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By Mark Hyde

Written in Stone



ON WITH THE SHOW

A very warm welcome to you all as we start another season of National League football here at Grosvenor Vale.

If you switched off from all things Wealdstone at the end of last season there has, as always been a lot going on at the club over the summer.

You will notice a few new faces amongst the playing squad and thankfully two familiar faces for a bit longer. Our management duo of Stuart Maynard and Matt Saunders who have been key to our recent success have recently signed new two year deals with the club.

I don't think I can remember such a strong pre-season programme and I am certain that facing four strong football league sides here at the Vale will have prepared us for the challenges that lay ahead of us.

Each side we faced over the last month has provided a slightly different challenge to the others, not least of all Charlton's corner routines!

Once again large amounts of additional money has been raised through innovative club promotions and fan donations that have been matched by our

board of directors and our supporters club. These playing budget initiatives are hugely important to the club and enable us to field a side that we can all be proud of so thank you to everyone who has contributed.

The club is still looking for supporters or businesses to step forward as sponsors to ensure we maintain our competitiveness and we have a range of Matchday and Ball sponsorship packages

I don't think I can remember such a strong pre-season programme

available to suit all pockets, as well as our ever-popular Kit Sponsorship that allows you to show your support for your favourite player.

Full details of all these packages, which can be customised to your individual requirements, can be found in the pages of this and every programme.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has volunteered their services this year, the club simply wouldn't exist without your dedication and support. There are still a number of vacancies around the club and Supporters Club and I know they would be glad to hear from you if you can spare some time.

Mark

AWAY TRAVEL

EASTLEIGH Saturday 12th August
Adults £25 U16's £15

Departs Grosvenor Vale 10.15am - Drop off in Town Centre -
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1951 / 1952 Athenian League
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 1996 / 1997 Isthmian League Division Three
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 2019 / 2020 National League South

NATIONAL CUPS

1965 / 1966 FA Amateur Cup
 1984 / 1985 FA Trophy

LEAGUE CUPS

1981 / 1982 Southern League Cup

MIDDLESEX COUNTY CUPS

1958 / 1959 Senior Cup
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 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

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 • 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
 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

MAX KRETZSCHMAR

Taking it to the

M₃ A₁ X₈



Hello Stones fans! It's that time of the year again thank goodness - WE ARE BACK! There's always a huge sense of excitement and anticipation among players before the first game of the season, emotions I'm sure you're all feeling too. Today will be no different I'm sure.

It was a tough pre-season with plenty of fixtures. The last three, all played at the Vale, proved stern tests against football league oppositions with each team posing a different kind of threat. Charlton looked a very tidy outfit with players bursting with pace, power and mobility which caused us problems on the day. I fancy the Addicks to have a strong season in League 1 this year by their showing. My former club Wycombe Wanderers and AFC Wimbledon were up next. I thought both were more realistic dress rehearsals for what we will face in the National League this season and it was disappointing to lose both these games. We dominated the ball in both games, as we so often do, but we were unable to take our chances and be ruthless in and around the 18 yard box. That was an oh so familiar tale last season so that's definitely something we need to improve on as players going forward this season.

Today marks a year since my debut for Wealdstone. A late winner from my cross by Cookie gave us a 3-2 victory over Bromley on what was a scorching hot day. It would be pleasing to

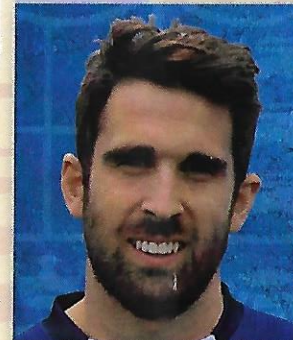
record such a result today too. That result set the platform for a great run of results in the early part of last season. Wins against Halifax, Oldham Athletic and Gateshead quickly followed and that gave the team and I a lot of confidence to improve on the club's previous season's finish. Having looked at the fixtures for the forthcoming season, it's so easy to try and pick a run of games where you think we'll rack up a few victories in a row. It's pointless! You just don't know. This division is so fiercely competitive and any team can beat anyone. So as the old adage saying goes "we'll take it one game at a time."

On a personal note, I want to be more available this season. Frustrating hamstring injuries hampered my season last term and I was gutted to miss the amount of games I did. We're quite a young team in comparison to the league and I felt that my communication, experience and leadership would've helped the team in those sticky patches we had.

Away from the pitch, I've started coaching with the Wealdstone Academy a little and started my own podcast and YouTube channel called 'Max Talks Football' (it does what it says on the tin!). As we all know, the most common way we ingest information nowadays is through social media and sites like YouTube. The channel will have a diverse range of topics and talking points but one thing I'm keen to do is bring you fans closer to us as players and give you a little insight to how we plan, prepare and train for a long arduous season. Be on the lookout for behind the scenes content this season which I'm sure you'll love.

Finally, let's hear you loud and proud today and for the rest of the season for that matter. Let's get the Vale rocking as I know it can and let's have a season to remember! Come on you Stones!

Max



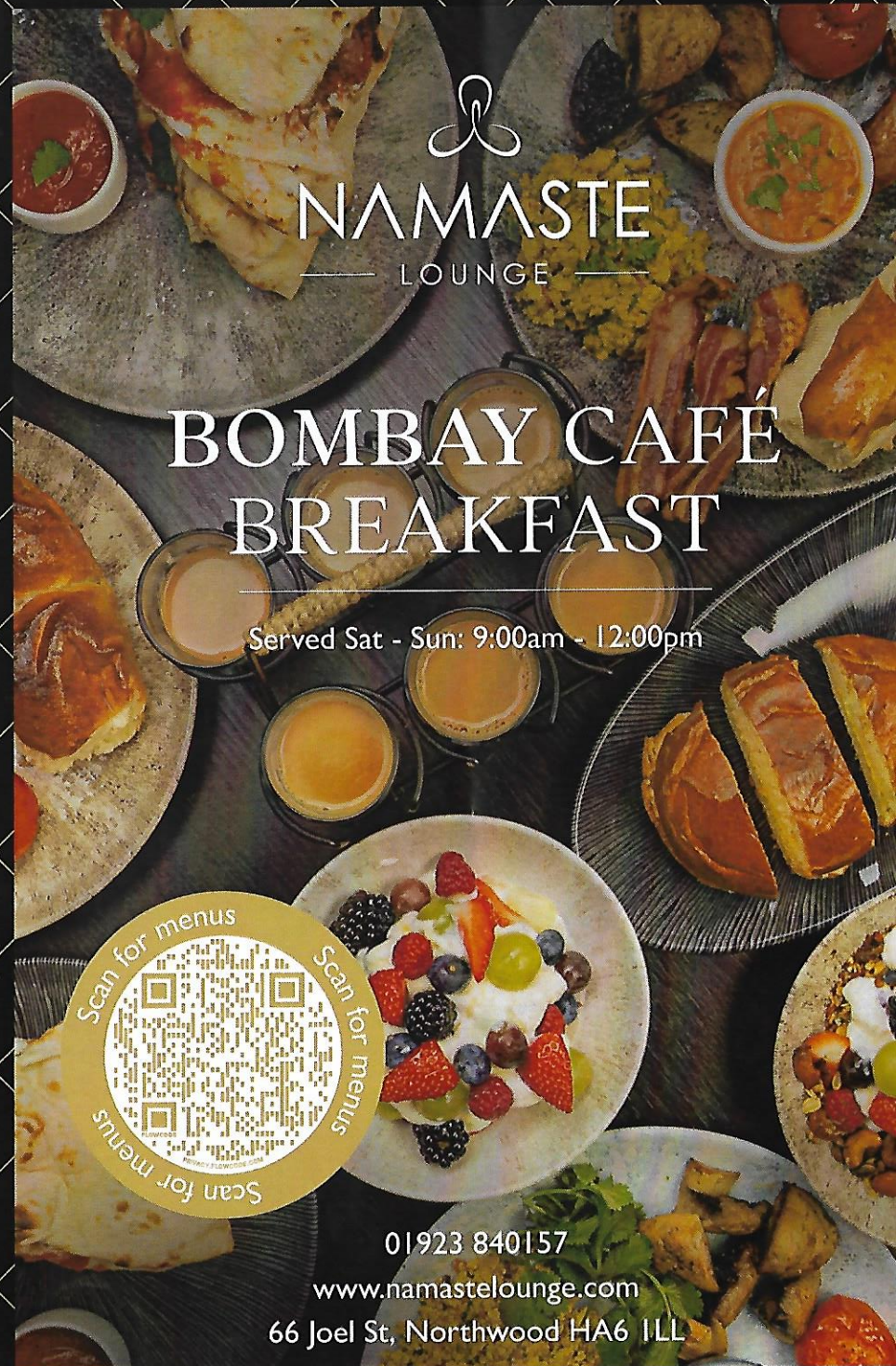
I've started my own podcast and YouTube channel called "Max Talks Football"

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You know I don't do friendlies, except when I do



BY SUDHIR RAWAL
As some of you know, I don't do pre-season friendlies. Usually I wander along to the last one before the season starts, once Mr and Mrs Triallist's many offspring have flown the nest.

But this season has been a bit different - the weather has been ropery so seeing my sons playing cricket hasn't been the joy it should be, filled with sun and beer. Together with the fact that our settled squad has meant that the Triallist family has been seen far less.

I have made three and half games out of the first five: Charlton second half was cold, wet and we were three down, so I bailed. So far, so good, from what I have seen, even the Charlton game saw some positive elements, though it once again showed how much more clinical footballers become higher up the pyramid, every mistake pounced upon with Teutonic efficiency.

