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By Mark Hyde

## Written in Stone



### A moment for reflection

**As is tradition at this time of year we will be honouring the memory of all those who have paid the ultimate price for our freedom.**

We do many things well at our club and one that makes me and many other fans especially proud is the way we honour our 19 Wealdstone FC war heroes every November.

Over the years we have sponsored seats in their names so that they are always among us and dedicated a permanent memorial in their honour. We have published their stories several times over the years within the programme and we even reverted to our 1919 club colours to commemorate them on the Centenary of the Armistice a few years back.

As we observe a minutes silence and wreath laying before this afternoons match please take a

moment to reflect on their sacrifice and keep their names alive.

Welcome then to the fans, players and management from Rochdale. We hope you enjoy your brief stay with us here in Ruislip and join us in our moment of reflection prior to kick off when an official from your club will join us to lay a wreath on your behalf.

Back then to this afternoon's football match and we will be hoping to continue our excellent home form that has seen us lose just the once here at the Vale this season whilst Rochdale who sit just 4 points above us in 9th will be looking to continue their great form on the road where they have lost just

twice.

Our next home game following today will be the much anticipated local derby against Barnet and tickets are already available online for this unmissable fixture should you need one. **Mark**



### ERIC BURGESS 1944 - 2023

The club was saddened to learn of the passing of former Wealdstone defender Eric Burgess earlier this week.

Eric was a much respected and admired player across his career which included spells at Watford, Torquay, Plymouth Argyle and Wealdstone. A full Obituary for Eric can be found on page 7 of this programme.



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# WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2023/2024

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## GROUND REGULATIONS

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

- 1) The club reserves the right to eject from the ground any person who is considered to have committed any of the following acts:
  - Entering the ground through any means other than through the turnstiles or entrances
  - Entering the field of play before, during or after a game without prior authorisation
  - Being drunk, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs • Using violence of any nature
  - Carrying items which may be considered a danger to others, including cans, bottles, or glasses containing alcoholic beverages
  - Throwing any article onto the field of play • 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.

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## 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**

## STUART MAYNARD

# From the Manager



### Good afternoon and a warm welcome to Rochdale today.

It has been a while since our last game but everyone this end is more than ready to go.

There are very few positives about going out the FA Cup but one that comes out of it is that it gives part time players the chance to recover from the intense start to the season.

We did have a lot of games in a very short space of time and currently after our short rest we don't have too many players out, which is really positive news.

Rochdale are first time visitors to the Vale this afternoon and they are a team that at the start of the season would have been looking to find a way back into the EFL.

Rochdale have had a steady start and sit just outside the playoffs. They are a club that have spent most of their existence in the EFL, so we are under no illusions and understand what we're up against today. The players have been well prepped and hopefully we can continue our good home form and put in a good performance for you all.

Stuart



## TEAM DRAW OCTOBER 2023 WINNERS

1. £125 - Tony Waller
  2. £75 - James Goodman
  3. £50 - James Sorrell
  4. £25 - Tony Short
  5. £25 - Chris Antill
  6. £10 - Dave Hooper
  7. £10 - Toby Jackson
  8. £10 - Tony McDonagh
  9. £10 - Andrew Lane
  10. £10 - Simon Heaney
- Voucher - Sarah Gowdy

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## MAX KRETZSCHMAR

# Taking it to the



*Stones' striker/midfielder Max Kretzschmar on our enforced Cup-less two week break and the horrors of VAR...*

### **Hello and welcome back Stones fans!**

Waking up last Saturday without a game was painful and frustrating and made worse when we saw the amount of FA Cup upsets across the First Round. However, it has given us a chance to train five times before today's fixture. It's exciting to host yet another former league stalwart at the Vale today in Rochdale.

Recent performances have been strong. A draw against a tough Borehamwood side, a dominant win at home to Oxford City and a narrow defeat to Solihull in a spirited performance.

Those two home games contrasted in styles in my opinion. Conditions were wet and muddy in front of the BT cameras and the game looked similarly messy on the television when I watched it back. However, against Oxford City I thought we were at our dominant best. Pressing high and controlling the ball for large spells. It should've ended up with a much larger scoreline. In contrast our away form needs to be addressed. Playoff-chasing Solihull managed to create that one moment of quality in the game to punish a couple of errors on our part. Something we could learn from.

I'm writing these notes today fresh from watching the Spurs v Chelsea game on Monday night. In a



*Max was bizarrely red-carded by referee Elliott Swallow at Wrexham last season*

## VAR in non-League? No thank you!

game that encapsulated the mad sport we all love, Spurs had two players sent off and finished the game with only four of their starting XI still on the pitch.

There were five disallowed goals, six yellow cards and nine VAR checks in a hectic game. In the first half, the game was paused for five to six minutes to allow the VAR officials to wade through a potentially offside goal, a penalty claim and a red card... all in the same sequence of play! Whilst the 62,000 inside the Tottenham Hotspur waited with bated breath and frustration for a conclusion to these decisions, the calls for VAR to be shelved grew louder and it got me thinking... Would Stones fans have

VAR in the National League if offered it?

Personally, I wouldn't. The beauty of the lower leagues are the throwback nature of it all. Fast-paced games, tight, in-your-face crowds often ignited by the controversy of the referee. Would the introduction of VAR sanitise these qualities?

In the affluent Premier League, I'd semi-automate offsidess as we saw in Qatar, increase the distance for handballs given in the box and abolish VAR.

It would grant Ange Postecoglou's wishes and give the onfield referees authority once more rather than officials in Stockley Park and help the game flow far more than it does now. Our beautiful game is still that: beautiful. But it could do with a bit of touching up.

**Follow Max's vlog>>>**  
[youtube.com/@maxtalksfootball](https://www.youtube.com/@maxtalksfootball)

## RIP Big Eric

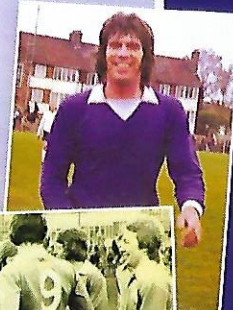
THE TWO legendary Lynchpins of the title-winning Wealdstone defence 50 years ago have now passed on.

John McCormick, the former Palace centre back, died half a dozen years ago and earlier this week Eric Burgess joined him in our prayers. Burgess, who was 79, started his career at Watford and went on to play League football for Torquay United and Colchester, from whom he signed for Sid Prosser's Stones in

1972. He was a key member of the SL Div One South winning team the following year but only played half the next season in the Prem before suffering a career-ending injury. He was married to the glamorous Lisa, sister of Generation Game host Anthea Redfern... which made Eric Bruce Forsyth's brother in law!

Hence Bruce and Anthea's presence at Eric's 1975 testimonial game against First Division Wolves (pictured right).

*Eric (right) after scoring his only goal of the 1973-4 season against Basingstoke at Lower Mead. Picture: Jon Taffel*





# When the whistle blows..

Please join us in a minutes silence prior to this afternoons game.

Our wreath laying party this year will consist of ...

## ANDY GIBBS

Chief Petty Officer Andy "Gibbo" Gibbs joined the Royal Navy in 1987 having grown up in the village of Chinnor in Oxfordshire. Gibbo has served on numerous ships and shore bases. Highlights include deploying around the world in 208 days in 2000, conducting counter narcotic ops in the West Indies in 2002 including the largest haul of drugs ever seized at the time by a RN unit, assisting in the evacuation of Beirut in 2006, supporting counter narcotics operations in the Indian Ocean in 2014. Gibbo is currently based at HMS Collingwood in Fareham, where he has a role as part of the executive team. This, along with train and tube strikes has hindered his efforts to attend as many games as he would like to this season.

Gibbo said "It's always a pleasure and an honour to lead Wealdstone out on the Remembrance Day game. An occasion which allows us to remember those that have fallen in combat for our country. Gibbo has followed Wealdstone since 2011 and always enjoys a nice away day with the Stones family.

## BRETT AHERNE

Sergeant Brett Aherne joined the Royal Air Force (RAF) in 1998 having grown up in Leicester. Brett joined as an Aerospace Systems Operator and was based in the Northeast of Scotland for 4 years. Air and Space operations are behind all our Fighter Aircraft in the sky and protect our interests in outer space. As part of a team, he worked with some of the most advanced aerospace technology on the planet, facilitating the successful planning and execution of missions. He then re-mustered to the profession of Air Cartographer in 2002, subsequently based at RAF Northolt. Responsibilities include the processing of digital mapping for use in frontline aircraft cockpit displays and mission planning systems, used to guide our aircrew safely through take-off, transit and landing. Brett has seen active service in Iraq, Afghanistan, USA, Cyprus, Falkland Islands, Ascension Island and Norway.

In the summer of 2022, alongside his day job in the RAF, Brett became the Kit Manager at Wealdstone FC and is proud to represent your club as part of Stuart Maynard's Management Team.

## JANE ANDERSON

Jane Anderson is an Early Years specialist, teaching Music and Reception in St Martin's School, Northwood where she has remained in employment for the last 34 years, working up from Junior Matron to Teacher. In July 2022, she took semi-retirement and now only works there two and a half days a week, leaving more time for her personal pursuits, however, her enthusiasm to help the boys flourish is as strong as ever.

Music plays a big part in Jane's life and in her 'spare' time, she plays cornet/trumpet and French horn in Northwood Headquarters RN Volunteer Band, French horn with BBC Ariel Orchestra, trumpet with Abbots Langley Orchestra and deputises on French horn or trumpet for Harrow Concert Band's concerts.

Jane has also been heavily involved in Northwood District Guides for the past 32 years as a Brownie Leader and District Commissioner, however, she has now graciously handed her unit over to a much younger Leader and is now a member of the Willow Tree Trefoil (old, retired Guiders!) and enjoys the slower pace of their monthly meetings. Jane continues to enjoy the odd game of golf, swimming and catching up with friends as well as spending time in her beloved homeland of Forfar in Scotland where she will fully retire to sometime in the future.

## TERRY HISSEY

Terry Hissey has been a Reservist for over thirty years, initially with the Royal Army Medical Corps and now with the Waterloo Band & Bugles of The Rifles in Abingdon. Amongst his many career highlights are taking part in the Basel and Bermuda Tattoos and receiving a commendation from Prince Philip presented by his grandson Prince Harry. A special occasion was performing at Wembley Stadium for the 2015 Rugby League Cup Final, certainly the shortest distance I have ever travelled for an Army gig! I first saw Wealdstone play in 1986 and became a Junior Stone the following year. A member of the Supporters Club Committee for over 10 years. Highlights of following Wealdstone would be organising the Diamond Jubilee Dinner with Stuart Pearce as our guest, the Double 30th Anniversary reunion, or beating Cambridge City in 2012 in the FA Trophy Quarter final.

# REMEMBRANCE 2023



Last seasons wreath laying party consisted of (left to right) Jane Anderson, Mark Lount, Andy Gibbs & Simon Brown. Pic. Jon Taffel

## FOR THE FALLEN

**With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,  
England mourns for her dead across the sea.  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.**

**They went with songs to the battle, they were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.  
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,  
They fell with their faces to the foe.**

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.**

Extracts from the Poem by Robert Laurence Binyon (1869-1943), published in The Times newspaper on 21 September 1914.

# ..We will remember them.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY SPECIAL BY ROGER SLATER

# 106 years on, another moving & remarkable Remembrance tale

**MOST OF YOU reading this will know that I've been researching the 134-year history of Wealdstone FC over the past three decades, with several programme features on Stones players who were killed in the two World Wars - commemorated at the Vale today.**

In 2016, the impending 100th Anniversary of the WWI Armistice focussed the mind on those lost players and officials. My research - culled from electronic copies of local newspapers - helped me compile the list on the opposite page, with details that are often poignant and sad.

