see above), including by just a single vote ahead of Altrincham in 1978-80 after a 2nd successive bottom place.

**RUBBISH** has featured before, but only in the context of team performances, some of the worst of which were during our Yeading years. Today we'll focus on a few other varieties, starting with the litter version of Rubbish.

At the risk of sounding like an old person take

**CONTINUED OVERPAGE**

## S AT PLOUGH LANE



Yeovil and Wimbledon set their stall for promotion to the League in the 1970s with these glossy publications. No expense spared. And my, that Wimbledon physio room looks well equipped



Peter John Baptiste on his usual voluntary litter-picking round at a Stones game. His least-favourite chant: what a load of rubbish

# Stones Alphabet contd...

## FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

to a child, when you eat food at home do you throw the packaging on the floor or put it in the bin? There are plenty of bins at the Vale, use them! If you don't someone else has to do it for you, it's not fair and not necessary, so please play your part!

Secondly, the written version of Rubbish, of which you may consider this article to belong. I am a regular user of social media and there's some really good and worthwhile stuff out there, but there's a lot of **RUBBISH** too. All too often it spills over from being simple **RUBBISH** to being downright vile and nasty. Whatever happened to being nice to people?

Maybe I'm stretching things a bit here as this is football not croquet, but last weekend we played Barnet and there's a lot not nice about that. Unfortunately having such a large crowd brings its own problems, and as with any section of society the numbers game tells you that there will be some **ROTTEN** apples in there. So whilst I am disappointed to read about accusations of racism towards a Barnet fan (totally abhorrent), the way that this has been sensationalised and jumped on by a few idiots and used to tar all of our fans with same brush is simply **RUBBISH**.

The name of Wealdstone is a good one, rightly so, and the respect that we have gained throughout this league won't be tarnished by a few social media Rotten apples from Barnet. For the record, I am sure that the vast majority of Barnet fans are good people who share our values.

Who remembers **RUSH** goalie? I have no idea of whether this is still

a thing nowadays, but when I was a kid playing football in the park we'd often have the situation where there was an odd number of players. So for example if six were playing against seven, the six would have a Rush goalie. In essence this meant that the goalie would spend more time out of the penalty area than usual playing a more active part in the game, then rushing back to his area when required to defend.

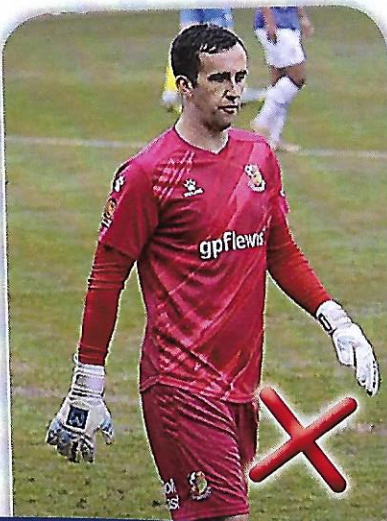


This could often lead to the Rush goalie being hopelessly out of position. The weird thing here was that it would be announced that a Rush goalie was in place, all rather pointless given that the laws of the game allowed the goalie to do what he wanted anyway.

Did the former Wales & Liverpool striker **IAN RUSH** (above) ever play in goal? That would have been mildly amusing

Finally this week, we've touched on this before, but if you are reading this Sam Howes, please can you stop wearing **RED**, the devil's colours? Thank you.

Next up is S, when we face **SOLIHULL**. It's a **SHOO-IN!**



Sam, have a word with Brett the kit man! Red is unacceptable. Don't we have a nice yellow kit for when we face the Yeovils of this world?