When you look around the National League, every club seems to have signed quality and there isn't an obvious basket case that there is pretty much every season - even Southend United, who I suspect will still start the season.

If they keep their squad together, they will be fighting towards the top of the table rather than the bottom.

It has become a cliché, but the National League is stronger this year than last, even without the Hollywood boys and Notts, and the strongest since we first returned to the top division. It feels that that a



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

never-ending flow of money seems to find its way into the division. Our visitors today, York City, are just the latest club to attract a very wealthy owner, who flirted with Yeovil Town last season, and have been on a spending spree attracting some very decent players.

Our US investor, meanwhile, flew the coop to Dagenham as our speed of change wasn't fast enough. No Hollywood story here, unfortunately. Well, not until a long-term lease can be signed and the facilities developed to match our ambitions.

We, on the other hand, still are one of two part time teams (although Oxford City are now training mornings as well), with the lowest budget, but we also know that there are very few clubs as well run as ours in this division and we are unlikely to find ourselves in the position that collection buckets are being used to save the club.

Of course, we are at the forefront of supporters' donations, which were instrumental in the signing of Charlie Barker and Tavhon Campbell this season.

From what I have seen, I like the look of Camp-



The impressive Tavhon Campbell in pre-season action v Charlton. This bending 25-yarder just missed the target. Picture: Darren Campbell

bell. He's a handful with tricky feet, and a couple of the Trialist family have stood out too. Whether we see them today will no doubt depend on how flexible our budget will be.

What we do need? After the departure of double Player of the Year Sam Howes to Leyton Orient, clearly a 'keeper. Howes was a marmite figure, but you can't argue with a move to a League One side where he will be fighting for a starting spot.

It is a shame that George Wickens continues to kick his heels in Fulham's U23 for some unfathomable reason. A commanding centre back wouldn't go amiss either, but otherwise we are in decent shape.

Chesterfield will start as favourites for the title but there are probably at least another nine or ten teams in with a decent shout. As for the bottom, as ever Wealdstone are one of the favourites to go down. I think I quite like it that way, as we continue to defy the odds.

The other big news locally was the surprise win for Wealdstone follower and Ruislip resident Steve Tuckwell in the Uxbridge and South Ruislip by-election.

His opponent from Camden was 1/10 on favourite, but Ulez was a huge factor locally and Tuckwell defied the odds.

Of course, I

would like to think it was "Wealdstone wot won it!" for Steve in a very tight call as he was very clear in his support for Wealdstone, as the biggest sports club in the borough, obtaining a long-term lease.

His opponent only came down to the Vale for a photo-opportunity with the Harrow Borough associated MP for Harrow West after he had been relentlessly asked on social media how he was going to support the club. His silence was deafening.

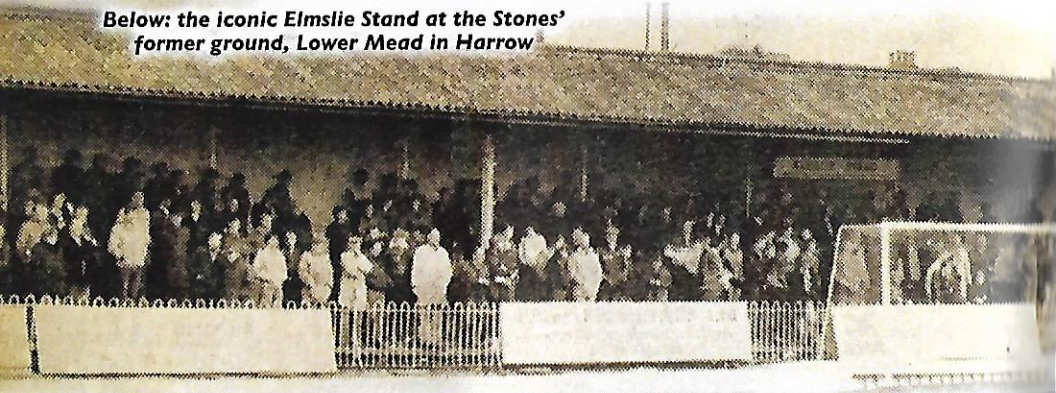
'Stones follower Steve Tuckwell won the Ruislip by-election but he will now be judged by his actions'

Tuckwell had already been down the club twice before Danny Beales made an appearance (and is pictured below, centre, with Stones directors Paul Rumens and Nicky Symmons at the recent MK Dons friendly). Some people were queasy about the political association that the club made with the previous MP, Boris Johnson, but BoJo played a very important part in obtaining the short lease that was signed in March of this year.

Organizations like our landlords love association with well-known individuals, that photo opportunity with Johnson would have invaluable, so you have to pull every lever possible to assist in obtaining the holy grail of a long-term solution at the Vale.

Naturally we have been stung by politicians of all colours in the past, whether red, blue or yellow, with the site in West Harrow and PEPF, so Steve Tuckwell will be judged by his actions.

Below: the iconic Elmslie Stand at the Stones' former ground, Lower Mead in Harrow



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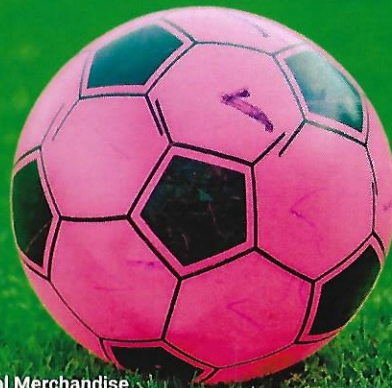
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All you need to know about... York City

The opposition in focus

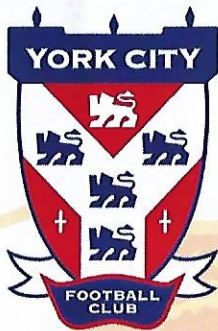
The present club was formed in 1922 and prior to their election to Division Three North of the Football League in 1929 played in the Midland League. They remained in the Northern Section until 1958 when they became one of the original members of the Fourth Division. (During the Second World War when the League was suspended from 1939 until 1946 the club operated in the various wartime competitions). Over the next 45 seasons (1958-2004) the club won promotion six times. In 1958/59 and 1964/65 they moved up to the third tier only to suffer immediate relegation.

City again gained promotion in 1970/71 and in 1974 reached the Second Division (Championship) for the first and to date only time in their 91 year old history. In two seasons in the second tier of English football the club competed with Manchester United, Chelsea, Aston Villa, Sunderland, West Bromwich Albion and Nottingham Forest amongst others and in 1974/75 achieved their highest ever League placing when they finished 15th. The following campaign, however, they were relegated and by 1977 were back in the Fourth.

In 1983/84 they won their first major honour when they finished runaway Fourth Division champions with 101 points becoming the first club in Football League history to reach three figures.

City's last promotion success in the League was via the playoffs in 1992/93 when on the club's first ever visit to Wembley Stadium they beat Crewe Alexandra in a penalty shoot out.

On the other side of the coin City suffered relegation six times and over the years had to make seven applications for re-election back to the League. In 2004 the club finished bottom of Division Three



(League Two) and dropped down to the Conference bringing to an end 75 years membership of the Football League. During that time they had spent two seasons in the second tier and 16 in the third tier.

In eight years in the Conference City reached the promotion play offs three times. In 2006/07 they lost at the semi-final stage and in 2009/10 went down to Oxford United in the final and then, on May 20th 2012, promotion back to the Football League was achieved when Luton Town were beaten 2-1 at Wembley. This latter game marked the club's 4th appearance at the national stadium in four years and completed a league and cup double that season.

MINSTERMEN

York are nicknamed "the Minstermen", in reference to York Minster. It is believed to have been coined by a journalist who came to watch the team during a successful cup run, and was only first used officially in literature in 1972.

and competed in regional non-league football in 2017/18 for the first time since 1929.

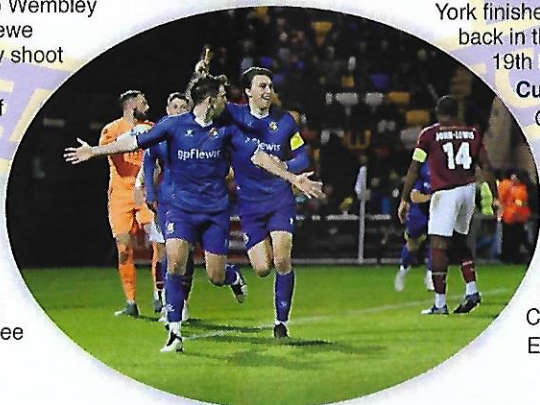
The club was promoted back to the National League at the end of the 2021-22 season via the play-offs, with a 2-0 victory over Boston United in the final. The ST purchased JM Packaging's 75% share of the club in July 2022 to regain its 100% shareholding, before transferring 51% of those shares to businessman Glen Henderson, who took over as chairman of the club.

York finished their first season back in the National League in 19th Position.

Cup History

Over the years City have earned themselves the title of "giantkillers" and when in the Third Division North reached both the quarter finals and semi-finals of the FA Cup.

En route to the 6th round



York City's 8,500 capacity York Community Stadium

in 1937/38 they defeated First Division clubs West Bromwich Albion and Middlesbrough before bowing out to Huddersfield Town in a replay at Leeds Road. The game against Town at York attracted Bootham Crescent's record crowd of 28,123.

In 1954/55 City beat top flight clubs Blackpool and Tottenham Hotspur and in the semi-final drew 1-1 at Hillsborough against Newcastle United to become the first Third Division side to appear in an FA Cup semi final replay which was lost 2-0 at Roker Park. In the mid 1980's the club twice reached the 5th round of the competition losing on each occasion in a replay to Liverpool.