But today we tell the remarkable story of **William Henry John Clowes**... a name that will mean very little to anyone, although he did play a small part in the club's history before losing his life as a result of gassing on The Somme in The Great War.

You may recall the dawning realisation about the inaccurate 'official' year that Wealdstone FC was formed: 1900. Yet reading the 'first' match report it stated that "...the club wore the same colours". And later on: "...the club used a number of the same players".

Not the first match then! Down the rabbit hole of preceding years I went, eventually uncovering seven or eight associated clubs that were in fact related to the history of 'the first' Wealdstone FC and - with various name changes and mergers - the current club. One of these preceding clubs was Harrow Athletic, with whom 'the

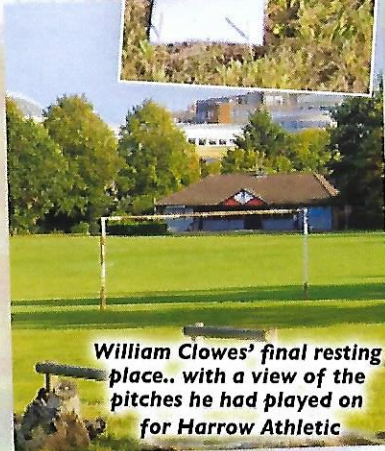
first' Wealdstone FC had merged in 1894.

With that established, I set about reading decades and decades of match reports. For some reason the names of two brothers - HW Clowes and WH Clowes (Harrow Athletic players from the mid-1890s) stuck out. William Henry played for the Harrow club when it merged with Wealdstone FC to become Wealdstone Athletic in 1895.

Later on, preparing the annual memorial for the match programme, more news appeared regarding William (known as "Tut") Clowes, one of three children of William and Eliza Clowes and who was still playing with a reformed Harrow Athletic in 1900. A report from August 1916 mentioned that he had been severely gassed on The Somme on 4th May and had been invalided home to recuperate.

William (below left) had served as a Sergeant with the Machine Gun Battalion of the 13th Middlesex Regiment and had joined up in September 1914, aged 36. He had fought in both Belgium and France prior to being invalided home. All this I gleaned from a later newspaper report (May 1917)... an obituary that

reported his death at home in Eastcote Rd, Harrow. Since his repatriation, he had spent time in the Great Eastern Hospital in Cambridge, the Cottage Hospital in Hounslow and eventually in Mount Vernon Hospital in Northwood, where he resided for four months, all to no avail, as his con-



**William Clowes' final resting place.. with a view of the pitches he had played on for Harrow Athletic**

dition slowly worsened until he was discharged home shortly before his death on 4th April 1917.

I had a look at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website to see where he was buried, but drew a blank. Quite simply, he wasn't there.

Then, a few years later the trail led to a family tomb at St Mary's, Harrow on the Hill where father, grandparents and brother were buried... but not William. Thankfully, a forensic search by a Harrow Council customer advisor covering seven cemeteries - through original hand-written notes and plans - revealed that William Clowes was buried with his mother and sister at Harrow Cemetery at the rear of Harrow Rec near Roxborough Road.

Astonishingly, William's grave faces the Rec and the two football pitches (above) that he would have played on for Harrow Athletic in the 1890's. A small cross marks the spot but a permanent headstone will soon be installed.

**Please remember them all today when the whistle blows.**



### LEST WE FORGET

TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE REPRESENTATIVES OF WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN TWO WORLD WARS.

#### 1914-1918

##### PERCIVAL ANDREWS

DoB 28.04.1889 in Hendon, Middlesex. Mechanic 1<sup>st</sup> Class. S/No 225242 Royal Naval Air Service  
Died 04/05/1918 aged 29 in Calais, France.

##### CHARLES JOHN FRANCIS BELLCHAMBERS

DoB 16.09.1882 in Hendon, Middlesex. Private, S/No 207213 Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.  
Died of his wounds 11/10/1917 aged 35 received at the Battle of Poelcapelle

##### CHARLES HENRY BIRD

DoB 18.05.1893, Harrow Middlesex. Private S/No 703 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Infantry.  
Killed in Action on 31/08/1918 aged 25 in Péronne, during the assault on Mont St Quentin.

##### HENRY (HARRY) JAMES BOWELL

DoB -.04.1878. Born in Acton, Middlesex Lance Sergeant S/No 3/10684, 7<sup>th</sup> Northants Regiment.  
Died of his wounds aged 38 27/09/1915 in the Battle of Loos.

##### RUSSELL WILLIAM BRADBERRY

DoB -.10.1884. Lance Bombardier S/No 70878, Royal Garrison Artillery 301<sup>st</sup> Siege Battalion.  
Died of Fever aged 33 in Rouen 03/12/1917.

##### WILLIAM HENRY COZENS

DoB -.09.1877 in Fulham, London. Private S/No G/19948 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment.  
Killed in Action on 21/03/1918 aged 41 in the Battle of St Quentin at Shepherd's Copse

##### FREDERICK FARMBOROUGH

DoB c1881 Private S/No TF/265283, 1/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Middlesex Regiment.  
Died 12/10/1916 aged 35 though his death was not confirmed until August 1918.

##### GEORGE RICHARD (DICKY) GOODEGE

DoB --.1888, Private S/No TF/1651 Middlesex Regiment 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, later attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Norfolk Regiment.  
Killed in Action aged 27 near Baghdad on 22/11/1915.

##### WALTER LANGSTON HOWMAN

DoB -.04.1885 Private, S/No PS/2879 though deaf, recruited in the 24<sup>th</sup> then 16<sup>th</sup> Middlesex (Public Schools) Regiment.  
Killed in Action 19/08/1916 aged 31 in the region of High Wood on the Somme.

##### FRANK TINGAY MARTIN

DoB --.12.1888 in Hendon. Corporal S/No B/2070 Enlisted in 7<sup>th</sup> Rifle Brigade  
Killed in Action 30/07/1915 aged 26 at Hooze, near Ypres, Belgium.

##### JAMES J ROBERTSON

DoB c1888 in Belfast. Private S/No 58824 (formerly S/No 2209 joined the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)  
Died of Wounds received at Vignacourt 16/08/1918 aged 30

#### 1939 - 1945

##### KENNETH GEORGE EDWIN BALDWIN

DoB 25.02.1920 Private S/No 5956838 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Hampshire Regiment  
Killed in Action 28/03/1945 aged 25 during Operation Plunder, part of a coordinated set of Rhine crossings.

##### ROBERT WILLIAM BIDEWELL

DoB 25.09.1919 in Watford, Herts. Lance Sergeant S/No 5950925 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Dorsetshire Regiment,  
Killed in Action 25/09/1944 aged 25 in Holland

##### CHARLES ERNEST BUNCE

DoB 13.03.1913 in St Albans, Herts. Lance Corporal S/No 5832498 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Cambridgeshire Regiment  
Serving in Singapore, captured on 15/02/1942 died of Cholera as a Prisoner of War 25/06/1943 aged 30

##### WILLIAM AINSLEY BURTON

DoB 17.10.1892, A former player who survived the Great War.  
A civilian killed as a result of enemy action 03/12/1940 aged 48

##### WILLIAM WILFRED PARR

DoB 23.04.1915 in Blackpool. Sergeant Pilot S/No 1375471 Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, 233 Squadron.  
Killed in a crash at Lower Treburrick Farm, St Ervan, Cornwall 08/03/1942 aged 26

##### ERNEST WILLIAM WALKER

DoB ---.1906 Able Seaman S/No P/JX321616 Royal Navy serving on HMS Quorn, Hunt Class Destroyer.  
Killed in Action 03/08/1944 aged 38 when HMS Quorn sunk by a human torpedo

##### ROBERT WILSON

DoB --.01.1919 Private S/No 98369 Royal Army Service Corps.  
Died of Pneumonia in Red Hill Hospital Edgware 09/01/1943 aged 24

##### THOMAS WILLIAM WINTERBOTTOM

DoB 09.10.1923 Acting Sub Lieutenant Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, HMS Saker  
Killed in Action 28/03/1944 aged 20

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM WHEN THE WHISTLE BLOWS.**



Britain's longest-running fanzine column (and it shows it)

# Bobby Charlton and me: a tale of a programme, a Mexican cab and a missing picture



BY TIM PARKS

**THIS programme pays the traditional November 11 tribute to those who died in the two Great Wars, but in this column I'd like to pay regard to the man who switched me on to football in the late 1960s ... as he undoubtedly did for millions of people the world over. Bobby Charlton.**

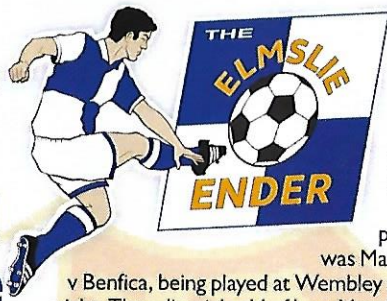
This is our first issue since the news came through three weeks ago that the Manchester United and England icon had died. As a former national newspaper journalist, for quite a few years I'd been involved in compiling background articles and features in homage to this great man in preparation for his demise. Every newspaper takes similar precautions - invariably, high-profile deaths seem to coincide with the evening print deadline.

But it wasn't until my wife asked just what Bobby Charlton had meant to me that I realised the gigantic impact. He had stirred the deepest feelings for over 50 years, and I hadn't even computed it.

For the first ten years of my life, football was an alien life form. I was a regular grammar schoolboy from Northwood with little else on my mind apart from building Airfix models and cars, and fooling around on our bikes with my mates.

My dad ran a small plastics factory in the Exhibition Grounds, Wembley, just 200 yards from the Stadium. And he changed my life one early summer's evening in 1968.

"Here we go, Tim. I managed to get a programme for the European Cup final tomorrow" he said, breezing through the front door. "One of the boys



at work popped round to the stadium to get a few as souvenirs. I thought you might like it". I took the programme. It was Manchester United

vs Benfica, being played at Wembley the following night. The editorial told of how Matt Busby, United's manager, had rebuilt his team after the tragic crash at Munich Airport ten years earlier when half a dozen players had died.

I was captivated. Although football had not touched my life, I already knew that Manchester United had an aura about them. And Bobby Charlton was the man who linked the past with the present, possessing a name that was known around the world. Even if natives of South America and Australia knew no English, they knew the words 'Bobby Charlton'. And his name had even entered the consciousness of this 11 year-old with no interest in the beautiful game.

I read how they had been robbed of a chance of winning the European Cup in 1958 by the ice and snow of that Munich runway; how Busby had fashioned a new, young team of his 'Babes' and how close they had come to the final in 1966. But now they had won an epic semi-final against European demi-gods Real Madrid 4-3 on aggregate - and just 24 hours separated my Damascene conversion to football from the kick-off at Wembley.

Two years earlier, England had won the World Cup at the same stadium - an event that left me totally untouched. That afternoon I had gone shopping in Hatch End with my mum, who commented on how quiet it was!

My dad had watched at home on telly, one of the few live football events, and we celebrated with cream slices from the local bakers. I remember thinking that England should win the World Cup more often if cream cakes were the outcome.

But now I was fully immersed in the pre-match build-up and delighted to hear that the game would be shown live, in glorious black and white, on the BBC. I was in the last few months of Primary School life and nobody talked of anything else that day. I had brought along to school the programme my Dad had procured, and my classmates almost fainted to be in its presence.

At home that evening, we grouped around the TV set. The programme was in pride of place on the coffee table. But there was puzzlement when the teams ran out, United in a dark strip and Benfica in all-white. Both

teams wear red as first-choice, so why were United wearing all-blue (as my programme stated) while Benfica steered away from their usual red shirts and white shorts?

My mum chimed in: "Well they would both look the same in black and white, wouldn't they?"