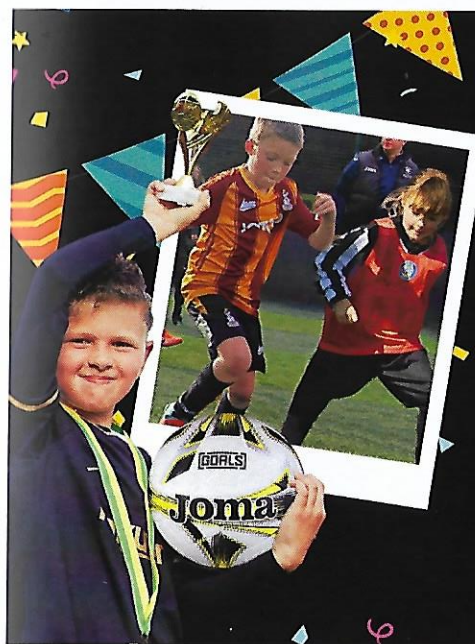
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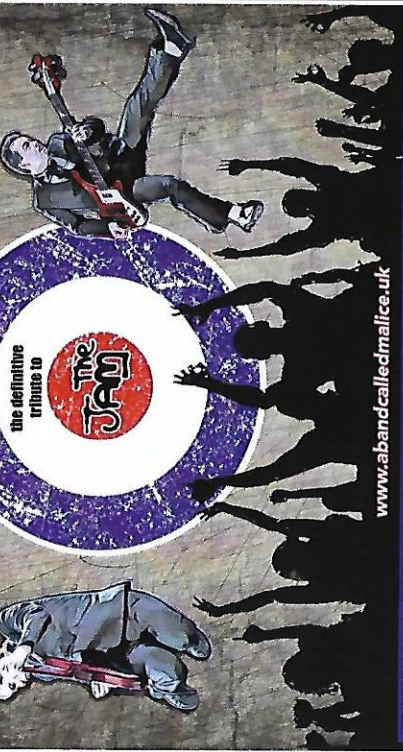
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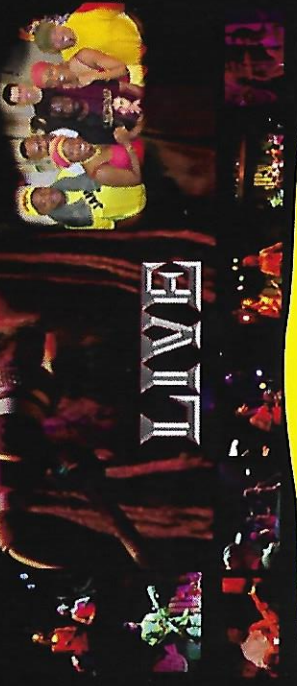


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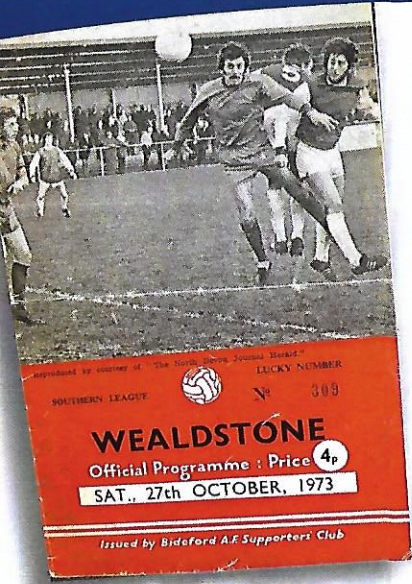
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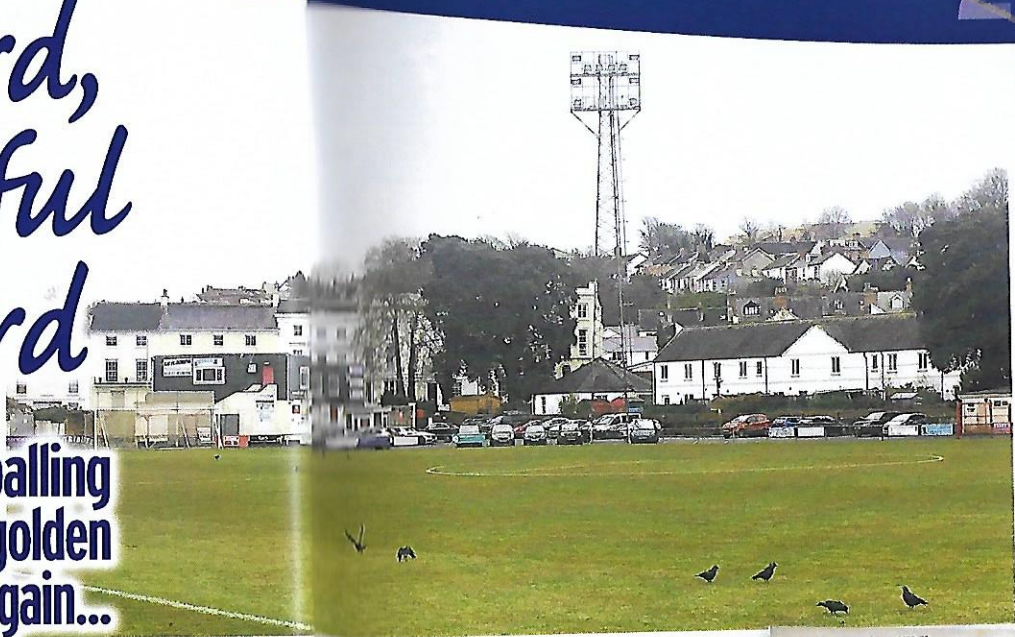
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# Bideford, beautiful Bideford