In the Football League Cup they reached the quarter finals in 1961/62 and in the mid 1990's beat Premier clubs Manchester United and Everton in successive seasons.

Whilst in the Conference City won the FA Trophy in 2011/12 beating Newport County AFC 2-0 at Wembley to lift their first major cup competition and were runners up in 2008/09. The Minstermen repeated the feat in 2016/17 when they defeated Macclesfield Town 3-2 to win non-league's premier cup competition for the second time under Gary Mills. The club have won the North Riding Senior Cup 11 times.

LAST SEASON

SAT 18TH FEB 2023 - W 3-1 (H)

SAT 19TH NOV 2022 - W 2-1 (A)

OUR RECORD AGAINST YORK CITY
P2 W2 D0 L0 F5 A2 GD +3

THE MINSTERMEN

HOME GROUND
YORK COMMUNITY STADIUM

CAPACITY - 8,500

MANAGER - MICHAEL MORTON
2022/23 - 19TH NATIONAL LEAGUE

HONOURS

FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIV 4
Champions 1983-84

FA TROPHY

WINNERS 2011-12 & 2016-17

RECORDS

MOST APPEARANCES
Barry Jackson 538 1958-1970

TOP GOALSCORER
Norman Wilkinson 143 1954-1962

RECORD TRANSFERS

IN - Adrian Randall £140,000 from Burnley in 1995

OUT - Richard Cresswell £950,000 to Sheffield Wednesday in 1999

OPPOSITION IN FOCUS - YORK CITY

RYAN WHITLEY - GOALKEEPER



Highly rated 22-year-old shot stopper who progressed through the younger age groups of the academy and since went on to sign his first professional deal at 18.

After successful loan deals at Whitby Town, South Shields and Scarborough Athletic over the past few years he is now set to challenge for the number one shirt for the upcoming campaign.

MICHAEL DUCKWORTH - DEFENCE



Raised in York, the defender came through the youth system and went on to have a career in the Football League with Hartlepool United and Fleetwood before re-joining City in 2020. He now enters his third season with the Minstermen.

ADAM CROOKES - DEFENCE



Athletic left-sided defender equally comfortable playing left-sided centre back or at left back – Crooksey can also play as a defensive midfielder if required. The 24-year-old was part of the Grimsby Town squad who were promoted from the National League last season.

DAN PYBUS - MIDFIELD



Formerly with QPR, AFC Wimbledon and Dover Athletic, Ed joined us at the start of 2019-20 season from Havant & Waterlooville where he was part of their National League South promotion winning team.

PADDY MCLAUGHLIN - MIDFIELD



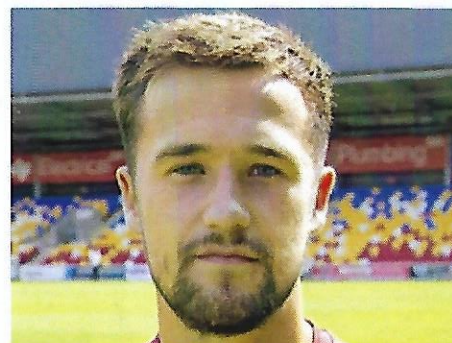
Midfielder Paddy McLaughlin became Steve Watson's first signing as City manager when returning to the club in January 2019 on loan from Hartlepool United. In his second spell with York after winning promotion to the Football League with the club in 2011. His signed on a dual role for 2021/22 as Player/Sports Scientist.

OLLY DYSON - MIDFIELD

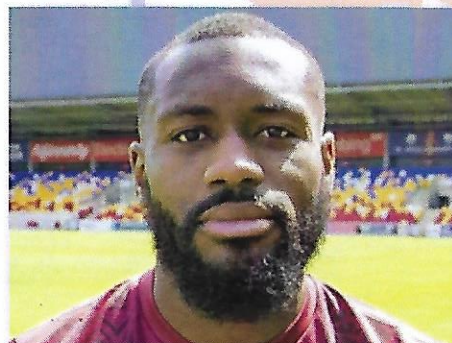
The 23-year-old who is going into his third season with the Minstermen. Known for his versatility, Ollie can play in centre midfield, right back or right wing.

He forged his way to be a regular last season after a period out injured and finished last season's promotion campaign with the top number of assists in the team. Before City, he played for Huddersfield Town U23s.

10 PLAYERS TO WATCH

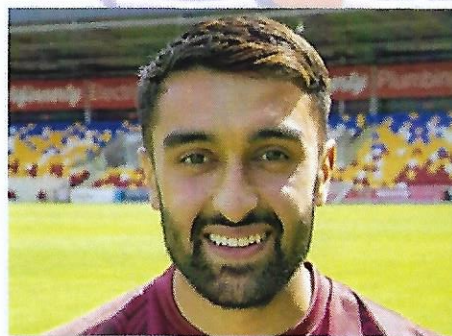


LENELL JOHN-LEWIS - FORWARD



Experienced forward, nicknamed 'The Shop', who joined City initially on loan from Grimsby Town in February 2022, has spent the majority of his career playing in the Football League for the likes of Lincoln City, Bury and Newport County. After playing a key role in the National League North promotion, John-Lewis was signed on a permanent deal.

MAZ KOUHYAR - FORWARD

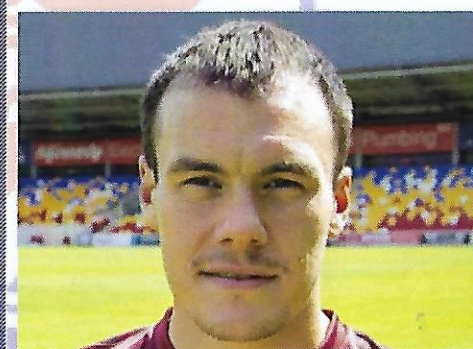


Afghanistan International who signed for City just before the transfer deadline last March from Hereford, the club beating off stiff competition for his signature.

Kouhyar came through the ranks at Walsall before making 33 appearances in League One for the Saddlers. After an injury kept him out of the game for two years, he resurfaced at Hereford and in his debut season scored 5 goals in 30 appearances which included a strike against City which prompted Manager John Askey to sign the 24-year-old.

Maz can play as a winger or as an attacking midfielder and made his debut in red and blue against Kettering in April.

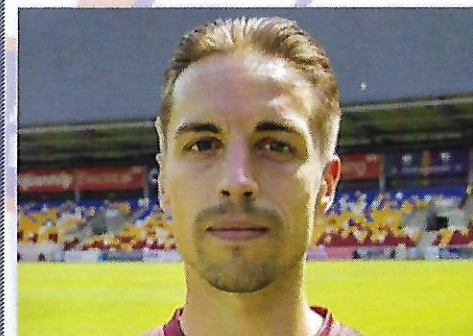
RYAN FALLOWFIELD - DEFENCE



Energetic right back who is well-known to York City fans after playing against the club for North Ferriby United in the National League and Harrogate Town – where he played a pivotal role in their rise to the Football League.

He made a total of 168 appearances for Town over the course of five seasons.

MITCH HANCOX - MIDFIELD



In his 7th season with the club, he has played for several Scottish League teams (including Clyde) and more locally for Chipstead, Egham and Molesey.

* Unfortunately full squad details were unavailable at the time of going to press



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York City's greatest seasons

CLASSIC CAMPAIGNS

1954/55

York City took eventual winners Newcastle United to an FA Cup semi-final replay in 1954/55. Arthur Bottom grabbed a hat-trick as York began with a 2-0 win at Wrexham but Jimmy McCormick resigned as manager in September. Tom Lockie and Billy Sherrington took charge, with a ten-match unbeaten run including five-goal wins over Carlisle and Chester. In the FA Cup, York beat Scarborough 2-0, Dorchester 5-2, Blackpool 2-0, Bishop Cleeve 2-0, and Luton 2-0. They drew 1-1 with Newcastle in the semi-finals. They lost the replay 2-0 but finished fourth in the Third Division (North).

1958/59

Sam Bartram managed York City to promotion in 1958/59. They won their first three games in the new Fourth Division without conceding a goal and went top of the table with a 4-0 win at home to Crewe in September. Skipper Peter Wragg grabbed a hat-trick in a 5-1 victory at Hartlepool and York returned to the promotion frame with a 3-2 win at Watford in mid-February. They lost just one of their last 20 League games, winning 2-0 at rivals Peterborough and clinching promotion with a 1-0 victory at Aldershot. Goalkeeper Tommy Forgan was ever-present, while George Howe and Barry Jackson also starred in a strong defence.

1964/65

Paul Aimson was top scorer with 26 goals as York City won promotion in 1964/65. Other newcomers included wingers Derek Weddle and Andy Provan. York remained unbeaten in their opening six Fourth Division games. After a poor spell, they surged up to second place with ten wins in five games, trouncing Chesterfield 7-1 on Boxing Day. The run ended with a 1-0 defeat at leaders Tranmere but York hammered Newport County 5-1 and went top as Derek Weddle grabbed a hat-trick in a 4-0 win over Tranmere in late March. Skipper Billy Rudd, Jimmy Heron and Andy Provan were ever-present as York finished third.



Football historian LEIGH EDWARDS selects ten post-war York City 'Classic Campaigns'.

1970/71

Tom Johnston managed York City to promotion in 1970/71. The Minstermen made a bright start but by the end of January they were mid-table, ten points behind fourth-placed Northampton. They took top-flight Southamption to an FA Cup fourth round replay and a 3-0 victory at Newport in late February heralded the start of the tremendous promotion surge, with ten wins in 11 matches. York climbed into the top four with a 4-1 win over rivals Northampton in late March, then won 5-4 at Lincoln and held on to fourth place. Paul Aimson was leading marksman with 26 goals, while the back four missed only six games between them.