We went quiet and just watched the game.

**Well, we all know that Bobby cemented his place in football folklore that evening, scoring twice as United won 4-1 in a pulsating final. I became a Manchester United fan that night.**

On my very first day at secondary school, a few months later, I was caught talking in assembly and was made to stand at the front - wearing a bright red United badge on my lapel. People assumed I had some long-held affiliation with the club and I let them think it, too ashamed that I was the archetypal Johnny-come-lately football fan.

Five and a half decades later I think I've proved that it's no flash in the pan. Not the United connection: no, that lasted just a few years until the magic of Best-Law-Charlton faded.

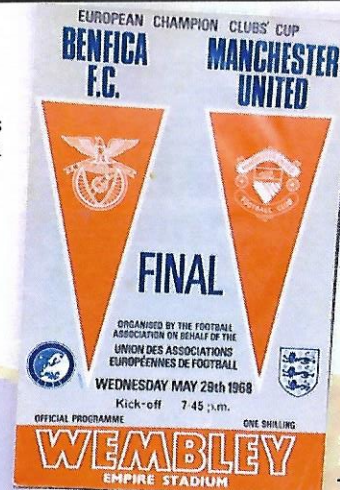
But I've still got the programme (above) for that balmy evening at Wembley, and there's no doubt that it kindled the first flames of my love for football progs. Fans of my generation now have the conundrum of whether to continue buying a matchday programme now their shelves runneth over... well, you don't have to be a fanatical collector; you can just read them, enjoy them and toss them away.

So says someone who has just installed yet another row of shelves in the living room!

**As for Bobby Charlton, well he was doing his thing through the late '60s and early '70s: Arriving late around the edge of the box to pummel in breath-taking goal after breath-taking goal.**

Nobody could body-swerve in full flight like Bobby, and nobody could strike the ball like him, often with both feet off the ground in that wonderful alliance of grace and awesome power.

My dad used to talk about his goal against Mexico that sparked England's World Cup journey to victory in 1966 - the goal 'that stopped the traffic in Mexico City' according to one South American correspondent as Sir Alf Ramsey's team were playing out another goalless draw in the group stage, having been held 0-0 by



Uruguay in a lifeless opener. Bobby ran from halfway as the Mexicans backed off, feinting onto his favoured left foot before swerving onto his right and thrashing a 25-yarder beyond the despairing clutches of the keeper into the far rigging.

"I was in a taxi, listening to a crackling radio" said the correspondent. "Mexico had drawn with France in their first group game and, like England, couldn't afford to lose. The commentator said 'now Charlton, Bobby Charlton on the ball, he shoots... Then silence. Then you heard the bedlam of the crowd, a huge roar

of relief while the commentator groaned in despair. And so did everyone else.

"My taxi didn't move for ten minutes, as we all soaked in the atmosphere in London, imagining the beauty of the goal but hating that it had happened to Mexico".

**There is another strand to my Bobby Charlton story.**

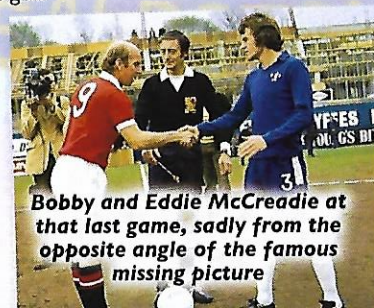
Obviously, I became infatuated with Wealdstone at the start of the 1969-70 season but I also went to watch Chelsea half a dozen times a season, courtesy of my Uncle Terry's season ticket. The great era of Osgood-Hudson-Cooke. And so it passed that I was at the Bridge for Bobby's very last match for United in late April 1973, along with my Grandad Tom.

At that time, Chelsea's white elephant East Stand was still under construction, and to get to our seats in the old North ('Shoebbox') Stand you had to walk along the near touchline... except if you arrived after the teams had come out (which we did) when it was a case of going all the way around the pitch. And so we walked, feeling conspicuous.

Thus, a picture appeared in the Sunday Express the next morning of Bobby and Chelsea's skipper Eddie McCreadie exchanging souvenir pennants, slightly out of focus, with me and Grandad in clear view in the background!

(Who's that with Tim and Tom? asked my mum. Oh just some bloke called Bobby Charlton said dad).

I kept that picture for 20-odd years, always expecting to replace it from the Express archives at some point in the future... but now there are two years missing from their digital records which coincides, of course, with that weekend. A real shame for me, probably not so much for Sir Bobby. RIP, great man.



**Bobby and Eddie McCreadie at that last game, sadly from the opposite angle of the famous missing picture**

**Below: the iconic Elmslie Stand at the Stones' former ground, Lower Mead in Harrow. 'Elmslie Ender' magazine was an incarnation of 'Wealdstone Whispers', the very first football fanzine in Britain, published 1971**



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Mark Randall

## WFCSC Update

### MEGASTORE 4.5 - The Return of the Programme Hut



*Good afternoon and welcome to the supporters, players, and officials from Rochdale. I hope you enjoy your inaugural visit to Grosvenor Vale. Remembrance Day is a special occasion where we remember those that gave their lives for our future, and it is wonderful that Rochdale are represented in the pre-match procession.*

Our programme team work hard to produce an award-winning publication but when it comes to Remembrance Day they go the extra mile. If you are missing any of these from over the years, then please come to the Megastore and we can point you in the direction of what we are calling Megastore 4.5 which officially opens today. This is the new programme hut that we have created opposite the main shop. Here you will find programmes from Wealdstone games since the 70's plus a large range of Premier League and EFL teams including Watford and Chelsea etc.

We officially launched our Christmas Raffle at our AGM last week; tickets are £1 and can be purchased from our 50:50 sellers and online at [www.wfcmegastore.co.uk](http://www.wfcmegastore.co.uk). Like last year if you can take a few books to sell to family, family or work colleagues that would be fantastic. Prizes this year include a guided tour of the Happy Potter studios at Leavesden. An air fryer, Scalextric, champagne hamper, harry potter Lego, table football table and many more. Last year we raised over £2000 from was a big part of our £10,000 donation in January.

Thank you to everyone who has purchased a 50:50 ticket this year. So far this season we have given out £1,953 to the winning ticket holders. It has

been great to see so many regular fans each take home an average of £217 per game!

Tonight is our comedy night with 3 fantastic comics, doors open at 8.30pm and tickets are still available and priced at £15 each. So far over 100 have been sold and if we can make tonight a success then perhaps this will become a regular event.

If watching three established comics is not your thing, then perhaps you would like to watch a load of amateur ones dancing at our Xmas disco on 2nd December. Tickets are £10 on the door, and you can contact James on **07979 795414** or at [www.wfcsc.co.uk](http://www.wfcsc.co.uk) to purchase them in advance before they sell out.

There is so much going on at WFCSC over the next few months so please get involved where you can as the more help we have, the more successful we can become.

So much is going on in fact that I have run out space to write about what I had intended, which was about performance management in sport and key factors that effect performance and how these link back to us at Wealdstone. That will have to wait until next time but in the meantime let's get behind the team from minute one until minute 90+.

With the Aldershot game being postponed due to their demolition of Swindon Town in the FA Cup I look forward to seeing you all the Barnet match on 25th November.

Mark



<https://wfcsc.co.uk> - X @wfcsc1 & @wfcmegastore

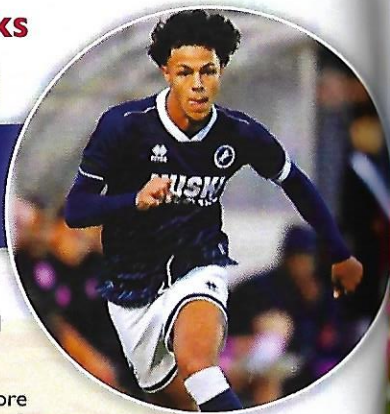




the stones interview by tim parks

ten minutes with

# KYLE SMITH



**CHELSEA, Millwall and Wealdstone: there's definitely blue blood running through the veins of our Lions loanee Kyle Smith!**

The 19-year-old has been at Championship side Millwall since the age of eight, but grew up supporting Chelsea along with his uncle, grandad Ray and his mum Laura.

"I'm an only child, just me and my mum so she's been the most important person in my life, ferrying me to training and games since the age of four! Not one of my relatives have played the game... I'm a bit of an anomaly!" he said.

Laura put the live-wire Kyle into the David Beckham Academy at the O2 centre at that tender age "to burn off a bit of energy". She then got him involved with the Teviot Rangers youth team in Plumstead, close to Abbey Wood in South London where he was brought up and still lives.

"Then I was scouted by Millwall 11 years ago and I've been there ever since!" he says. The winger/midfielder has had a solid progression through the Lions youth set-up, first at the club's Well Hall base in Eltham and then moving up to the u-18s and u-21s at the senior training ground in Downham, near Bromley.

Kyle (known as 'Smudge' since he was ten) has not been involved in the first team squad though

he has trained with the 1st XI... and found it "a different level".

"It's much more intense and they're playing to win. You get the ball and suddenly there's four players around trying to tackle you.

"That's why I'm so keen to be playing men's football. At Wealdstone the games really mean something, the supporters are invested and the points are important - don't get me wrong, it's frustrating when you play for Millwall's under-21s and you lose but in the National League it's serious stuff".

So is it the physicality of the men's game that is the main difference?

"It's speed and size and intensity: you come out of the tunnel and you see the opposition who are massive and muscled with tattoos. Maybe I'd better invest in a sleeve just to fit in!" he laughed.

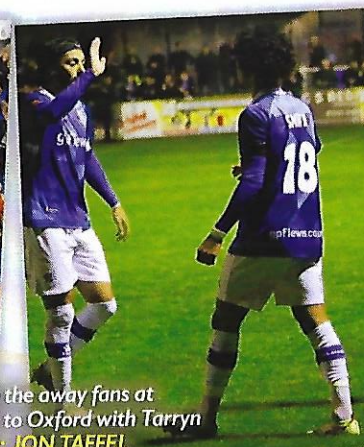
Kyle reckons he's in the top two or three for speed into the Millwall u-21s, whereas "in the National League everyone's quick". But he says that the Stones management team has encouraged him to take risks on the ball and take people on in the final third.

"They back me to make things happen and I think our performances have been good, even if

## It's going to be hard to budge Smudge... our Millwall loanee enjoying grown up football



Kyle celebrates his goal with the away fans at Chesterfield (above) and at home to Oxford with Tarryn Allarkhia (right) Pictures: JON TAFFEL



handed the Man of the Match award! Since then Kyle has started (and finished) every game and made himself an integral part of the Stones midfield with his trademark crossing and zippy running. "There's no substitute for pace in football and I work very hard on the power side of the game, building up my lower body strength.

"At Millwall we have 30m races every day and I'm

the results have not always backed that up. It's just moments in a game that have not gone our way but if we keep playing to a good standard the results will come".

**Kyle had a baptism of fire, starting the game against Altrincham at the Vale just two days after joining on loan.**

"Having Abdul (Abdulmalik) already at the Stones on loan from Millwall made it a lot easier for me - I've been friends with Abs for years and he said how much I'd enjoy coming to Wealdstone. And he was absolutely right."

But Kyle took a bit of a chance in the week that Stuart Maynard contacted the South London club. "I had a call on the Wednesday from Kevin Nugent, the under-21s manager, saying that Wealdstone were interested in taking me on loan, but to be honest I'd had a dodgy hamstring and wasn't sure I was fully fit. But I so wanted the chance."

Kyle travelled over the Harefield for training with the Stones the very next day - and then found himself in the starting XI on the Saturday. "I was thrown in the deep end! The game was fast and competitive and it was good playing in front of a noisy crowd" he says.