## One man's footballing story about two golden opportunities missed, never to arrive again...



### opportunities missed, never to arrive again...

**W**hat were YOU doing on October 30 1973? Well obviously most of you whipper-snappers weren't even born. Or even a glint in the eye of your parents/grandparents.

But I raise the date because that was the day I thought I'd missed out on the chance of ever going to Bideford FC.

Why Bideford? And where on earth is it, I hear you ask?

Well, it's in a rather lovely part of North Devon, the sort of seaside nirvana that the BBC eye up when they are about to commission a new crime series where no crime is committed, apart from seagulls nicking the odd chip.

And back in 1972, when I was 14, we went on a family holiday just around the corner in Combe Martin - a holiday branded on my mind due to the rash decision to buy a bright red pair of trainers in the local sports shop. I quickly realised that my school 'mates' would ridicule the outlandish shoes and spent the weekend pre-return to St Nicks feverishly trying to colour them black with

Airfix paint... which didn't work, obviously. The nickname Scarlet O'Hara didn't wear off half as quick.

Anyway, back to 1972 and that summer, with Stones transferring across to the Southern League in only our second season as semi-pros, we had some interesting new opponents to add to the whole list of never-before-visited clubs.

First it was Stourbridge in the West Midlands, Kings Lynn in Norfolk and Barry Town in South Wales - and now Tonbridge in Kent, Bognor Regis in Sussex, Bath City and Minehead in Somerset and Bideford in Devon.

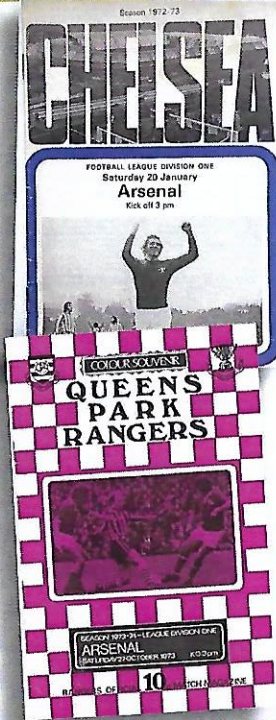
When you're a young teenager away travel is fraught with problems - shyness, not wanting to

travel on a supporters coach among strangers, and the impossibility of long-distance train travel (even if your parents were happy to wave you off on a ten-hour adventure).

But Bideford was tempting. Fellow oldie fan Nick Symmons has told me how he caught a train to Exeter, then the local bone-shaker service to Barnstaple and finally a bus to Bideford, nestling on the Cornish border in the far south west. He can't remember how he got home!

That was beyond my gumption. And last week I set about wondering where I was when the Stones set off to play their only two away games at Bideford.

The Devon side were serial Western League champions but had resolutely turned down the chance of joining the Southern League due to travel costs. We had beaten them 4-0 at Lower Mead earlier in the season but by the time we were due to travel to Devon for the return - Saturday January 20, 1973 - Bideford were in third place and looking realistic



prospects for promotion to the Southern Prem.

Stones were in eighth place having fallen victim to some terrible away results while walloping teams at home... this was around the time we beat Bexley 5-1, Salisbury 4-0, Ashford 3-0, Crawley 4-1 and Gravesend 4-2 in successive home games.

So was it the fear of another disappointing away defeat that prevented me from going to Bideford? Well, more likely it was the offer of using my Uncle Terry's Chelsea season ticket for the visit of Arsenal... both he and my grandad were long time Blues fans and I was at Stamford Bridge that afternoon. Chelsea were beaten by a single Ray Kennedy goal and it was a miserable afternoon when my Grandad's transistor radio informed us the Stones had gone down 4-1 the same afternoon.

So... that was the 1972-73 Bideford game. What was my excuse for the following season?