1973/74

Chris Jones and Jimmy Seal scored 34 goals between them as York City won promotion to the Second Division for the first time in 1973/74. The Minstermen kicked off with a 4-2 win at Charlton and went 21 League games without defeat until Charlton gained revenge with a 1-0 victory at York. They equalled the Football League record by going 11 matches without conceding a goal. York were never out of the top three after mid-November and clinched promotion with a 1-1 draw against champions Oldham in the final home match. The players who formed the magnificent defence missed only six games between them.

1983/84

John Byrne and Keith Walwyn netted 52 goals between them as York City stormed to the Fourth Division title in 1983/84. The Minstermen started with a three straight wins, then regained top spot with a 2-1 win at Northampton in late October and were never again headed. Denis Smith's side lost just twice in 29 games and the 1-1 draw at home to rivals Doncaster attracted 11,297. Promotion was clinched with a 1-1 draw at Chester in mid-April and York won the title with a club record 101 points. John MacPhail, John Byrne and Gary Ford were ever-present, while other stars included captain Roger Jones, Alan Hay and Ricky Sbragia.

1954/55 hero Arthur



2011/12's FA Trophy / National League Play Off Final winning side

PIC: yorkpress.co.uk

Hay and Ricky Sbragia.

1984/85

York City made headlines as they defeated Arsenal in the 1984/85 FA Cup fourth round. Newly promoted York were early pace-setters, winning six of their first eight League matches. John Byrne moved to QPR in October and Dale Banton was signed as his replacement shortly after York won 7-1 at home to Gillingham. In the FA Cup, Denis Smith's team defeated Blue Star 2-0, Hartlepool 2-0 and Walsall 3-0 before Keith Houchen's late penalty clinched a 1-0 fourth round win at home to Arsenal. They drew 1-1 with Liverpool in the fifth round before losing 7-0 in the Anfield replay and finished eighth in the Third Division.

1992/93

Alan Little plotted York City's 1993 Third Division play-off final triumph. The Minstermen raced to the top of the table, losing just one of their opening 14 League matches and slamming four goals past Wrexham and Hereford. A mid-season run of six successive draws saw York lose pole position but they maintained their promotion challenge as leading marksman Paul Barnes netted four goals in a 5-1 victory at home to Scunthorpe, then grabbed a hat-trick in a 5-1 win at Barnet. They finished fourth, despite winning five of their last seven games, beating Crewe 5-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in

the play-off final at Wembley.

1993/94

Paul Barnes was leading marksman with 24 goals as York City qualified for the Second Division play-offs in 1993/94. Newly promoted York began with consecutive wins over Swansea and Exeter, then won at Fulham and Hartlepool before trouncing Cardiff 5-0 in early October. Alan Little's side failed to win any of their next eight matches and slipped to 17th place. Paul Barnes scored twice in a 5-0 victory at Blackpool as York climbed back up the table. Dean Kiely, Andy McMillan and Steve Tutill were ever-present as they finished fifth after losing just once in their 13 games. York were defeated 1-0 by Stockport in the play-offs.

2011/12

York City won both the FA Trophy and Conference National play-off finals in 2011/12. Gary Mills' side beat Solihull Moors 3-0, Salisbury City 6-2, Ebbsfleet United 1-0, Grimsby Town 1-0 and Luton Town 2-1 en route to the FA Trophy final, defeating Newport County 2-0 at Wembley. It was the first time York had won a national knockout competition. Jason Walker was top scorer as they qualified for the Conference National play-offs in fourth place, beating Mansfield Town 2-1 in the semi-finals before defeating Luton Town 2-1 in the Wembley final. York regained Football League status.

Martin Read's original take on this beautiful game

the world of ball



Mark my words: miked-up refs might just be magnificent

thing unexpected happened. With the ref having stopped play to indicate that VAR had been invoked, she then spoke into a microphone around her neck to explain through the stadium's PA system the situation she was consulting on. Result? The entire ground suddenly shushed to grasp her words. Forty thousand people, all cupping their ears to hear her speak.

A few months back I sat down after a long old day to catch up with whichever TV drama was closest to hand that evening.

A broody old build-up ensued, involving a shady character darting in between some dark abandoned warehouses. And as each scene changed we

heard a quiet voiceover intoning the on-screen action: "The assassin stops and listens. He sniffs the night air. A dog's bark can be heard on the wind. He turns the corner. Suddenly, bright lights illuminate the scene as police leap out to confront him."

At first we thought this was part of the drama itself; perhaps an old lag diarising a flashback, maybe? But, ahem, no, not so much: turns out Mimi the cat's errant paw had come down on the remote and switched the audio description on...

There was, however, something novel about having the visual action we could see in front of us simultaneously described by an off-screen third party. We were, in that moment, perhaps a little more invested in what was happening on-screen.

Anyway, I was reminded of the impact of a voice unexpectedly explaining what's going on right in front of you when England's women played their first World Cup match against Haiti. All the usual hubbub of a match was present, of course; the general in-game murmur that rises in intensity whenever the ball came towards the penalty area. But then, just as I was re-learning how to be disappointed in an England performance, some-

Pitch perfect?

Of course, with the decision communicated we quickly returned to the usual murmuring / outrage / screaming, but I couldn't help feel that a fascinating line had just been crossed. A referee explaining to the crowd what they had decided, and why, had the effect of entirely transforming the stadium's atmosphere, albeit for a few seconds. Were this kind of thing to catch on, I reckon it could change the nature of the relationship between crowd and event.

Seems the FIFA way thus far is for only VAR decisions to be communicated from the field. But who's to say that's the last of it? What's wrong with a referee shouting out 'corner Wealdstone' or 'penalty Wealdstone' and for that to be relayed through the PA? We have, of course, already got rugby doing this kind of thing - it's like a soap opera out there at Twickenham. But could it really work in football - and in fact, could the idea be taken even further?

A sound idea

So of course, thoughts turn to the use of a myriad miked-up Mike Deans in the men's game. I think we can all accept that today's game comes with a soundscape of often constant incoherent rage as each small on-field infringement is greeted as if the opposition player involved had personally punched every crowd members' mother at exactly the same



time. And there's a pile on, God knows there's a pile on, as one or two vitriolic voices are quickly latched on to by others. Result: constant abuse of both players and officials. Assistant refs are particularly chastised for every marginal offside call, as if all such decisions are always night and day when they hardly ever are. But the man in the middle? Anger towards the ref typically builds over the course of the match so that by the end he / she often has to leave the pitch to a chorus of boos and worse. The thing is, for us in the crowd this dialogue is all one-way traffic. And because we can't hear the ref speak, all we can do is steadily build up a body of grievances to put to then when they make for the tunnel at the end of the game.

I wonder what effect a routinely 'talking' ref might bring to the party? Not just using the PA to communicate decisions, perhaps, but even communicating the overall ebb and flow? Speaking to communicate 'play on', 'no foul', 'I'm not falling for that', 'you've had fair warning', etc.? You'd surely get a true extra dimension to the game taking place right in front of you. Forget all these augmented reality goggles and their three dimensional images, that's just augmentation - actually hearing the on-field dialogue would add materially to our perception of the game.

And it would change other things too, of course. The overall wall of sound typically produced by the crowd would be likely to stop and start more often. And there may well be an almost pantomime-like air to proceedings ('oh no you haven't awarded a pen?' 'Oh yes I have') as the match you used to simply just to come to watch becomes one in which you're actually engaged via the back and forth between crowd and spectacle. Perhaps hearing the ref speak over the course of the full ninety inutes would actually help the match flow more freely.

Refer-heed

Now, I'd say that the National League Premier is probably the furthest you can descend down



Left: A baying crowd. Above: "Check 1-2, 1-2 - what do you mean it's still one all?"

England's footballing pyramid and still actually get to hear some of what's said when players and officials converse from the terraces. But it's drips and drabs at best, so you probably need to drop another division to catch a decent amount of it for sure. And to

be honest, even with park-level football you rarely get to hear any actual ref-to-player dialogue, especially when it's windy. So yes, a ref wearing a mike pack and some kind of telecoms link to the PA would be inevitable to make this audio fever dream of mine a reality at all levels. But it's perhaps not outside the bounds of today's technological wizardry. These days I can take hours of 8k high resolution video of my tortoise eating a cucumber, and that's

just with my phone; you're surely not telling me that making refs all chatty over stadium speakers is a step too far?

Look, I really don't know about this, it's been a long day if I'm being brutally honest and opinion columns don't just fill themselves. But I reckon there's a kernel of an idea here that's worth floating. In fact, I've often wondered why so many potential initiatives, some considerably more sensible than this one (only captains approaching referees, sin bins, etc.) end up falling back into obscurity after a short burst of enthusiasm from commentators. Perversely, perhaps this obviously far more outlandish idea is just the one to actually break through? I'll see if I can talk to someone.