And he couldn't have done too badly as he was

always in the top two or three".

One thing he wasn't expecting to improve was his goal account. But Kyle hit the opening goal at Chesterfield in our narrow 3-2 defeat and chipped in with another in the 3-1 home win over Oxford City, when his cross sailed into the net from out of the left hand touchline.

"That was 100% deliberate!" he laughed. "No I think Max and Tahvon both unsighted the keeper and it ended in the far corner. I can't say I'm a prolific goalscorer as that's not really my game, my role is to provide chances and I only got the odd goal here or there in all my years at Millwall. I have assisted for five goals this season though".

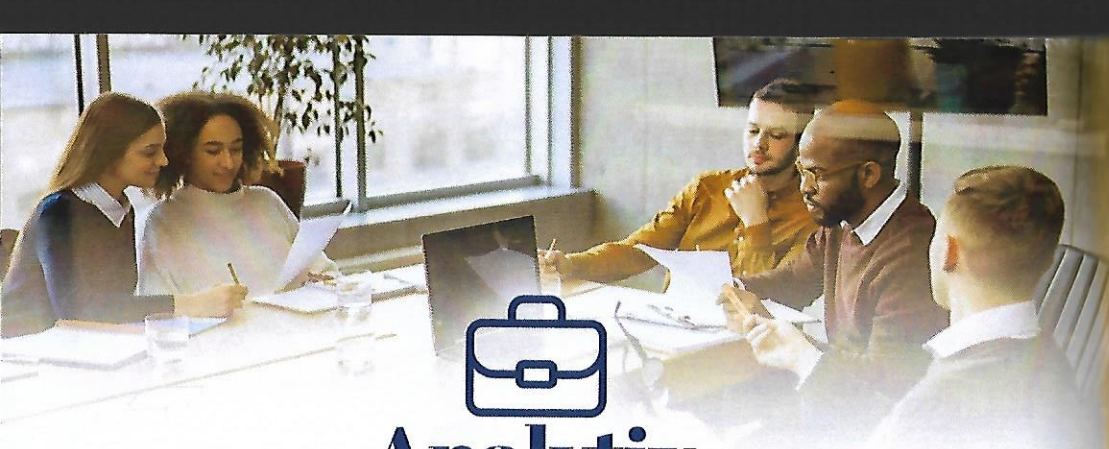
After the interview was over, I had a quick trawl of the internet for pictures of Kyle playing for the Lions... and lo and behold, up popped a glorious video of his solo goal for the under-18s Swansea two years ago. He'd told me his left foot was really just for standing on.... but here (pictured below) he cuts inside and out, past four Swans defenders before sliding a left foot shot past the despairing keeper. It's spookily similar to Abdul Abdulmalik's wonder goal we highlighted in the last programme.

There's just no stopping these Millwall boys!

You kept this quiet, Smudge! Kyle's wonder goal for Millwall under-18s against Swansea two years ago..



Kyle (No.2) takes on the full-back and cuts inside, swerving left then right past the second man... then a third... before dummieing past a fourth and slotting his shot past the keeper. Then celebration



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# All you need to know about... Rochdale AFC

## The opposition in focus



**Rochdale Association Football Club was former on 14th May 1907, following a public meeting held in the Central Schools Council, Fleece Street.**

Two previous attempts had been made to launch an Association Football Club in the town, but Rochdale AFC as we know it was officially launched in 1907.

Dale's first game was a friendly against second division Oldham Athletic on 3rd September 1907, which the opposition won 4-1.

The club was accepted into the Manchester League a fortnight after its formation and played its first league game on 7th September against Tongue.

The game attracted 2,000 spectators to Spotland (then known as St. Clement's Playing Fields) and ended in a 2-2 draw.

In 1908, the club joined the Lancashire Combination, winning the competition in 1911.

This success led to an application being lodged with The Football League. After receiving the support of just one club, Herbert Hopkinson called for the powers that be to expand their numbers and create a Third Division. However, his proposal was scuppered by countless objections.

The failure to gain League status led to the club to apply for a place in the Central League. The request was initially granted but was then reversed by the FA due to objections from the Lancashire Combination, who claimed Dale's attempt to progress up the ladder should have been made earlier. It is thought their protests derived from the fact that most of their members had successfully applied for memberships of other divisions.

Dale's next application to join the game's elite came in March 1919, when the League expanded following World War One, with six places available. The club gathered more votes – seven in total – than they had attracted on their previous effort, but they were still some distance behind those chosen. This is despite Rochdale having a better League record than those clubs chosen. This latest rebuff led to calls for the winding up of the club, but the motion was rejected.

Herbert Hopkinson's brainchild of a Third Division was finally adopted in 1920, but as it was

pushed through by clubs in the Southern League, they took all the places made available. The notion of allowing Northern and Midlands clubs to form an equivalent division took place a year later. Dale were one of 14 clubs recommended by the Football League Management Committee for acceptance into Division Three North without a vote, which was

approved.

Our first ever Football League opposition came in the shape of Accrington Stanley, on 27th August 1921, which Dale won 6-3.

Despite that good start, Dale finished bottom of the league and had to reapply for membership. Survival was granted and Dale did finish runners-up in Division Three North twice, in 1924 and 1927.

However, for the next 30 years Dale struggled in the lower reaches of the

division. In 1958, the Football League decided to scrap the regional structure and create four national divisions. A tenth-place finish, on goal difference, in the 1957/58 campaign meant Dale stayed in Division Three for the following campaign, but a bottom placed finish meant relegation to Division Four, where they would stay for a decade

The 1960s turned into the club's most successful period to date, beginning with a historic run to the League Cup final in 1962, under the guidance of manager Tony Collins, who was the first black manager in the Football League. In reaching the final, Rochdale became the first – and, until 2013, only – club to reach the League Cup final as a bottom division side. Wins over Southampton, Doncaster Rovers, Charlton Athletic, York City and Blackburn Rovers set up a two-legged affair with Norwich City, which the Division Two side won 4-0 on aggregate.

In the 1968/69 season, Dale fans tasted success once again, as the club achieved promotion for the first time in its history. Manager Bob Stokoe had overseen a large player turnover the previous season, but Dale started well, not losing any of the opening seven league games. Stokoe departed for Carlisle United in early-October, with Dick Conner taking the reins, but Dale struggled to turn draws

**THE DALE**  
**HOME GROUND SPOTLAND STADIUM**  
**CAPACITY - 10,249**  
**MANAGER - JIMMY McNULTY**  
**2022/23 - 24TH EFL LEAGUE 2.**

into wins before the turn of the year. However, in the new year, legendary striker Reg Jenkins started to find the net with regularity and the points soon came flooding Dale's way. Promotion was secured with a final day 3-0 victory over Southend United at Spotland.

Dale achieved a ninth-place finish in the 1969/70 season, which was the club's highest league finish for a long time, until 2015 in fact. However, in the 1973/74 campaign, the club were relegated back to Division Four, after winning just twice all season.

Some green shoots of recovery began to appear in early 1990 when Dale reached the fifth round of the FA Cup for the first time, a run which helped to pay off a large amount of the club's debts. The redevelopment of Spotland also began early in the decade, with the rebuilding of the Main Stand to its current form.

The summer of 1999 proved to be something of a turning point in Rochdale's history, with the appointment of Steve Parkin, who was then the Football League's youngest manager at 33. Tenth and eighth placed finished followed in his first two seasons, narrowly missing out on a play-off spot in 2001 on the final day of the season. When Youth Team manager Keith Hill took over in a caretaker capacity, not many would have foreseen the turnaround in club's fortunes that was to come. Hill and assistant Dave Flitcroft lifted Dale from 22nd on Boxing Day to a ninth-place finish in the 2006/07 campaign, which gave the supporters great optimism for the club's Centenary Year in 2007/08.

Dale reached the now rebranded League Two play-off final that season, and as such made their first appearance at Wembley Stadium. However, despite taking the lead, Dale were beaten 3-2 by Stockport County. 12 months later, Hill guided the club to the play-offs again, but were beaten in the semi-finals by Gillingham, 2-1 on aggregate.

The following campaign proved to be one of the most memorable in the club's history, as promotion was achieved for the first time in 41 years. Some scintillating football saw Dale lead the table from December to early-April, and although they didn't secure the League Two title, the ultimate aim of promotion was achieved with a 1-0 win over Northampton Town on 17th April 2010. A joint-best ever ninth-place finish in League One the following season had Dale fans dreaming of a push for the Championship, but Hill and Flitcroft left for Barnsley in the summer of 2011.

The 2017/18 season proved to be one of the most memorable in Dale's history. Hill's men were 11 points from safety with 17 games remaining, but a fine run of form, losing just three times before the end of the campaign, led to a shot at survival on the final day. Joe Thompson, who had returned to action after cancer treatment earlier that season, scored the goal that kept Dale in the division.

This was all after a campaign which saw Dale reach the fifth round of the FA Cup for just third time in our history, taking Premier League giants Tottenham Hotspur to a replay at Wembley, following a 2-2 draw at the Crown Oil Arena.

After four straight league losses to begin the 2022/23 campaign, Stockdale was sacked, with former Morecambe manager Jim Bentley his successor. Despite an initial bounce, Bentley couldn't turn Dale's fortunes around, and with the Club bottom of the EFL in March, he was dismissed.

Jimmy McNulty, who made 237 Dale appearances as a player, took interim charge and despite an upturn in results, there was too much to do to avoid the drop into non-league.

In the close season, McNulty was appointed as Dale's first ever Head Coach on a permanent basis, taking charge of the Club in their first foray into non-league football.



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# OPPOSITION IN FOCUS ROCHDALE AFC

## 1. LOUIE MOULDEN - GOALKEEPER

Louie is a goalkeeper who is with Dale on a season-long loan from Premier League Wolverhampton Wanderers. The 21-year-old is the son of former Dale striker Paul Moulden, who played 21 games for the club in the 1995/96 season, and the grandson of Tony Moulden, who appeared eight times in the 1960s. A former Liverpool and Manchester City youngster, Louie spent time on loan at Gloucester City in 2020. He signed for Wolves on a permanent deal in the summer of 2021, before joining Ebbsfleet United on loan for the second half of the 2021/22 campaign. A key member of The Fleet side that made it to the National League South play-off final, Moulden stepped-up to the National League last season with Solihull Moors. Louie impressed in 16 appearances for Moors, before heading back to his parent club in January, where he featured for their Premier League 2 team. Moulden has also featured heavily in the England youth setups, including two appearances at the European Under-17 Championships in 2019.

## 3. CAMERON JOHN - DEFENCE

Cameron is a left-sided defender who was signed on a two-year deal by Dale in June 2022. After thriving though the youth system at Wolverhampton Wanderers, John went out on a season-long to Doncaster Rovers during the 2019/20 campaign. A successful stint there saw the 24-year-old make a permanent switch to the Keepmoat Stadium in the summer of 2020 for an undisclosed fee. Cameron had also impressed during his time with the Wolves Academy and was a key member of the U23 side which secured promotion to Premier League 2 Division 1 in 2018/19, wearing the captain's armband on several occasions as the side won the title.

## 4. RYAN EAST - MIDFIELD

Ryan is a midfielder player who has joined Dale on a season-long loan from EFL League Two side Bradford City. The 25-year-old came through the ranks at Reading, but left the Madejski Stadium for Swindon Town in the summer of 2021. East made 23 appearances in all competitions for The Robins in 2021/22 as they finished in the League Two play-offs, before moving to Bradford City during the following close season.