That is harder to explain with the Stones riding on the coattails of early leaders Poole Town and Waterlooville as the teams met at the Sports Ground on September 20. It was late summer. What could have been nicer than a trip to Devon?

Well sadly this time I succumbed to the lure of Queens Park Rangers, my other 'second club'. They had just been promoted from Division Two and Gordon Jago's team was a thrilling blend Stan Bowles, Dave Thomas, Dor Givens and Gerry Francis... they were about to take the top flight by storm and I thoroughly enjoyed being buffeted by big, swaying crowds on the school End terrace as Rangers put the established

CONTINUED OVERPAGE

Main image: A view of Bideford's 'Sports Ground' stadium with its pretty surrounding houses nestling by the harbour side. Above: the main covered side at the 6,000-capacity ground



FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

clubs' to the sword. On this occasion it was Arsenal, double winners a couple of years before, who had answered to the power of the Reds with a 2-0 win. And again, listening to the report as I drove back with my mate Derek and his dad as the 'Robins' results were read out on Radio Devon: Bideford nil, Wealdstone nil. A hard-earned point!

It may have been almost 50 years ago that was when I made myself a promise to see the next Bideford v Wealdstone. Whenever it was. And of course, it never happened.

The Stones won the SL Div One South that season (1973-74) and 'The Robins' spent just one more season in the Southern League before bailing out because of the travel costs ... and there was a near-30 year spell of dominance in the Western League before they accepted promotion to the Southern League South & West in 2010.

Bideford actually won promotion to the SL a year later and with the Stones doing well in the parallel Ryman Prem there was the heady prospect (for me, anyway) of both teams meeting in the Conference South at some stage.

At the Robins lasted just one season at that level and, ever since, have been struggling to stay in the Southern League at all.

To be honest, I've given up hope of us ever meeting at the Sports Ground - and that is largely because of course to our own place at the top of the League tree.

Why not pop along there to have a look, if there was no game to watch. Just to satisfy my own curiosity?

And so that is what I did a few weeks ago, when the half-term break took me to North Devon... my wife and daughter wanted to do some father-daughter things and I gave me the opportunity to pop in the car, set the sat nav and drive the 20 miles to Bideford to see the footballing El Dorado.

And I wasn't disappointed - it was midway through



Last time the teams met... it was at Lower Mead in March 1974 and this corner from Paul Fairclough (now the England C manager) swung under the bar to set up a 3-1 win

... a dank, grey February afternoon when I pulled into the club car park, with the backdrop sound of seagulls and a salty tang in the air.

The big, undulating pitch was being carefully mown and the vast, towering floodlight pylons conferred a far loftier status on the stadium than that of level four in the non-League hierarchy.

I wandered around the terraces. This spacious, oval ground has a capacity of 6,000 and it was easy to imagine four figure crowds thronging the stands as they went on FA Cup runs in the past. Back in '73, soon after facing the Stones in that tight goalless draw, they were beaten 2-0 at the Sports ground by Bristol Rovers of Division Three.

I stuck my head inside the clubhouse, just as a fellow in his 60s was leaving.

"Are you a long-time Bideford fan?" I asked him, noting his sweat top with its 'Robins' badge.

"That I am" he confirmed. "Tourist are you?"

I told him my story. He seemed bemused. "Come

all this way when there's no game on? We've got Willand Rovers on Saturday but I'm not confident ... every game is a struggle this season. We'll be lucky to stay up".

He told me that the better players at step three and four were all based around Bristol and it was hard to convince them to make the two hour journey "unless you've got loads of money, which we don't".

"How are the crowds holding up?" I asked him. "Only 200 or so... of course when we have a big cup game they all turn up, saying how they love the club and then you never see them again".

He was genuinely interested to hear the Wealdstone Story of progression over the years. And he knew all about the 1970s and the endless hours of travelling to London, Sussex and Kent.

"I don't know how clubs like Truro and the Cornish clubs manage it. Just be thankful your Wealdstone are in London and in the middle of things with plenty of players all around... it may seem idyllic here, and I don't deny I love living here, but in football terms it's hopeless!"

And with that sobering thought I got back in the car. But still dreaming of one day seeing the Stones facing the Robins in this Devon paradise.