"These days I can take 8k high res video of my tortoise eating a cucumber"

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 ALDERSHOT TOWN Saturday 2nd November Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available
 HARTLEPOOL UNITED Saturday 23rd December Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Sponsor 2 Available
 MAIDENHEAD UNITED Monday 1st January Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available
 SOUTHEND UNITED Tuesday 23rd January Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Sponsor 2 Available
 FC HALIFAX TOWN Saturday 27th January Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available
 GATESHEAD Saturday 17th February Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Sponsor 2 Available
 DORKING WANDERERS Tuesday 20th February Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available
 EASTLEIGH Saturday 9th March Vanarama National League	Harrow Windows	Sponsor 2 Available
 BROMLEY Tuesday 12th March Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available
 KIDDERMINSTER HARR. Saturday 23rd March Vanarama National League	Rolfe-East	Sponsor 2 Available
 SOLIHULL MOORS Monday 1st April Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available
 CHESTERFIELD Monday 1st April Vanarama National League	Sponsor 1 Available	Sponsor 2 Available



FIRST TEAM RESULTS 2023/2024

- Jed WARD
- Jack COOK
- Ashley CHARLES
- Alex DYER
- Dom HUTCHINSON
- Tarryn ALLARAKHIA
- Max KRETZSCHMAR
- Giovanni MCCREGOR
- Jaydon MUNDLE-SMITH
- Giovanni MCCREGOR
- Olufilea OLOMOLA
- Mason BARRETT
- Eric NEWMAN
- Michal OBIERO
- Nathan FERGUSON
- Charlie BARKER
- Corie ANDREWS
- Charles CLAYDEN
- Luke DREHER
- Dante Astor BAPTISTE
- Corie ANDREWS
- Tahvon CAMPBELL
- Joseph CULLIS

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

5 YORK CITY	VNL	--	---	---		
12 Eastleigh	VNL					
15 Bromley	VNL					
19 AFC FYLDE	VNL					
26 Aldershot Town	VNL					
28 DAGENHAM	VNL					

SEPTEMBER

2 Hartlepool United	VNL					
9 EBBSFLEET UNITED	VNL					
16 ALTRINCHAM	VNL					
19 Dorking Wanderers	VNL					
23 Chesterfield	VNL					
26 WOKING	VNL					
30 OLDHAM ATHLETIC	VNL					

OCTOBER

3 Gateshead	VNL					
7 Kidderminster Harriers	VNL					
14 TBD	FAC40					
21 BOREHAM WOOD	VNL					
24 OXFORD CITY	VNL					
28 Solihull Moors	VNL					

NOVEMBER

11 ROCHDALE	VNL					
18 FC Halifax Town	VNL					
21 Southend United	VNL					
25 BARNET	VNL					

DECEMBER

2 ALDERSHOT TOWN	VNL					
9 TBD	FAT30					
16 Dagenham & Redbridge	VNL					
23 HARTLEPOOL UNITED	VNL					
26 Maidenhead United	VNL					

JANUARY

1 MAIDENHEAD UNITED	VNL					
6 Ebbsfleet United	VNL					
20 Rochdale	VNL					
23 SOUTHEND UNITED	VNL					
27 FC HALIFAX TOWN	VNL					

FEBRUARY

3 Barnet	VNL					
10 Altrincham	VNL					
17 GATESHEAD	VNL					
20 DORKING WANDERERS	VNL					
24 Woking	VNL					

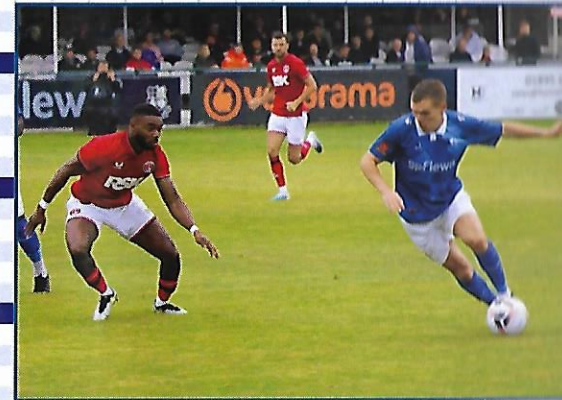
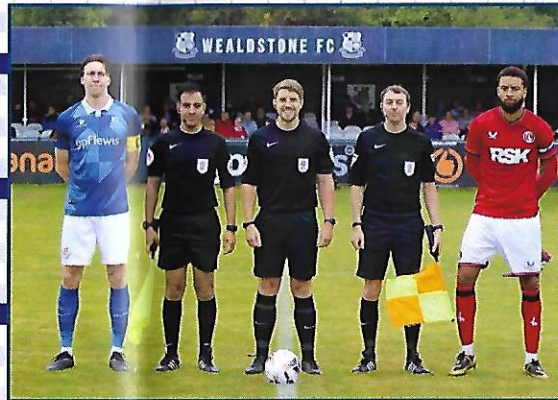
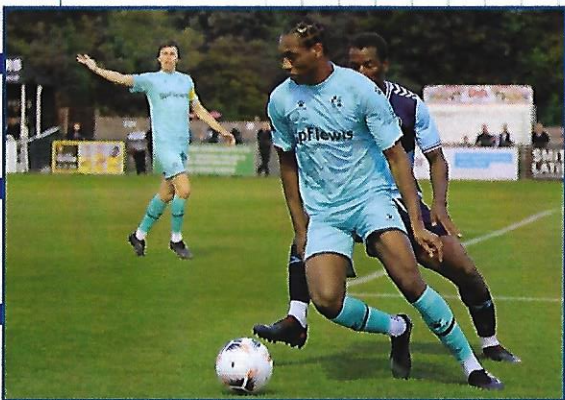
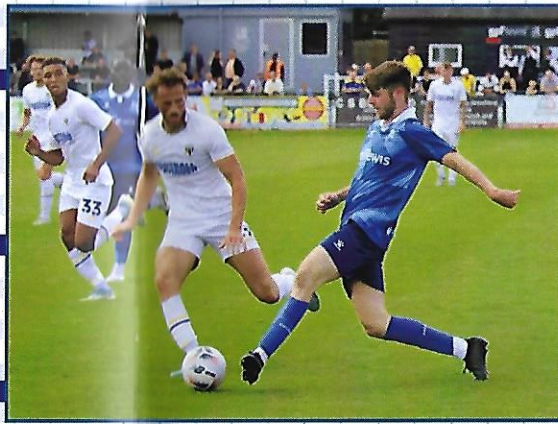
MARCH

2 York City	VNL					
9 EASTLEIGH	VNL					
12 BROMLEY	VNL					
16 AFC Fylde	VNL					
23 KIDDERMINSTER	VNL					
29 Oxford City	VNL					

APRIL

1 SOLIHULL MOORS	VNL					
6 Boreham Wood	VNL					
13 CHESTERFIELD	VNL					
20 Oldham Athletic	VNL					
29 Southend United	VNL					

TO BE ARRANGED



PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY RESULTS

8th July	Bracknell Town	N	W	3-2	Campbell, Allarakhia, Mundle-Smith
10th July	Milton Keynes Dons	H	W	2-1	Dyer, MacGregor
15th July	Farnborough	A	W	4-2	Olomola, Campbell, Trialist C 2s
18th July	Billericay Town	H	D	0-0	
22nd July	Charlton Athletic	H	L	0-5	
25th July	Wycombe Wanderers	H	L	0-1	
29th July	AFC Wimbledon	H	L	0-2	

(RED DATE = Midweek)

Pictures above of our pre-season friendlies all courtesy of Jon Taffel

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Mya Graham,
UCFB graduate, Assistant Producer at **talkSPORT**



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MATCH REPORTS

WYCOMBE WANDERERS

Grosvenor Vale Tuesday July 25th 2023



Stones boss Stuart Maynard handed a start to new keeper Jed Ward, who joined on the day from Bristol Rovers for the season.

In a first half where both sides enjoyed large spells of keep ball trying to probe through the opposition it was Luke Leahy who had the first chance of the game, trying an audacious lob from 40 yards out, but it never troubled Ward in goal.

It took until 30 minutes for Ward to make his first save, getting down low to thwart Dale Taylor when he broke free from the Wealdstone defence.

Wealdstone first troubled when Micah Obiero played in Charles Clayden down the right, his low cross to Corie Andrews was cut out by Jasper Pattenden, who's clearance almost went into his own net.

The visitors scored the only goal of the game next on 42 minutes when Leahy swerved in a crossed free kick to McCleary who flicked it past Ward with the deftest of touches.

There was almost an instant equaliser from the Stones when Nathan Ferguson played the trialist winger in on goal but Chairboys keeper Max Stryjek saved well with his legs.

With a number of changes made by both teams it

took the second half until 77 minutes to spark into action when Olufela Olomola saw his on target effort flicked over the bar by a Wycombe defender.

Olomola went closer just a minute later when he cut inside from the left and unleashed a swerving effort that just went wide of the far post.

Chairboys midfielder Jack Young then gave Ward his first save of the second half, when his 20-yard strike was tipped over by the keeper with ten minutes to go.

Ashley Charles was bailed out by Ward in the final moments after the midfielder was dispossessed on the edge of the area but Stones' new stopper saved well with his leg to keep it at 1-0, with the final whistle going moments after.

WEALDSTONE:

Ward, Trialist A, Barker (Cook 60), Mundle-Smith, Clayden (Trialist D 60), Trialist B (Charles 60), Ferguson (c) (Dyer 60), McGregor, Trialist C (Phillips 78), Obiero (Olomola 60), Andrews (Campbell 60).

Subs not used: Trialist E, Brookshaw.

Report by **Chris Woods**



AFC WIMBLEDON

Grosvenor Vale Saturday July 29th 2023



A hectic start to the friendly saw both teams' fashion similar chances within the first five minutes of the game. Pinpoint cross from Giovanni McGregor fell to skipper Jack Cook at the back post, who fizzed a dangerous ball across the box that narrowly missed a Wealdstone body.

A minute later, Josh Neufville played an almost identical ball across the Stones penalty area, but a miss-hit shot from Josh Davison scuppered a big chance for the visitors.