## 5. MAX TAYLOR - DEFENCE

Max is a central defender who left Manchester United at the end of the 2020/21 season to pursue new opportunities, at which point he penned an initial one-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. Taylor's performances last term have since seen that contract extended to summer 2024. The 23-year-old, a product of United's Academy, progressed through the youth ranks at Old Trafford, featuring at U18 and U23 levels. He was on the first team bench for United's Europa League tie with Astana in 2019

and featured twice for The Red Devils in the EFL Trophy. Max spent the 2020/21 campaign on loan at Kidderminster Harriers.

## 6. ETHAN EBANKS-LANDELL - DEFENCE

Ethan is a defender who signed a two-year contract at the Crown Oil Arena in July 2022. This is his second spell with the club after playing 16 games on loan from Wolves in the second half of the 2018/19 campaign. The centre-half joins Dale having spent the last three seasons with Shrewsbury Town, clocking-up over 100 appearances in League One. A product of the Academy system at Wolves, the 30-year-old made his way to their first team squad as a substitute for a Premier League game at Birmingham in December 2010. Ethan made his professional debut in November 2012 while on loan at Bury and went on to play Championship football for Wolves and in League One in loan spells at Sheffield United and MK Dons.

## 7. TYRESE SINCLAIR - FORWARD

Tyrese is a forward who joined Dale in July 2022 after a successful spell on trial during the early weeks of pre-season. The forward, whose father is former Chelsea defender Frank Sinclair, has signed a two-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. Aged 22, Tyrese came through Blackburn Rovers' Academy before joining Mansfield Town's youth system in 2017. He turned professional two years later and made his senior debut against Everton in the EFL Trophy, before getting his league bow on the opening day of the 2020/21 campaign. Tyrese spent the second half of last season on loan at Scunthorpe United, against whom he scored twice on the day he signed for Dale in a 4-1 friendly win at Glanford Park.

## 8. ADAM CLAYTON - MIDFIELD

Adam is a midfielder who arrived at the Crown Oil Arena on a free transfer in July 2023, penning a one-year deal with the club. The 34-year-old has made over 500 career appearances, including a season in the Premier League with Middlesbrough in 2016/17. Clayton began his career at Manchester City, where he progressed through the youth ranks from the age of seven. After signing a professional contract in 2007, he had loan spells at Carlisle United and Leeds United, before joining the Elland Road club on a permanent basis in 2010. Adam was a regular for Leeds in the 2011/12 season, before moving to Huddersfield Town, where he spent two seasons, clocking up almost 100 appearances. In the summer of 2014, Middlesbrough paid a seven-figure fee for the midfielder and he went on to feature over 240 times for the Riverside Stadium outfit, including 34 appearances in the Premier League. Since leaving Boro in 2020, Clayton has had spells at Birmingham City, Doncaster Rovers and Bradford City.

## 9. KAIRO MITCHELL - FORWARD

Kairo is a striker who joined Dale in June 2023,

penning a two-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. The 25-year-old was signed from Notts County, where he had played over 40 games since moving to Meadow Lane ahead of the 2021/22 campaign. A product of Leicester City's academy, Kairo signed professional terms with The Foxes in 2016. He went on to have spells at Nuneaton Town and Coalville Town, where an impressive goalscoring return secured a move to Dartford and then King's Lynn Town in the National League. Chesterfield paid an undisclosed fee for the striker in April 2021, before Notts County did the same that summer. Mitchell spent the second half of last term on loan at fellow National League side Eastleigh, finishing the season strongly with four goals in six games. Kairo has also been capped 15 times by his country, Grenada.

## 10. DEVANTE RODNEY - FORWARD

Devante is a forward who joined Dale from Walsall in June 2022, penning a two-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. The 24-year-old spent his youth career in the academies at Manchester City and Sheffield Wednesday, before starting his professional career at Hartlepool United in January 2017. A move to Salford City followed and during his time with The Ammies, Devante enjoyed loan spells at FC Halifax Town and Stockport County. He went on to join Port Vale in July 2020 and finished as the club's top-scorer in the 2020/21 campaign, before linking-up with Walsall for an undisclosed fee in January 2022.

## 11. JESURUN UCHEGBULAM - MIDFIELD

Jesurun is a winger who arrived from Chesterfield in August 2023, penning a two-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. The 22-year-old was born in Lagos, Nigeria, but moved to Italy as a youngster, where he was scouted by footballing giants AC Milan at the age of seven. His family relocated to England when Jez was 15-years-old and he was soon spotted by Everton, spending time on trial with The Toffees. Spells in non-league at Stockport Town and Mossley followed, before moving to Matlock Town. Impressive form alerted interest from Chesterfield, where Uchegbulam made 37 appearances last term, as well as appearing in their opening day win over Dorking Wanderers this season.

## 12. BRAD KELLY - GOALKEEPER

Brad is a goalkeeper from the club's Academy set-up who is in his second season as professional deal at the Crown Oil Arena.

## 13. JIMMY KEOHANE - MIDFIELD

Jimmy is a right-back or midfielder is now in his fifth full season with Dale after signing a 12-month contract extension in the summer. The right-back or midfielder player initially arrived at Spotland on a short-term deal towards the end of the 2018/19 season, with his form prompting manager Brian Barry-Murphy to offer him a two-year contract. After an impressive 2020/21 campaign, in which Keohane scored ten goals and won several Player of the Season awards, the

32-year-old penned a new two-year deal with the club. Jimmy started his senior career with Wexford Youths, before moving to England, where he signed for Exeter in August 2011. After making nearly 90 appearances for The Grecians, Keohane spent time with Cork City, winning the Irish league and cup double, before joining Dale.

## 14. TOMMY MCDERMOTT - MIDFIELD

Tommy is a midfielder player who is with Dale on loan from Port Vale until January. The 18-year-old progressed through The Valiants' academy before earning a professional contract. After providing six goals and 11 assists for the Under-18s in 2021/22, he won the youth team Player of the Year award and earned the opportunity to train with the first team towards the latter stages of Vale's promotion-winning season. McDermott was then handed his professional debut on the opening day of the 2022/23 campaign. Earlier this year he had a spell on loan at Salisbury, where he impressed before returning to his parent club.

## 15. GEORGE NEVETT - DEFENCE

George is a central defender who made his senior debut as a substitute against Sutton United in Dale's final home game of the 2022/23 campaign. After being a regular in the pre-season fixtures ahead of this season, the 17-year-old was rewarded with his first professional contract, which will run to 2026.

## 16. KWAKU ODUROH - DEFENCE

Kwaku is a right-back who is with Dale on a season-long loan from Derby County. The 20-year-old has made six appearances in cup football for The Rams having joined them from Manchester City in July 2022. Oduroh is a product of City's Academy, where he first linked-up with the Under-9 age group. During his time with the European Champions, Kwaku won the Under-18 Premier League and Premier League 2 titles.

## 17. MICHAEL AFUYE - FORWARD

Michael is a winger who linked-up with Dale in July 2023, penning an initial one-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. The 22-year-old has been with Avro FC for the past two campaigns and signed for Dale after impressing in pre-season training and during friendlies against Chorley and Tranmere Rovers.

## 18. CIAN HAYES - FORWARD

Cian is a winger who linked-up with Dale on a month's loan from Fleetwood Town in October 2023. The 20-year-old has featured six times for The Cod Army this season, grabbing himself a goal in the EFL Cup against Port Vale. Hayes has made 80 appearances in total for Fleetwood since progressing through their academy and became the club's youngest-ever player when he made his debut in a 2-0 EFL Trophy win over Oldham Athletic in November 2019. He has also featured for the Republic of Ireland U19 squad, playing in five games and scoring once

## OPPOSITION IN FOCUS ROCHDALE AFC Continued -

### 20. HARVEY GILMOUR - MIDFIELD

Harvey is a midfielder who joined Dale from FC Halifax Town in June 2023, penning a two-year deal at the Crown Oil Arena. Originally on Sheffield United's books, the 24-year-old gained his first experience of league football after moving to Tranmere in summer 2018. Gilmour spent the 2020/21 season with Stockport, before joining Halifax, where he made around 80 appearances and helped The Shaymen lift the FA Trophy at Wembley last term with a Wembley defeat of Gateshead in the final.

### 24. KYLE FERGUSON - DEFENCE

Kyle is a central defender who joined Dale on a free transfer from Harrogate Town in June 2023. The son of Rangers legend Barry Ferguson, Kyle spent time in the youth academy at Ibrox, as well as Kilmarnock and Airdrieonians. He made his professional debut at the age of 16 for Clyde, before moving across the pond to the USA in 2017, where he played college football for Medaille University in Buffalo, New York. A brief spell in Sweden with Second Division Ytterhogdals IK followed, after which the Ferguson spent a year in Ireland with Waterford. He impressed with The Blues and caught the eye of Altrincham, whom he joined in February 2022. An impressive end to the 2021/22 campaign led to a move to Harrogate, where Kyle made eight appearances last term, including in their 4-1 win at the Crown Oil Arena. Ferguson re-joined Altrincham on loan in March 2023 and made ten appearances before the end of the campaign.

### 40. IAN HENDERSON - FORWARD

Ian is a forward who joined Dale on a free transfer in July 2022 after being released by Salford City. The move saw 'Hendo' return to the Crown Oil Arena two years after he left the club when his contract wasn't renewed as the Covid-19 pandemic took hold. Ian had scored 126 goals for Dale at that time and he has since added the extra goals he needed to overhaul Reg Jenkins as the club's all-time leading goalscorer. He has also played over 400 times in Rochdale colours, putting him in second place behind Gary Jones in the club's all-time appearances list. Initially with Norwich, Henderson made almost 80 first team appearances for The Canaries, before joining Northampton in July 2007 following a six-month loan spell at Rotherham. He remained at Sixfields Stadium for 18 months and then played for Luton and in Turkish football, prior to signing for Colchester in January 2010. Ian hit 11 goals for The U's in the 2010/11 campaign, including home and away winners against Dale, and then scored again at the Crown Oil Arena for Colchester in October 2011. All told he netted 26 times in 130 outings for United, but left the Essex club early in 2013

after manager Joe Dunne oversaw a shake-up of his squad. Brought to Rochdale on a short-term deal by Keith Hill, Hendo immediately made a big impression and signed an extended contract at the Crown Oil Arena during the summer. He was one of the most consistent performers in Dale's 2013/14 promotion campaign, missing only one game and scoring 11 goals, including several 'Goal of the Season' contenders. Ian bettered this in League One in 2014/15 with 22 goals as Dale enjoyed their highest-ever league finish. He continued to reach double figures in every full season he has been with the club and has now written himself into Rochdale folklore with goalscoring achievements that may never be beaten.

### MANAGER. JIMMY MCNULTY



Jimmy was appointed as manager of Rochdale in May 2023 following a spell in interim charge at the end of last season. The 38-year-old is still contracted as a player with the club and has made 237 appearances for Dale since joining from Bury in 2015. McNulty had played Championship football under former Dale boss Keith Hill at Barnsley, before leaving Oakwell to help Bury to promotion in 2014/15. The defender started his career with Wrexham, but didn't play league football until joining Macclesfield in July 2006. He moved to Stockport in January 2008 and was a member of the County side that won promotion from League Two four months later with a Wembley play-off defeat of Rochdale. Jimmy later played for Brighton and had two loans spells at Scunthorpe.

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# ROCHDALE AFC Greatest Seasons CLASSIC CAMPAIGNS

## 1961/62

Tony Collins managed Rochdale to the League Cup final in 1961/62. Newcomers included Louis Bimpson, Colin Whitaker, Jock Winton and Doug Wragg, with Rochdale racing to the top of the Fourth Division after winning four of their opening six games. They defeated Southampton 2-1, Doncaster Rovers 4-0, Charlton Athletic 1-0, York City 2-1 and Blackburn Rovers 4-3 to reach the League Cup final, losing 4-0 on aggregate to Norwich City. Rochdale gained seven successive wins before fixture congestion led to a mid-table placing. Leading marksman Ron Cairns, Ted Burgin and Colin Whitaker were ever-present.