# BIDEFORD ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL CLUB

Tel. Bideford 4974

The Sports Ground  
Kingsley Road  
Bideford

A FULL MEMBER OF THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, DEVON COUNTY F.A., THE SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE AND PLYMOUTH AND DISTRICT LEAGUE

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Sports Ground for this Southern League Division I (South) encounter with Wealdstone, who are one of the strongest sides in the League. We bid a warm welcome to the players officials and supporters of Wealdstone F.C., who have made the long journey from London. A glance at the current League table will show that Wealdstone are in a top spot, although the top few clubs, including ourselves, are separated by no more than 2 or 3 points.

We can therefore look forward, I feel, to a good match for the second time this week. I want to say, however, whether this temporary return to 'bread and butter' stuff produces a similar crowd to Wednesday night. I have rarely seen so many people, not usually seen at The Sports Ground for our League matches, present last Wednesday for the replayed cup-tie with Falmouth Town. We are always pleased to see such people, but let us not delude ourselves—the week-in week-out grind of League duty, for players and spectators alike, is ultimately what counts in the progress of any Club like ours with a forward looking attitude. The Cup-ties are always the JAM on the BREAD AND BUTTER. We certainly should have crowds of 2,000 like Wednesday night on most occasions, for our League programme—the players, every one of 'em so richly deserve such wholehearted support. Few are really aware of how dedicated each and every player is in his task on behalf of this Club—some are more dedicated than others, but ALL are generally a lot more 'dedicated' to this Club than the average supporter. They ALL work a lot harder—have you seen the training? In addition to this most train individually nearly every night apart from Saturday or Sunday, including

Manager Graham Bond! A classic example of this dedication is our 17 year old keeper, David Lee, who has literally been 'pitched into the deep end' as far as the team is concerned. It seems obvious to me that his career in football is only just beginning!

At the time of writing these notes, Falmouth and ourselves have not finally settled on the venue for the 2nd replay—but it will be somewhere on Monday evening next at 7.30 p.m. A FULL ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE AT TODAY'S MATCH — So LISTEN CAREFULLY, AND WHY NOT VISIT THE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING AFTER THE MATCH IN ORDER TO CONFIRM THE MATTER?

Next Saturday 3rd November, we are either away to Andover in a Southern League fixture or home to Trowbridge in the final qualifying round of the F.A. Cup!! We could of course be engaged in a 3rd Replay with Falmouth! We just have to wait and see how things turn out.

Let's get behind the lads today and give all the support we can, to keep 'em going and at the same time show them that we have Real confidence in them to deliver the goods.

Michael Pope.

...while the editorial in the Bideford programme lamented the fickle home crowds. Nothing has changed in half a century!

## Goalkeepers' day, but 'Stones edge upwards

Bideford 0, Wealdstone 0  
WEALDSTONE came away from the Sports Ground, Bideford, on Saturday well pleased with their performance. Their hard-earned point keeps them well up with the club, Waterlooville, with a game in hand.  
Played at a lively pace, this match produced some great football. Yet it was a day for goalkeepers, with Roy McKenzie and Bideford's young David Lee doing heroic work to stop the goal-hungry forwards. Indeed, one could not help feeling that if either man had blinked it would have been curtains.  
So tense and nail-biting was the affair that when half-time came Don Brown, the Wealdstone chairman, sitting behind me in the stand,

Doherty in danger of John Pearce

Above: The Harry O reports on the entertaining 0-0 draw at the Sports Ground in October 1973... the last time the clubs met in Devon