Johnnie Jackson's side didn't let the early miss affect them and took the lead five minutes in when Jack Currie floated a pinpoint cross onto the head of Bugiel, who looped his header out of Jed Ward's reach and into the top corner.

Despite the Stones playing their trademark possession football, the visitors looked unfazed and continued to cause problems for the hosts, creating dangerous chances whenever they seized possession from Stuart Maynard's side.

Utilising their size advantage, the Dons saw two headers from the imposing Ryan Johnson go narrowly wide of the Stones goal, once from a corner and again from another dangerous ball cross from Currie.

The marauding Wimbledon left-back caused problems for the Stones back-line for the entirety of the first-half and on 30 minutes created yet another chance from the left-flank, driving to the by-line and pulling the ball across to midfielder Jake Reeves, who fired over with all the goal to aim at.

An unfortunate incident just before half-time saw

new Wealdstone signing Luke Dreher stretched off on his debut with a suspected broken arm after a nasty collision with Bugiel, that earned the Dons striker a booking for his clumsy attempt to win the ball.

The second-half saw the Stones start the brighter of the two sides, creating two big chances early on as they hunted for an equaliser.

The first chance saw Charles Clayden played through after clever play from Mundle-Smith and Tahvon Campbell, but a strong save from Alex Bass denied the Stones an equaliser.

Just minutes later, Olufela Olomola played in former Wimbledon forward Corie Andrews, but the striker's shot was well blocked by a Dons defender.

Seventy minutes in, James Tilley forced a big save out of Ward with a curling effort towards the top corner. Despite the Stones efforts to keep out the resulting corner, a scramble inside the box saw the ball eventually fall into the path of Al-Hamadi, who smashed his effort into the back of the net to double the visitor's advantage.

WEALDSTONE:

Ward, Barker, Cook (c), Mundle-Smith, Clayden, Dreher (Charles 45), Dyer, McGregor (Andrews 45), Obiero (Phillips 82), Olomola (Ferguson 69), Campbell (Trialist 69).

Subs not used: Baptiste, Pottle, Debney.

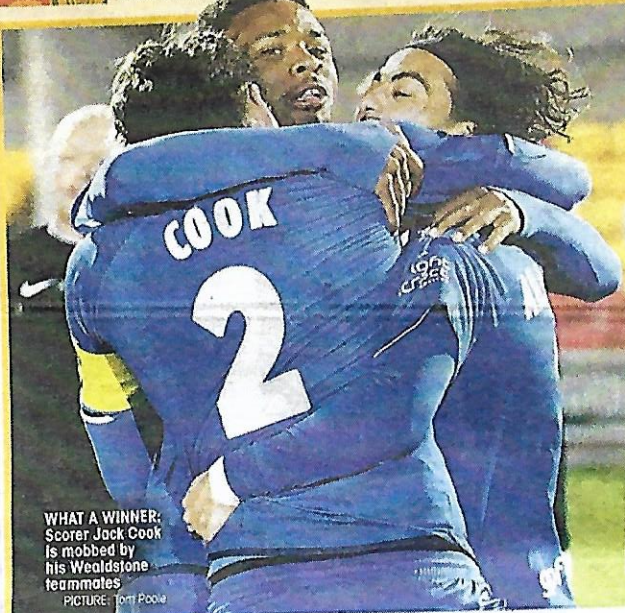
Report by **Will Beaman**

York City: we've played you before

YORK CTY 1
Duku 14

WEALDSTONE 2
Freckleton 68, Cook 90

MATCH STATS	
YORK V WEALDSTONE	
9	SHOTS ON TARGET 3
1	SHOTS OFF TARGET 1
3	CORNERS 8
1	OFFSIDE 1
12	FOULS CONCEDED 7
2	YELLOW CARDS 0
0	RED CARDS 0



WHAT A WINNER: Scorer Jack Cook is mobbed by his Wealdstone teammates
PICTURE: Tom Poola

LINE-UPS

YORK: James 6 (for Duku 48), Hurst 8 (for Kouogon 78), Maluta (for Hancock 88). Subs not used: Whitley, Duckworth

WEALDSTONE: Kretzschmar 6 (for McGregor 68), Ferguson 6 (for Dyer 78), Akinola (for Okoroa 68). Subs not used: Barrett, Mundle-Smith

Cook compounds York misery

By Joe Cook

CARETAKER boss Tim Ryan praised his York City players for following the gameplan, despite succumbing to a last-minute winner from Wealdstone captain Jack Cook.

Youth team manager Ryan took the dugout for the first time since the Minstermen ruthlessly parted company with popular boss John Askey on Wednesday.

Fans vented their anger towards underfire chairman Glen Henderson with many holding up red cards in his direction as he was ushered in to the directors box before kick-off.

They at least had something to cheer in the shape of Manny Duku's 15th-minute header, but second-half goals from Miguel Freckleton and Cook, in the fourth minute of stoppage time added more fuel to the fire.

Ryan, though, refused to

pin any blame on the players, commenting: "I had an hour-and-a-half to work with the lads on Friday in training and I think that they played well with the way that I like to play, which is to press teams."

"I wanted to press Wealdstone high and get at them from the off, which we did well through Mitch (Hancock) and Ollie (Dyson) in the middle of the park."

"It was a real kick in the teeth that we lost today due to two set-pieces, but I'm looking forward to be able to try and help the boys next week by implementing some of my stuff ahead of Dorking next weekend."

Credit to the fans, they did show their support to the players on the pitch and after a run of seven matches with-

out a win, which ultimately led to Askey's demise, they started with a point to prove.

Ollie Dyson forced a good save from Sam Howes after breaking into the Wealdstone penalty area before Adam Crookes had a header crash back off the crossbar from a corner. Lenell John-Lewis' follow-up was then cleared off the line.

Eventually, York made the breakthrough on 15 minutes when Duku headed home his third goal of the season at the far post from Dyson's corner.

Wealdstone grew into the game as the minutes ticked and they were well worthy of their equaliser on 68 minutes - Freckleton, on loan from Sheffield United - heading the ball home from a free-kick despite York players suggest-

ing he was in an offside position.

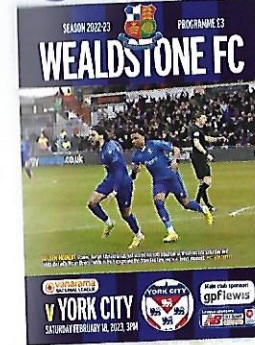
Stones keeper Samuel Howes then producing a fine late save to deny Ryan Fallofield but the main danger was at the other end as Wealdstone grew in confidence.

Max Kretzschmar's shot from distance was superbly tipped away by York goalkeeper Ethan Ross, before captain Cook stepped up with a goal identical at the death to their first, nodding the ball home beyond Ross.

"We came up against a really good side today," Ryan added. "We created some really good chances but no one could get on the end of it."

STAR MAN: Jack Cook (Wealdstone) **ATK:** 4/70
ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★
REFEREE: David Richardson

We'll never forget our very first games against historic York



STONES fans were in dreamland last season as we finally met the Minstermen... and chalked up a remarkable League double.

It is thoughts of trips to football's citadels that have kept our long-suffering supporters going through the years of struggle... and the first-ever meeting of our two clubs in November last year lived up to the hype and expectation.

There was some difficulty mixed in with that - with York city centre gripped by the first day of its Christmas market, dozens of fans were unable to catch buses to the out-of-town stadium, many missing the whole match - but what we'll most remember is the delirium of the final 25 minutes.

Manny Duku had headed York ahead in the first half but as Stones grew into the match and the 300 travelling fans found their voice, the 4,400 Minstermen were stunned by Miguel Freckleton's 68th-minute leveler from Lewis Kinsella's delicious cross. And in the fourth minute of injury time we were hoarse with disbelief when skipper Jack Cook headed the winner from another Kinsella corker.



The return game, in February, showed that Stones were coming of age at this level as they swamped the visitors with brilliant goals from Corie Andrews, Swansea loan star Tarrelle Whittaker (celebrating above, and scoring below) and Tarryn Allarakhia who nabbed a cheeky third.

Their first year back in the National League after promotion from NL North saw City finish 19th and the Stones 13th. But what a pair of games!

Cuttings courtesy of the non-League Paper



WEALDSTONE 3
Andrews 35, Whittaker 60, Allarakhia 87

YORK CITY 1
Crookes 90+2

STONES ARE RUTHLESS IN ADDING TO CITY MISERY

By Nicole Cho-Yee

IN THIS battle of play-off hopefuls and relegation strugglers, it was Stuart Maynard's high-flying Wealdstone who came through following a feisty encounter at Grosvenor Vale.

Goals from Corie Andrews, Tarrelle Whittaker and Tarryn Allarakhia swept aside City, with Adam Crooke's late consolation not enough to prevent a fifth straight league defeat for the managerless Minstermen.

"It was a great win and the football we played was of a really high level," said Wealdstone assistant manager Matt Saunders.

"We dominated the ball and created chances, so you can't ask for much more. "I'm delighted with the goals we scored and even happier with the way we took the ball away from them and didn't give it back."

That said, Manny Duku almost caught

down the right and arrowed an effort towards the far corner of the net which was deflected just wide.

Two minutes from time, a comfortable victory for the Stones was sewn up when the lively Ilunga picked out Allarakhia, who converted past Whitley with his second attempt.

York did manage a late consolation - Crookes tapping home from close range after Howes parried Alex Hurst's strike - but it didn't dampen Stones' delight.

Substitute Olufela Olomola made

minutes when beating the Stones' offside trap to latch onto Ollie Dyson's through ball, but captain Jack Cook recovered to thwart the striker's shot.