## 1968/69

Rochdale won promotion for the first time in their history in 1968/69. Summer signings included Joe Ashworth, Chris Harker, Vinny Leech, Colin Parry, Vince Radcliffe, Derek Ryder and Norman Whitehead, with Reg Jenkins scoring twice as Rochdale started with a 3-2 win over Scunthorpe. They drew ten of their next 12 Fourth Division matches and Len Richley replaced Carlisle-bound Bob Stokoe as manager, with Dale slamming six goals past the two Bradford clubs and Grimsby. Tony Buck arrived from Newport and Rochdale lost just once in 22 games, clinching third position with a 3-0 victory at home to Southend.

## 1969/70

Rochdale finished in their highest-ever League position in 1969/70. Bobby Downes and David Cross made their debuts as Dale kicked off with a 3-0 defeat at home to Orient. Steve Melledew was sold to Everton in September but eight straight wins catapulted Rochdale to the top of the Third Division, with the side unchanged for 15 matches. Len Richley resigned after a policy disagreement and was replaced by Dick Conner, with Reg Jenkins netting a hat-trick in a 5-0 victory over Halifax Town. Chris Harker, Colin Parry, Billy Rudd, Derek Ryder and Graham Smith were all ever-present as Rochdale finished in ninth

**Football historian LEIGH EDWARDS selects ten post-war Rochdale 'Classic Campaigns'.**

position

## 1970/71

Dick Conner plotted Rochdale's memorable FA Cup run of 1970/71. Skipper Billy Rudd was swapped for Bury's Alf Arrowsmith and other newcomers included Tony Godfrey and Peter Gowans. Rochdale gained a 3-3 draw at top-flight Crystal Palace in the League Cup, then drew 1-1 at home to Aston Villa and won 4-1 at Halifax on Boxing Day. They beat Oldham 2-0 and Darlington 2-0 in the FA Cup before goals by David Cross and Dennis Butler secured an epic 2-1 third round win at home to top-flight Coventry. Dale lost to Colchester in a fourth round replay but a 12 match unbeaten run took them clear of relegation danger.

## 1978/79

Rochdale completed a dramatic 'Great Escape' from re-election in 1978/79. Dale had finished bottom of the Football League the previous season, seven points adrift of Southport who had been voted out. Clearly they couldn't risk another disastrous campaign but by Christmas had won only two games and lost 1-0 at home to Droylsden in the FA Cup first round. Rochdale triumphed 4-0 at Scunthorpe under caretaker-boss Peter Madden, then Doug Collins became player-manager in January and plotted a remarkable climb to safety during the closing weeks of the season. Dale won seven of their last eight games to finish in 20th position.

## 1989/90

Terry Dolan guided Rochdale to the FA Cup fifth round for the first time in 1989/90. Newcomers Tony Brown, Willie Burns, Dave Cole, Wayne Goodison, Micky Holmes and Peter Ward made their debuts as Rochdale began with a 2-1 victory at home to Burnley. Dale had inconsistent form in the Fourth Division despite the arrival of Steve Elliott and Steve Johnson, but defeated Marine 1-0, Lincoln City 3-0, Whitley Bay 1-0 and Northampton Town 3-0 in the FA Cup before narrowly losing 1-0 at eventual finalists



1968/69 promotion winning squad

Crystal Palace in the fifth round. Goalkeeper Keith Welch was ever-present for the third successive season.

## 2001/02

Rochdale qualified for the Third Division play-offs for the first time in 2001/02. Matt Doughty, Kieron Durkan and Gareth Griffiths made their debuts as Rochdale kicked off with a 2-1 victory at Oxford United and raced to the top of the table with a seven-match unbeaten start. Richard Jobson arrived from Tranmere in September and helped Dale regain pole position with a 3-1 win over Mansfield. John Hollins replaced Barnsley-bound Steve Parkin as manager and new signings Alan McLoughlin and Paul Simpson helped Dale qualify for the play-offs in fifth position. They lost 4-3 to Rushden & Diamonds in the semi-finals.

## 2002/03

Player-manager Paul Simpson guided Rochdale to the FA Cup fifth round in 2002/03. Rochdale started with a 1-0 victory over Leyton Orient and Paul Simpson grabbed a hat-trick in their 5-2 win at Wrexham. They triumphed 4-3 at home to Cambridge United, then beat Macclesfield 3-1 to climb to second place in late September. Rochdale plummeted down the table after winning only one of their next 15 matches, with Simon Grand and Gavin Melaugh gaining regular first-team slots. Dale defeated Peterborough 3-2, Bristol Rovers 3-2, Preston 2-1 and Coventry 2-0 in the FA Cup before

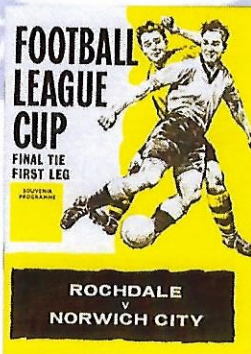
losing 3-1 at Wolves in the fifth round.

## 2009/10

Chris O'Grady and Chris Dagnall scored 42 goals between them as Rochdale won promotion for only the second time in 2009/10. Keith Hill's side won only one of their opening four games before the arrival of O'Grady from Oldham sparked an improvement in results. Rochdale soared to the top of the table with just three defeats in 24 matches and O'Grady grabbed a hat-trick in a 4-1 win at Cheltenham. Dagnall emulated his feat in a 4-1 win at home to Grimsby as Dale remained top until a 5-0 hammering at Torquay in April. They clinched promotion in third place with a 1-0 win over Northampton, then lost their last four games.

## 2013/14

Rochdale regained League One status in 2013/14. Keith Hill's side won just one of their first five games but then won seven of their next eight to go top of the table. Dale slipped out of the promotion frame after winning only twice in eight matches before returning to the top with just three defeats in 21 games. They also triumphed 2-0 at home to Leeds United in the FA Cup third round but lost 2-1 at home to Sheffield Wednesday in the fourth round. Dale clinched promotion with a 2-0 victory at home to Cheltenham Town in their penultimate match. Scott Hogan was leading marksman as Rochdale finished in third position.



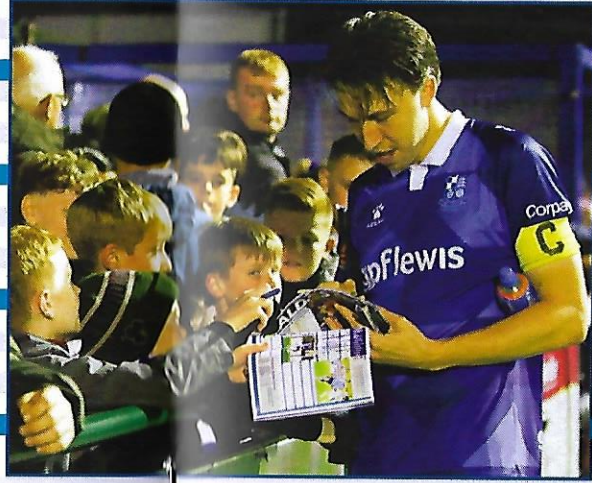


# FIRST TEAM RESULTS 2023/2024

Month	Comp	Score	(Total)	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers	Dante BAPTISTE	Jack COOK	Charlie BARKER	Ashley CHARLES	Alex DYER	Mason BARRETT	Tarryn ALLARAKHIA	Nathan FERGUSON	Olufela OLOMOLA	Max KRETZSCHMAR	Cortie ANDREWS	Jed WARD	Micah OBIERO	Luke DREHER	Dom HUTCHINSON	Kyle SMITH	Charles CLAYDEN	Abdul ABDULMALIK	Sam BOWEN	Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH	Sean ADARKWA	Tahvon CAMPBELL	Brandon MASON	Eric NEGRARU	Joseph CULLIS		
<b>AUGUST</b>																																	
5	YORK CITY	VNL	2-1	1,805	680	6	Kretzschmar (P), Mundle-Smith	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
12	Eastleigh	VNL	0-0	2,030	172	8		2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
15	Bromley	VNL	1-1	1,810	159	8	Campbell	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
19	AFC FYLDE	VNL	3-2	1,145	20	5	Campbell 2, Ferguson	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
26	Aldershot Town	VNL	1-3	1,860	149	9	Adarkwa	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
28	DAGENHAM & RED.	VNL	0-2	1,513	275	12		2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>																																	
2	Hartlepool United	VNL	1-2	4,072	115	15	Allarakhia	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
9	EBBSFLEET UNITED	VNL	2-1	1,422	186	11	Campbell 2 (1 Pen)	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
16	ALTRINCHAM	VNL	0-0	1,302	70	11		2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
19	Dorking Wanderers	VNL	1-3	1,389	150	12	Bowen	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
23	Chesterfield	VNL	2-3	7,301	140	15	Smith, Adarkwa	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
26	WOKING	VNL	1-0	1,310	250	13	Bowen	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
30	OLDHAM ATHLETIC	VNL	1-1	1,640	385	15	Bowen	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
<b>OCTOBER</b>																																	
3	Gateshead	VNL	1-2	896	54	16	Allarakhia	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
7	Kidderminster Harriers	VNL	0-1	2,546	190	15		2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
14	Bromley	FAC40	2-3	1,933	195	15	Kretzschmar, Ferguson	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
21	BOREHAM WOOD	VNL	1-1	1,505	73	16	Allarakhia	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
24	OXFORD CITY	VNL	3-1	1,029	35	15	Smith, Bowen (2)	2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
28	Solihull Moors	VNL	0-1	1,281	108	16		2	3	4	5	7	9	10	11	13	14																
<b>NOVEMBER</b>																																	
11	ROCHDALE	VNL																															
18	FC Halifax Town	VNL																															
21	Southend United	VNL																															
25	BARNET	VNL																															
<b>DECEMBER</b>																																	
9	TBD	FAT30																															
16	Dagenham & Redbridge	VNL																															
23	HARTLEPOOL UNITED	VNL																															
26	Maidenhead United	VNL																															
<b>JANUARY</b>																																	
1	MAIDENHEAD UNITED	VNL																															
6	Ebbsfleet United	VNL																															
20	Rochdale	VNL																															
23	SOUTHEND UNITED	VNL																															
27	FC HALIFAX TOWN	VNL																															
<b>FEBRUARY</b>																																	
3	Barnet	VNL																															
10	Altrincham	VNL																															
17	GATESHEAD	VNL																															
20	DORKING WANDERERS	VNL																															
24	Woking	VNL																															
<b>MARCH</b>																																	
2	York City	VNL																															
9	EASTLEIGH	VNL																															
12	BROMLEY	VNL																															
16	AFC Fylde	VNL																															
23	KIDDERMINSTER	VNL																															
29	Oxford City	VNL																															
<b>APRIL</b>																																	
1	SOLIHULL MOORS	VNL																															
6	Boreham Wood	VNL																															
13	CHESTERFIELD	VNL																															
20	Oldham Athletic	VNL																															
<b>TO BE ARRANGED</b>																																	
	ALDERSHOT TOWN	VNL																															

### KEY

- FILLED-IN = STARTED THE MATCH
- OUTLINED = CAME ON AS SUBSTITUTE
- GREEN = FIRST SUBSTITUTION
- PINK = SECOND SUBSTITUTION
- BROWN = THIRD SUBSTITUTION



## 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	Oiomola, 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 from our televised draw at home to Boreham Wood courtesy of Jon Taffel © Roman Pearce



# TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR VAN LEASING



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## APPEARANCES



## 2023/2024

CORRECT AS	VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE			FA CUP			FA TROPHY			MIDDLESEX SENIOR CUP			MIDDLESEX CHARITY CUP			TOTALS			STONES CAREER		
	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G
Abdulmalik, Abdul	6	2				1										6	3		6	3	
Adarkwa, Sean	3	10	2													3	10	2	3	10	2
Allarakhia, Tarryn	9	6	3	1												10	6	3	62	12	12
Andrews, Corie	2	6														2	6		15	10	3
Barker, Charlie	17					1										18			50		2
Barrett, Mason	3	3				1										4	3		23		10
Bowen, Sam	15	1	5	1												16	1	5	16	1	5
Campbell, Tahvon	14	1	5	1												15	1	5	15	1	5
Charles, Ashley	11	1				1										12	1		110	22	2
Clayden, Charles	13	2														13	2		36	5	4
Cook, Jack	17															17			103	2	8
Dyer, Alex	9	3														9	3		205	40	34
Ferguson, Nathan	11	3	1			1	1									11	4	2	61	13	9
Hutchinson, Dominic																			20	8	1
Kretzschmar, Max	6	5	1	1		1										7	5	2	32	11	8
Mason, Brandon	2					1										3			3		
McGregor, Giovanni *																			13	3	
Mundle-Smith, Jaydn	18		1	1												19		1	56	14	4
Obiero, Micah	13	3				1										14	3		42	9	8
Olomola, Olufela *	4	4														4	4		36	14	10
Smith, Kyle	9	1	2	1												10	1	2	10	1	2
Ward, Jed	18					1										19			19		

\* = no longer with club



Martin Read's original take on this beautiful game

# the world of ball



## The ups and downs of an imperfect non-league pyramid



**There is a time when welcoming Rochdale as our visitors would have seen us preparing for one of the biggest days of our year. A huge event, almost certainly an FA Cup fixture and an opportunity to progress within ninety minutes of Manchester United, Chelsea et al.**

And before I go on, I should explain that today will indeed be one of our biggest games of the season. Entertaining Rochdale is another huge first for the club. But - truly an out of the ordinary event? A 'giant killing' proposition? Well, to our immense credit, that's not the case this season. We've managed to equalise our circumstances, or as near as good as. If you're from Rochdale, please don't take that as disrespect - the fact that we can be so delighted that we've got you as a league fixture is simply a testament to how much of a big club we see you as.

The thing is, though, that we seem to be living in an age in which 'big' and 'small' are words that can be difficult to sensibly attribute to certain clubs. Look at some of the extraordinary crowds that some of our non-league contemporaries are getting in 2022/2023. Dulwich Hamlet may have been an exotic outlier in this regard, but recent years have seen plenty of other clubs defying convention to post stellar attendance numbers. In excess of 2,000 for Chatham Town versus Sheppey United in the Southern Counties East Premier Division! Crowds of 3,000 at Ramsgate. And there are many, many examples of once sleepy make-up-the-

numbers Tier Ump-teen clubs suddenly becoming a social magnet for people in their vicinities.

### Non-league appeals

What's going on? Well, if it really is a response to the huge cost of professional club football these days, these new non-league fans being principally those of bigger teams now disaffected with the experience higher up, then I'm all for that. It's about time that there was some downward pressure on clubs selling outrageous tat and often poor spectator experiences in the EFL.

Saying that, there's some evidence of it this being more than just some blip, with people seeming to have recently discovered enjoying the very different experience of football at non-league level. In which case, woe betide any chairman seeking to push his club up the ranks without looking to sustain some of the folksy charm of the non-league club that attracted those fans in the first place. Change ends at half time? Yes please. Pint up against the guard rail? Mini-

mum requirement. The list goes on.

From the other end of the spectrum, I often do wonder what 'big' clubs relegated to the National League genuinely make of it all? What must it like to be a Scunthorpe United fan? Torquay United? To have once been a firm fixture in the EFL but to now be afloat and uncertain about when

you'll get a genuine chance of a return.

### Ridiculous re-election

At least since the introduction of automatic promotion and relegation in and out of the EFL, we've been spared the frankly sinister exercise in back scratching once called 're-election'. I invite you to consider this scenario: a handful of around ten

poorly performing 'fourth division clubs - routinely comprising the likes of Crewe Alexandra, Halifax Town, Rochdale, Darlington - who would finish in the bottom four of the league. Rather than relegation, and with it a chance to rejuvenate your circumstances and root out what had made your club turn bad, you instead piled in to an annual meeting at which you would plead your case why you shouldn't be replaced by one of those terrible non-league oiks from down below. In the 1970s, Hereford United, Wimbledon and Wigan Athletic managed to secure enough votes at these things to actually replace one of these hapless perennial poor performers. But more often, the existing EFL clubs would close ranks and keep the status quo. The argument was simple: vote for us to stay in and if you ever find yourself in the same position, we'll vote for you. Gruesome stuff, if perhaps indicative of the age. It's perhaps no surprise that after the podgy, one-out-all-out mentality of the 1970s we saw this practice finally ended in the power-play shoulder-padded year of 1987. (Oh what, only a couple of seasons after we actually won the National League ourselves? Oh yes.)

### Pause for concern

Not only are things much, much better now, but there is almost too much opportunity for a non-league club 'having a moment' to shoot through the ranks. Nope I'm naming no names.

Personally I'd like to see leagues in which a club winning the title can opt not to go up, choosing instead to keep to its budget potential and stay in the same division for another year, thus steadily building its infrastructure and, for that season, allowing another club finishing behind it to advance in their stead. There's no inherent unfairness in that, and it would allow non-leaguers with genuinely interested backers to build in a more organic way.

For a while, in the early days of the English non-league pyramid, this was achieved by different, equivalent level leagues operating outside of it. For the first few years of the National League's



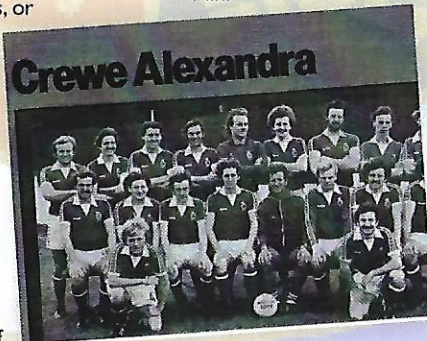
**Left: Crewe in the 1970s - serial re-election offenders. Above: a warm welcome to Rochdale and their fans**

existence, the Isthmian and Northern Leagues continued; those more ambitious clubs switched to the Southern or 'Northern Premier' leagues to get onto the pyramid; those biding their time or simply incapable of growing at pace moved in the other direction.

Over time, this all changed and today the English pyramid is ruthlessly effective and all-encompassing. All non-league clubs operate at some stage of the pyramid. Clubs can appeal against their relocation when they are either promoted, relegated, or asked to move sideways to a less geographically comfortable league. And apart from those clubs for whom geography is not their friend, this all works remarkably well. It's just that if here was more chance for clubs to pause their progress upwards that may be no bad thing for the club, its potential to grow in a sustainable way, and for the expectation level of its supporters.

Anyway, Rochdale fans, I'm sure all this tittle-tattle about non-league realities is something you'll be keen to avoid on your way back up, unlike others in your situation who've made the journey down. Very interesting times for your club, and we hope that when you do return to the EFL's promised land you'll have take back fond memories of your time in non-league. 'Big' club status? It's all relative.

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**Crewe Alexandra**

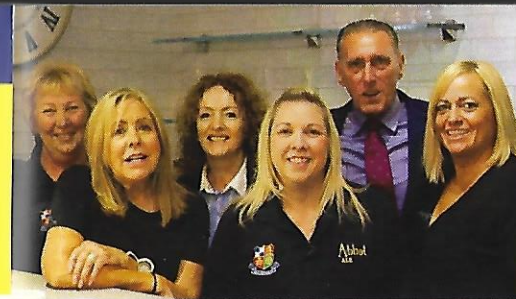
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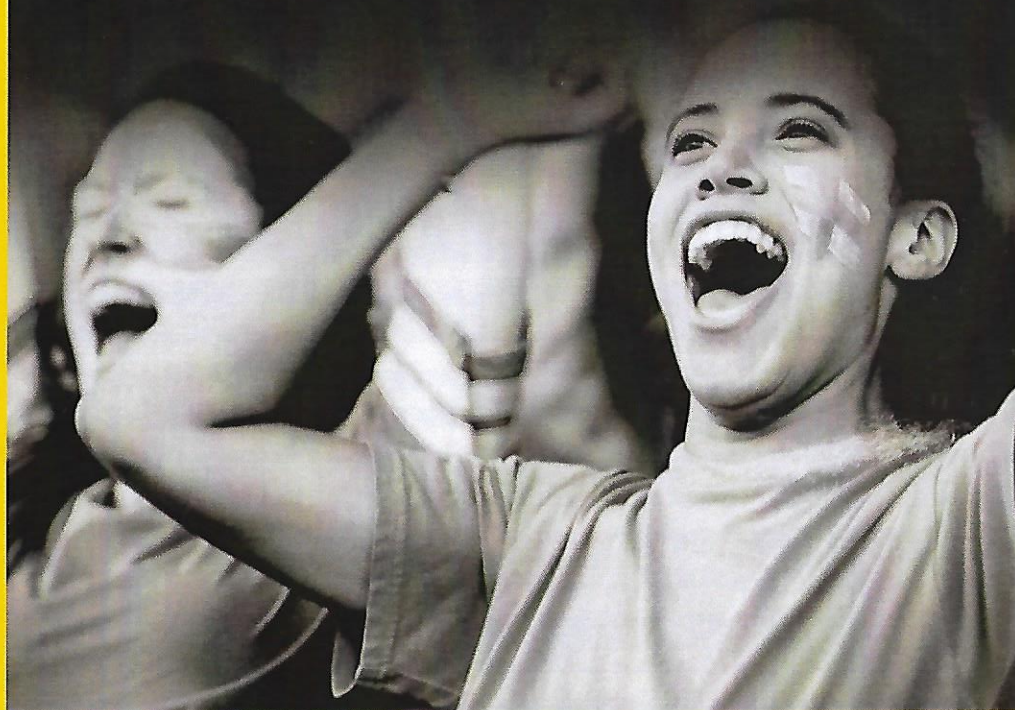


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# WFC academy focus

## Ready for the first team? Goal-crazy Bartolo & Co provide some food for thought

Friday November 3: National Youth League Premier Division South: Wealdstone 13 Kempston Rovers 2  
**WITH the Stones struggling to hit the net it was inevitable that the clamour for a goalscorer would intensify over the enforced two-week break writes Tim Parks.**

The elevations of 17-year-old Gibraltar hitman Jaiden Bartolo and goalscoring midfielder Blesk Ekpenyong (19) from the Academy team to train with the seniors last weekend was an intriguing move.

These eloquent young men have exploded onto the Academy scene this season. Bartolo, well-built, well-balanced and comfortable on either foot has spent much of the autumn playing for his national team's under-18s against some of the best players in his age group across Europe.

He's been described as the 'most outstanding teenager' in Gibraltar and backed that up with a hat-trick in each of his first three appearances for the Stones' Under-19s... and now currently eight goals in three games for the Under-23s!

Ekpenyong, meanwhile, switched across to the



Below: Bartolo on the ball with fellow Jaiden Celestine-Charles

Jaiden Bartolo salutes his hat-trick goal, but (below right) is denied a fourth. It was one of those days for the Kempston keeper



Stones' from the Reading FC Academy after his A-Levels and tore his meniscus at a crucial stage of his development - but he's now back fully fit and clearly capable of dominating the midfield at this level.

If you are a regular reader you'll have seen that I took in the Under-23s' game against Brooke House, Coventry City's international academy, last month and was hugely impressed with the 4-0 win.