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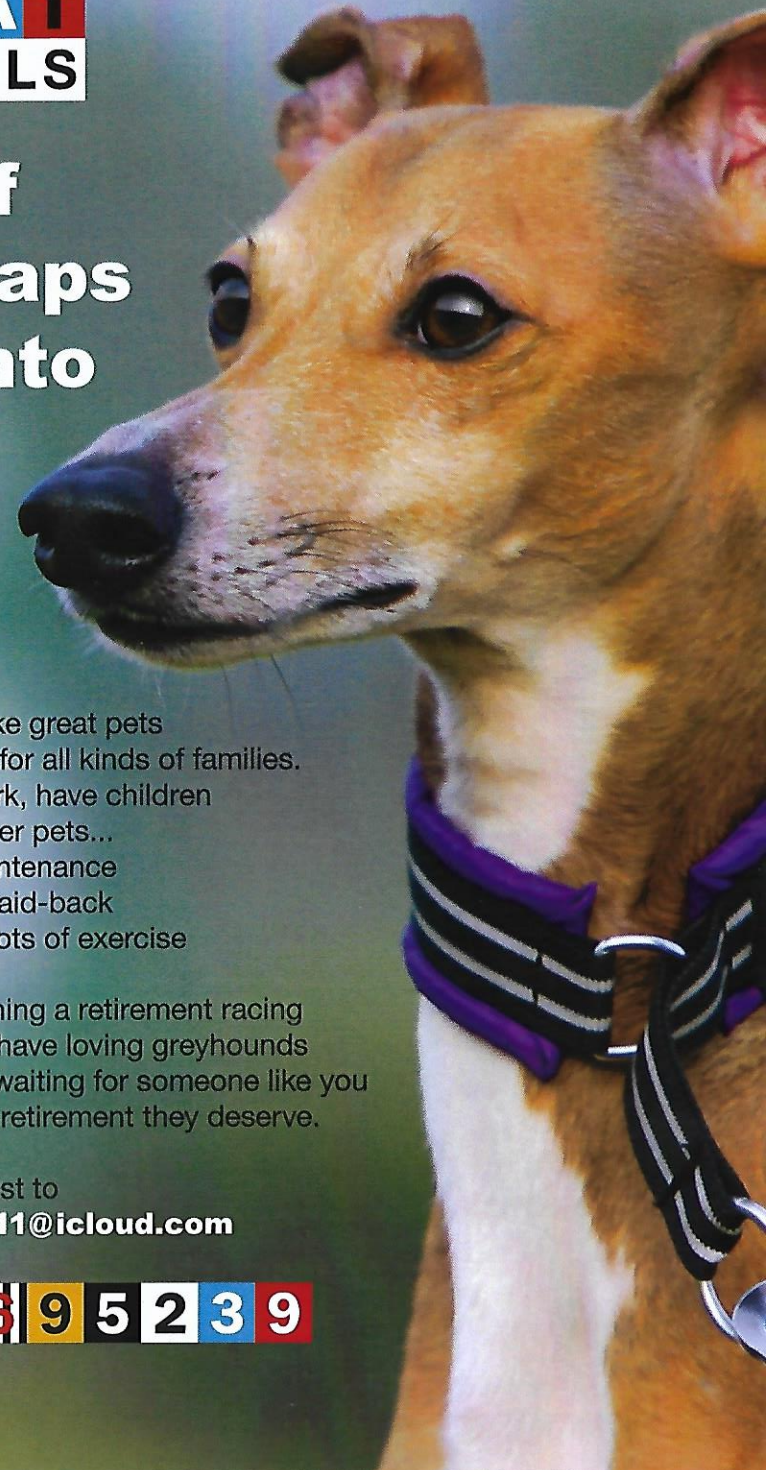
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 <b>YEOVIL TOWN</b> Monday, 29th August Vanarama National League	<b>Duncan &amp; Sandra Towell in memory of Arthur Rogers</b>	<b>Sardi's Law Firm</b>
 <b>WOKING</b> Sunday, 4th September Vanarama National League	<b>Mike &amp; Val Weston</b>	
 <b>TORQUAY UNITED</b> Saturday, 17th September Vanarama National League	<b>Stuart Kane</b>	
 <b>SOUTHEND UNITED</b> Saturday, 24th September Vanarama National League	<b>In Memory of Kat Kelly</b>	
 <b>BOREHAM WOOD</b> Saturday, 8th October Vanarama National League	<b>Nick Woolford</b>	
 <b>NOTTS COUNTY</b> Tuesday, 25th October Vanarama National League	<b>The Rawden Family</b>	
 <b>WREXHAM</b> Saturday, 12th November Vanarama National League	<b>In Memory of Kat Kelly</b>	<b>Jim Kane</b>

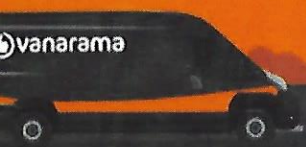
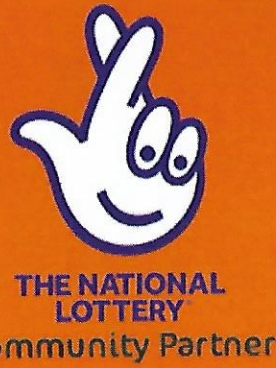
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 <b>SOLIHULL MOORS</b> Tuesday 10th April Vanarama National League	<b>Mick Fishman</b>	<b>Your name or business here</b>
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## VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE PREMIER TABLE @27/3/23