Wealdstone enjoyed the lion's share of possession during the early exchanges; but were unable to profit from any of their half-chances.

That was, however, until the 35th minute when Brooklyn Ilunga's teasing cross was volleyed home by Andrews in style - his first goal for the club.

As the second half progressed, the game became more open with chances falling at both ends. York

MATCH STATS
WEALDSTONE V YORK

6	SHOTS ON TARGET	1
6	SHOTS OFF TARGET	5
4	CORNERS	6
2	OFFSIDE	3
8	FOULS CONCEDED	14
1	YELLOW CARDS	4
0	RED CARDS	0

WEALDSTONE: (3-5-2) Howes 7, Cook 7, Barker 7, Freckleton 6, Okoroa 6, Dyer 7, Charles 7, Burgha 8, Whittaker 8 (Ferguson 78, 6), Andrews 7 (Okoroa 63, 7), Allarakhia 7. Subs not used: Barrett, McGregor, Hutchinson

YORK: (3-5-2) Whitley 6, Kouogon 6, Kerr 6, Crookes 7, Fallofield 6, Dyson 6 (Hurst 75, 6) Pybus 7, McLaughlin 8, Whittle 6, Duku 6 (Kouhyar 75, 6), Tanner 6. Subs not used: Ellis, Campbell, Duckworth

STAR MAN: Tarrelle Whittaker (Wealdstone) **ATK:** 1/03
ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★
REFEREE: Ben Atkinson



X

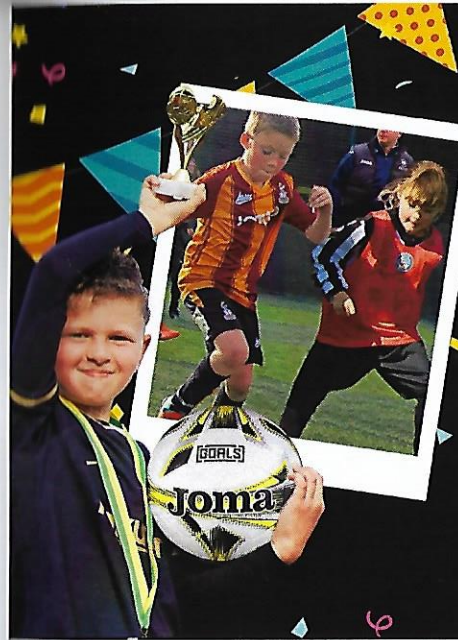
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REWIND SPECIAL >>>>>

by tim parks

It happened 50 years ago

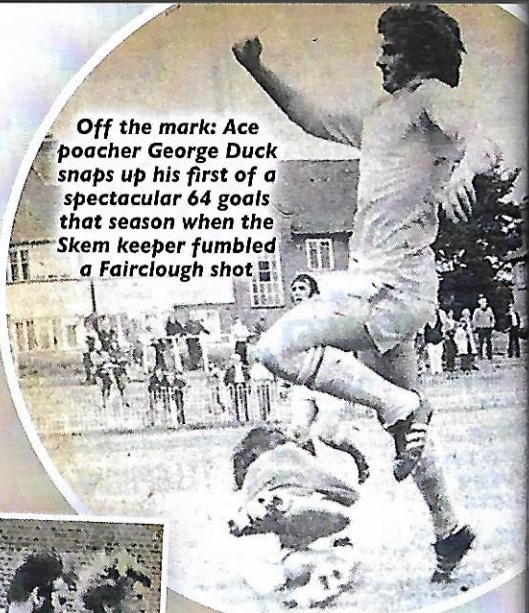
part four: pre-season 1973

This season we'll be reliving the extraordinary campaign of fifty years ago... which ended with the Stones' first league title in 22 years and its very first as a professional club.

The long wait was over! After weeks of scouring the Harry O for news of signings, this was the first chance to see newcomers John McCormick, Ray Fulton and John Henderson in action and all three were to play a pivotal part in the success of this, and the next few seasons.

To get Amateur Cup kings Skelmersdale to travel down from Manchester for a friendly was quite a coup, and 541 turned up at Lower Mead to watch - a decent number and a decent game. Apologies for the Sellotape markings which make it hard to read the match report (opposite page)... blame young Mike Pullin, keeper of the scrapbook, for his schoolboyish enthusiasm!

At the end of this season, in the Supporters Club vote for Player of the Season I opted for former Crystal Palace



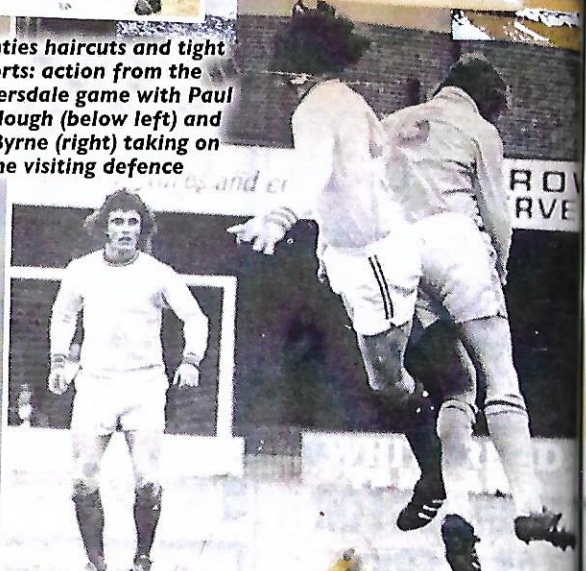
Off the mark: Ace poacher George Duck snaps up his first of a spectacular 64 goals that season when the Skem keeper fumbled a Fairclough shot



star McCormick as the strengthened defence was the one key improvement on the previous season. But many voted for fellow newbie Johnny Henderson (left) and he actually won it!

But how did we all ignore the claims of goalscorer extraordinaire George Duck? Despite hitting over 60 goals in 73-74 and a total of 250 for the club over seven seasons, he never once received the supporters' Jock Law Trophy. A strange omission, but George now receives the adulation of generations of fans as a club ambassador.

Seventies haircuts and tight shorts: action from the Skelmersdale game with Paul Fairclough (below left) and Bill Byrne (right) taking on the visiting defence



AUG 4TH 1973 FRIENDLY
George Duck straight off the mark

Promise of newcomers means problems for Wealdstone's manager

By Phil Sugden

Wealdstone 1, Skelmersdale 0

GEORGE DUCK picked up the threads of last season, when he so nearly set up a new Wealdstone scoring record, by notching the winner in the 36th minute of this highly entertaining pre-season friendly at Lower Mead on Saturday, but important as was his contribution — to give 'Stones' sweet revenge for an Amateur Cup defeat at the hands of Skem, a few seasons ago — the main interest was centred on Wealdstone's newcomers.

Happily, one can record it was a most satisfying afternoon from that point of view, and a display which to my mind augurs well for the coming season. It can be argued that pre-season friendlies do not reveal all, but Skem are a hard side to beat and that Wealdstone had 75 per cent of the play in achieving their success, says much.

Four 'Stones' five new signings were on show, the absentee being goalkeeper Clive Brodie who had booked his holiday before signing for the club.

The four who played all emerged with credit and although two of them, John Henderson, from Blechley, and John Barnes, a former apprentice pro from West Ham, are on trial, one suspects they did more than enough to make manager Sid Prosser start thinking about offering them contracts.

This might prove something of an embarrassment, for it would mean a pool of 18 players and one doubts if he is thinking of more than 15.

All eyes, of course, were on former Crystal Palace centre-half John McCormick and most of the 541 paying guests who gathered for August 4 when so many are on holiday departed more than happy about the safety of this position. McCormick did little wrong and a great deal right, much of which was highly polished. His vast experience was always evident and will be of great value to those around him.

Generally his tackling was strong, occasionally block-busting but scrupulously fair, and he found time and energy to move unopposed whenever a corner or a free kick offered him the slightest opportunity to show his prowess in the air.

He kicked cleanly and some of his first time volleying away from the edge of the box completely shattered Skelmersdale's attempted build-up.

All in all one can only be happy that an excellent signing for manager Sid Prosser.

This 25-year-old has quite a lot of experience having played 30-odd games for Bedford, the Southern Premier side before moving to Blechley. That he arrived at Lower Mead at all is, I understand, due to a contractual misunderstanding with the North Bucks side.

In the event I, for one, am happy to see him there and shall be surprised if he does not stay. Fast, tricky but usually direct, he was always in the game, looking for the ball and showing a great appetite for the job in hand.

Next newcomer to impress was undoubtedly young full-back Ray Fulton, from Orient, and constantly drew applause for his reading of the game, which shall be surprised if he is not offered terms.

His positional sense was excellent, his interceptions keen and intelligent, and more than that not his clean clearances set attacks going. He made but one real mistake during the 90 minutes — and recovered quickly. He will bring much needed vigour to a Wealdstone back four which has 100 often hesitant last season.

Stones run into injury

Wealdstone will delay selection of their side to meet Barnet, the Premier League team, in a pre-season friendly at Lower Mead tonight (Tuesday), 7.30 p.m., because of injuries to several players. Chris Kinnear, John Barnes, George Duck and John Henderson all sustained knocks on Saturday, the more serious being Kinnear and Duck, but all may be fit.

Clive Brodie is still on holiday, but will be back for Saturday's opening Southern League game. Roy McKenzie continues in goal tonight.

Paul Doherty, Wealdstone's amateur centre-half appeared for Walthamstow Avenue, the 15thman League club, in a pre-season friendly on Saturday. Manager Sid Prosser gave Doherty permission to play for the amateur side to give him match practice. He is registered at Wealdstone.