	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	41	29	10	2	103	36	20	15	4	1	47	11	21	14	6	1	56	25	67	97	1-6
2 Wrexham	39	30	7	2	100	35	19	18	1	0	60	15	20	12	6	2	40	20	65	97	0-0 1-3
3 Woking	40	21	9	10	65	41	20	10	6	4	35	21	20	11	3	6	30	20	24	72	1-1 1-1
4 Chesterfield	39	21	8	10	67	44	19	12	2	5	35	21	20	9	6	5	32	23	23	71	1-4 1-1
5 Barnet	39	20	7	12	72	62	19	11	3	5	33	27	20	9	4	7	39	35	10	67	0-2 0-2
6 Eastleigh	40	19	7	14	48	43	20	14	3	3	28	14	20	5	4	11	20	29	5	64	3-1 0-1
7 Boreham Wood	39	16	14	9	44	33	19	7	8	4	20	16	20	9	6	5	24	17	11	62	1-2
8 Bromley	39	15	13	11	55	49	20	7	9	4	28	22	19	8	4	7	27	27	6	58	3-2 3-3
9 Wealdstone	40	15	11	14	51	63	20	9	5	6	30	29	20	6	6	8	21	34	-12	56	-- --
10 Solihull Moors	39	15	10	14	59	54	20	9	5	6	33	23	19	6	5	8	26	31	5	55	1-2
11 Dagenham & Redbridge	39	16	7	16	56	65	20	10	4	6	33	31	19	6	3	10	23	34	-9	55	1-0 1-4
12 Southend United	39	15	8	16	45	40	20	9	4	7	26	18	19	6	4	9	19	22	5	53	0-1
13 Altrincham	40	14	10	16	59	71	20	10	3	7	31	26	20	4	7	9	28	45	-12	52	4-0 1-0
14 Oldham Athletic	39	12	11	16	51	56	19	9	4	6	31	27	20	3	7	10	20	29	-5	47	2-2 2-1
15 Maidenhead United	40	13	8	19	44	56	20	8	6	6	25	22	20	5	2	13	19	34	-12	47	3-2 0-0
16 Halifax Town	39	12	10	17	37	45	19	9	4	6	25	20	20	3	6	11	12	25	-8	46	1-0 0-5
17 York City	40	11	10	19	46	53	20	6	6	8	24	27	20	5	4	11	22	26	-7	43	3-1 2-1
18 Aldershot Town	40	12	7	21	54	68	20	5	4	11	27	33	20	7	3	10	27	35	-14	43	2-1
19 Dorking Wanderers	39	12	7	20	56	84	20	10	4	6	34	37	19	2	3	14	22	47	-28	43	1-3
20 Gateshead	37	9	14	14	48	55	18	4	8	6	24	26	19	5	6	8	24	29	-7	40	1-2 1-0
21 Yeovil Town	38	7	17	14	32	43	20	6	8	6	18	19	18	1	9	8	14	24	-11	38	0-0 0-0
22 Torquay United	39	8	10	21	45	69	20	4	6	10	30	38	19	4	4	11	15	31	-24	34	1-1 2-1
23 Scunthorpe United	40	8	10	22	46	75	20	7	3	10	32	37	20	1	7	12	14	38	-29	34	3-1 1-4
24 Maidstone United	40	5	9	26	43	86	20	3	7	10	22	35	20	2	2	16	21	51	-43	24	2-1 1-1



Official Sponsors of Wealdstone FC

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## Maintaining Excellence

GPF Lewis is an award winning national contractor providing Construction, Maintenance & Facilities management services.

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# Stones on the road



**Notts County**

National League  
Good Friday  
7th April  
3:00pm  
[NottsCountyFC.co.uk](http://NottsCountyFC.co.uk)  
@Official\_NCFC



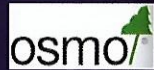
**Boreham Wood**

National League  
Saturday  
15th April  
3:00pm  
[BorehamWoodFootballClub.co.uk](http://BorehamWoodFootballClub.co.uk)



**Southend United**

National League  
Saturday  
15th April  
3:00pm  
[SouthendUnited.co.uk](http://SouthendUnited.co.uk)  
@SUFRootsHall



Wealdstone FC's first team travel is sponsored by Osmo, specialists in the supply of wood finishes

Wealdstone FC Supporters' Club often runs subsidised coach travel to our away games. Check online for full details.