Former Wealdstone midfielder Dave Cockell is joining Staines Town as a permit player.

Clive Brodie from taking over the job.

Up front, those terrible twins, George Duck and Bill Byrne, were quickly back to their double act without, perhaps, showing their full potential. Never-the-less, Byrne's neat head flicks might have brought him a couple of goals and Duck was unlucky not to get his second near the end when he took careful aim only to be thwarted by a fine save.

Alick Brown and Godfrey, who came on for Henderson and Barnes, both did enough to show they will be fighting for their places.

That Wealdstone scored only one was very largely due to the superb goalkeeping of John Fitton, who has been on Laverpool's books. This agile, aerobic goalkeeper had a game to be remembered and well deserved the ovation he received at the end of hostilities.

But for him the score would have been four, although he was splendidly supported by tight-back Dave Berry, a bearded giant who got through a great deal of work.

The only goal came after 36 minutes. Fitton had by then made three splendid saves from the rampant Wealdstone forwards but when Fairclough completed a fine run on the right the Skem goalkeeper could only parry a power-drive and Duck, of course, was on hand to finish the job.

Just about the nearest Skem got to an equaliser was when Kinnear cleared off the line from the clever Atherton with McKenzie stranded.

McKenzie continued in his handling.

The Harrow Observer goes into overdrive in the wake of the opening friendly: a 1-0 win over redoubtable Lancashire side Skelmersdale. 'Skem' had made their name five years earlier in the FA Amateur Cup, knocking out holders Wealdstone and going on to reach the final at Wembley where they drew 0-0 with Enfield in front of 75,000. The London side won the replay at Maine Road, Manchester, 3-0 in front of a heaving 55,000 crowd.

The latter it was very much Fitton repelling the advancing Wealdstone armada, and doing so with considerable success. By then we had seen enough to at least give us hope for good things for which we may be due.

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WFC ACADEMY

Head of player development Cameron Mawer gives us an update on our Academy



The Wealdstone FC Academy is a sports and education programme in partnership with Wealdstone FC.

In 2022 the Wealdstone FC Academy had around 15 players from the ages of 16 to 18 years old which were housed on one site at Harefield Academy, but its vision was clear, to create an

environment for 16-23-year-olds to progress within both sports and education surrounded by first class facilities. We wanted to stop talented young footballers from falling through the net and give them a chance to progress their talent with top quality coaching and a route into our first team and beyond or into other avenues in football.

In 2023 we now sit with the potential of over 100 players ranging from 16-23 years old on two different sites, Harefield Academy and Brunel University.

With Wealdstone FC Academy, our players receive top level of coaching from our highly qualified coaches, who not only hold a minimum of a UEFA B license level coaching qualification but are also fully first aid and safeguarding trained and checked. Our training philosophy is designed to improve our players in all aspects of the game, both technically and tactically. We believe that our programme gives our players the best platform to improve their game across all aspects.

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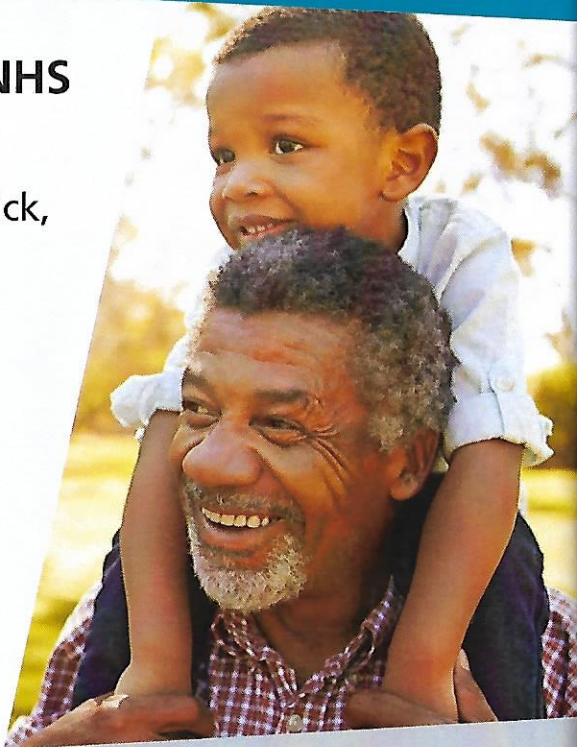
WFC Academy's Declan Phillips representing the 1st team against Wycombe Pic: Jon Taffel

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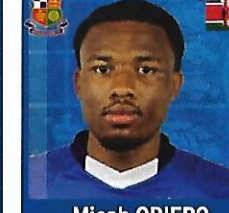
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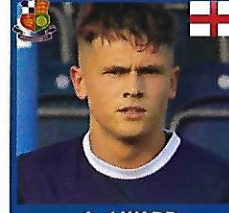
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DAVID EDWARDS




Charlie BARKER
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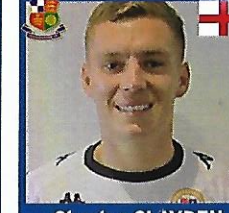
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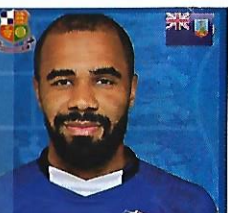
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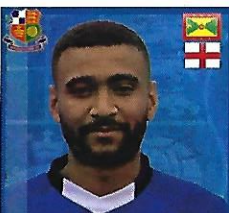
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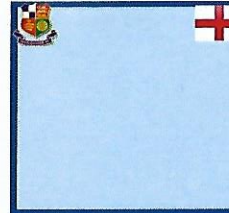
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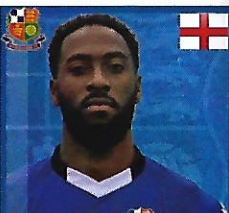
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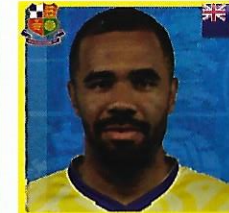


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FINAL VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE TABLE 2022/2023

	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)	(A)
1 Wrexham	46	34	9	3	116	43	23	21	1	0	71	18	23	12	7	3	41	23	73	111	0-0	1-3
2 Notts County	46	32	11	3	117	42	23	17	4	1	53	11	23	14	6	2	58	28	75	107	1-6	0-3
3 Chesterfield	46	25	9	12	81	52	23	14	2	6	44	27	23	10	7	5	33	23	29	84	1-4	1-1
4 Woking	46	24	10	12	71	48	23	10	7	4	36	22	23	12	3	7	32	24	23	82	1-1	1-1
5 Barnet	46	21	11	14	75	67	23	12	5	5	35	28	23	9	5	8	39	36	8	74	0-2	0-2
6 Boreham Wood	46	19	15	12	52	40	23	8	5	21	17	17	23	10	7	5	29	18	12	72	1-2	0-1
7 Bromley	46	18	17	11	68	53	23	8	10	4	33	23	23	9	6	7	32	29	15	71	3-2	3-3
8 Southend United	46	20	9	17	57	45	23	14	4	4	33	22	23	5	4	13	22	34	12	69	3-1	0-1
9 Eastleigh	46	19	10	17	56	57	23	11	4	7	30	18	23	7	5	10	22	25	+1	67	0-1	2-1
10 Dagenham & Redbridge	46	18	9	19	61	72	23	10	4	8	33	34	23	7	4	11	26	38	+11	63	1-0	1-4
11 FC Halifax Town	46	16	13	17	49	48	23	9	7	6	36	26	23	6	5	10	26	36	1	61	1-0	1-2
12 Oldham Athletic	46	16	13	17	63	64	23	11	5	6	36	29	23	4	7	11	23	34	+1	61	2-2	2-1
13 Wealdstone	46	16	12	18	57	72	23	11	5	6	32	22	23	4	6	11	15	25	+15	60	1-0	0-5
14 Gateshead	46	15	15	16	67	62	23	9	5	7	30	30	23	6	6	10	21	38	5	59	--	--
15 Solihull Moors	46	15	13	18	62	66	23	10	4	8	33	29	23	4	8	10	32	50	+4	58	4-0	1-0
16 Dorking Wanderers	46	16	9	21	67	91	23	6	9	7	30	29	23	7	6	8	30	31	+24	57	1-2	1-0
17 Altrincham	46	14	14	18	68	82	23	11	4	7	38	41	23	4	4	14	25	47	+14	56	4-0	1-3
18 Aldershot Town	46	14	11	21	64	76	23	6	5	11	30	35	23	8	4	10	31	38	+12	53	0-1	2-1
19 York City	46	13	12	21	55	63	23	7	6	9	25	30	23	6	4	12	27	30	+8	51	3-1	2-1
20 Maidenhead United	46	13	11	22	47	66	23	8	7	7	26	25	23	5	3	14	20	36	+19	50	3-2	0-0
21 Torquay United	46	12	12	22	58	80	23	6	6	10	35	40	23	6	4	12	20	37	+22	48	1-1	2-1
22 Yeovil Town	46	7	19	20	35	60	23	6	8	8	18	22	23	1	11	10	17	34	+25	40	0-0	0-0
23 Scunthorpe United	46	8	10	28	49	87	23	7	3	12	32	40	23	1	7	14	15	42	+38	34	3-1	1-4
24 Maidstone United	46	5	10	31	45	104	23	3	8	11	22	39	23	2	2	18	21	56	+59	25	2-1	1-1



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12th August
3:00pm

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Tuesday
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7:45pm

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Aldershot Town

National League
Saturday
26th August
3:00pm

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