So now I dropped into the Brunel University sports hub to see how they would fare against a club at a comparable level: Kempston Rovers. Ekpenyong and fellow midfielders Mo Mohamed and Sakthim Chemjong had caught the eye against Brooke House - with Jaiden Celestine-Charles the main threat up front - but with Bartolo joining his fellow Jaiden in the forward line the Stones operated on a whole new level.

Stones were 6-1 up in the first 20 minutes! The Kempston lads, clever on the ball and threading their passes around, were cut to ribbons as soon as they lost possession. Livewire right-winger Emmanuel Oyegoke crossed low for Bartolo to sidefoot the first; Bartolo saw another crisp finish deflected past the keeper; Mohamed lifted a smart effort over the stranded keeper from a tight angle; Chemjong danced through three tackles and rifled in from 20 yards; Ekpenyong gave the keeper no chance from similar

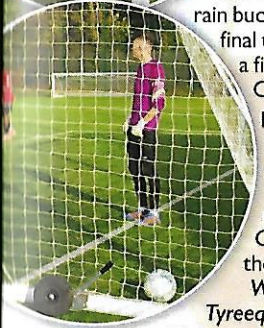
range and then Bartolo found himself unmarked from a corner and stuck out a foot to make it six.

To be fair, Kempston might have had a man advantage when Stones keeper Pompeyo Castillo rushed out to bring down a Rovers striker as he broke away with the score just 2-0 - it was a clear penalty (and converted) and probably should have seen a red card, but the referee took pity and didn't even brandish a yellow. Castillo went on to made several decent saves to keep Wealdstone noses in front.

An own goal made it 7-1 before Bartolo broke clear to roll in the eighth, and the busy Mohamed buried a final chance before the break to make it 9-1 at half time!

Stones coaches Dale Welch and Kenny Mutsanya withdrew Bartolo just a few minutes into the second half - having added four goals to his tally - and the towering sub Shane Johnson belted in the tenth goal with virtually his first touch. I was unable to stay for the whole game and decided to leave at this point - as the rain bucketed down! - and missed the final two goals, another own goal and a fine strike from the twinkle-toed Chemjong, while Mohamed completed a deserved hat-trick.

Kempston got a second consolation but the head of their academy won't have been impressed. However, he is Cameron Mawer, also head of the Wealdstone Academy!  
**Wealdstone U-23s: Castillo, Tyreeq White, Romero Smart Tull, Mohamed, Ben Cook, Suraj Gurung, Ekpenyong, Chemjong, Bartolo, Oyegoke, Celestine-Charles. Subs: Malakai Bailey, Johnson, Akeem Amodemajah, Mikaile Isegay, Casey Yusuf Philips**



Blesk Ekyempong (far left) bullets in a 25-yarder for 5-1 and, below, Mo Mohamed (16) celebrates a goal with Chemjong (19) Ben Cook and Oyegoke



### Under-19s National League Alliance Division C

POS		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	<u>Hertford Town Blues</u>	4	4	0	0	25	3	22	12
2	<u>Slough Town</u>	5	4	0	1	27	7	20	12
3	<u>Brentford CST</u>	5	4	0	1	17	9	8	12
4	<u>Newport Pagnell Town</u>	6	3	0	3	16	16	0	9
5	<u>Enfield Town</u>	6	3	0	3	14	14	0	9
6	<u>Kings Langley</u>	5	2	0	3	10	13	-3	6
7	<u>Barnet</u>	4	1	1	2	9	10	-1	4
8	<u>Wealdstone</u>	5	1	1	3	14	21	-7	4
9	<u>Hemel Hempstead Town</u>	4	1	0	3	5	22	-17	3
10	<u>St Albans City</u>	4	0	0	4	2	24	-22	0

### Under-19s Tactic League F2 North

POS	Team	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	PRO FA	5	4	0	1	10	12
2	Wealdstone FC Brunel F2	4	3	1	0	7	10
3	Slough Town F2	2	1	1	0	2	4
4	Marcelona Dev F2	4	1	1	2	-1	4
5	Kempston Rovers Academy F2	2	1	0	1	-1	3
6	Pro Direct Academy Watford	4	1	0	3	-3	3
7	Chelsea FC (Stanmore)	2	1	0	1	-5	3
8	Elite Coaching Green	3	0	1	2	-6	1
9	Hemel Hempstead Town U19 Tactic F2	1	0	0	1	-1	0
10	Pro:Direct Academy Luton (F2)	1	0	0	1	-2	0

### Under-19s Tactic League T3 Central

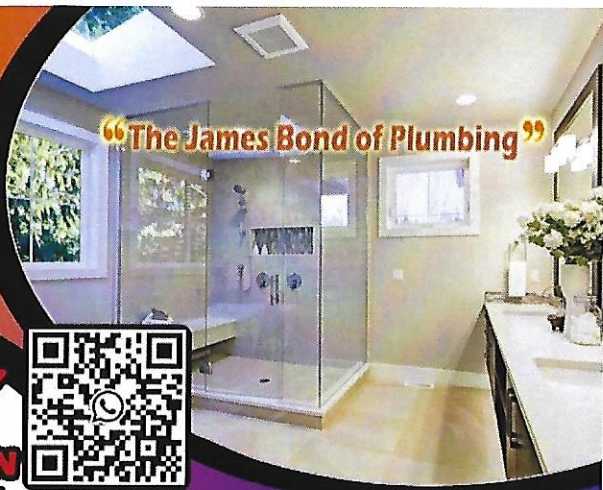
Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Wealdstone FC Brunel	5	5	0	0	16	15
2	Wealdstone FC Harefield	3	3	0	0	6	9
3	United Select	4	2	0	2	2	6
4	Barnet FC U19	4	2	0	2	2	6
5	Uxbridge College CF 2nd	5	2	0	3	-5	6
6	Slough Town T3	4	1	1	2	-1	4
7	Bedfont Sports FC	4	1	1	2	-6	4
8	West Herts Collage	4	1	0	3	-4	3
9	Samuel Ryder Football Academy	5	1	0	4	-10	3

### Under-23s National League Premier Div South

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
Wealdstone FC U23	4	3	0	1	25	10	15	9
AFC Rushden & Diamonds U23 Scholars	3	3	0	0	11	1	10	9
North Leigh FC U23	3	3	0	0	14	6	8	9
Kings Lynn Town FC U23	3	2	0	1	8	2	6	6
Chippenham Town FC U23	4	2	0	2	6	7	-1	6
Melton Town FES U23s	3	1	0	2	7	10	-3	3
Cambridge Utd U23	2	1	0	1	4	7	-3	3
Brooke House Coventry City Int U23s	4	1	0	3	3	12	-9	3
Kempston Rovers Academy U23	4	1	0	3	9	20	-11	3
Hartley Wintney U23	4	0	0	4	4	16	-12	0



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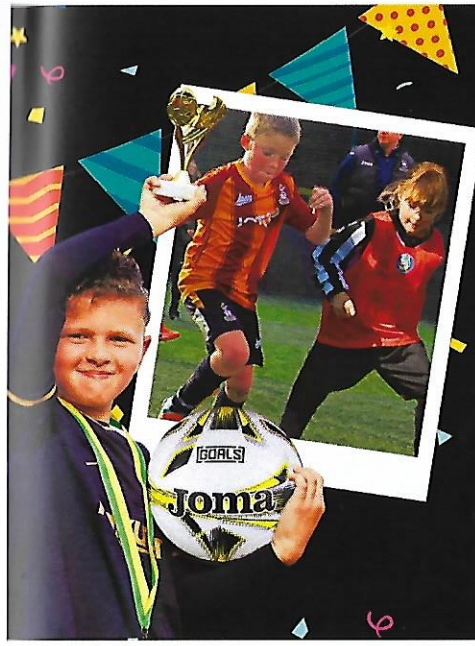
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REWIND SPECIAL >>>> by tim parks

# It happened 50 years ago

part II: stones show their title credentials... to the relief of this teenage fan!

*This season we are reliving the extraordinary campaign of fifty years ago... which ended with the Stones' very first promotion in its long history and our first league title in 22 years.*

Saturday November 3, Southern League Division One South: Wealdstone 2 Poole Town 0

WE are going to cheat a little with the dates this time as we had a week off last Saturday thanks to the Stones' early removal from the FA Cup... and this epic win over title rivals Poole Town, a half century ago, was a game not to miss!

In fact we're going to cheat quite a lot as Part Eleven covers

two notable games in the 1973-74 odyssey plus the

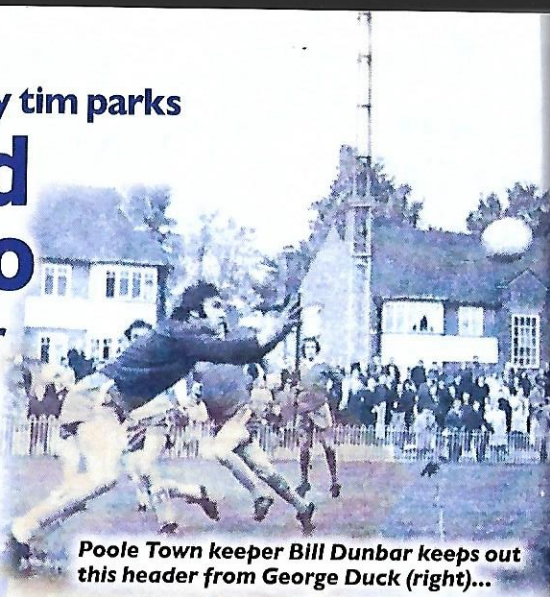
four-match Southern League Cup series against the powerful Premier Division Wimbledon side, illustrated by never-before-seen cuttings from the South London local paper's perspective.

**But first: Poole Town.** This game sticks out in my memory as I was a Wealdstone and QPR fan back in the early 1970s, probably seeing a dozen games at Loftus Road in this 73-74 season, though only when the Stones were away. It was a great time to watch the Rs with Stan Bowles, Gerry Francis and Dave Thomas in dazzling form in Rangers' first season back in the top division.

After a slow start they were blowing away the Arsenal, Spurs, Manchester Uniteds and Chelseas of this world and the packed School End terrace was the place to be with half a dozen of my school mates from St Nick's in Northwood (now Haydon High).

I lived in Pinner but went to school 'over the border' in Hillingdon... if I'd gone to Harrow County School no doubt it would have been Wealdstone all the way. So

**Left: The match programme covers for the games that took place 50 years ago**

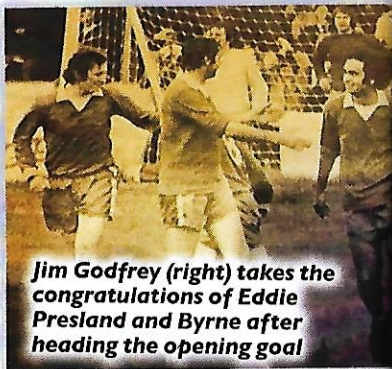


**Poole Town keeper Bill Dunbar keeps out this header from George Duck (right)...**

I had the best of both worlds!

Even so, I was desperate to show my QPR-supporting pals that Wealdstone weren't so far off in ability. Only my mate Derek was a Stones regular and I can still remember the anticipation in the lunch queue that Friday afternoon when my friends all decided that they were going to come to the Stones game the following day as Rangers were playing at Derby County.

Then the nerves set in. What if we were rubbish? Poole Town were relegated from the SL Prem the previous season and were obviously looking to bounce straight back - Poole were second in the table while we were fourth, two points off the top but with two games in hand on leaders Waterlooville, and one point be-



**Jim Godfrey (right) takes the congratulations of Eddie Presland and Byrne after the opening goal**



hind Poole.

If we lost dismally, they'd probably never come again!

So imagine my joy when the full-time whistle blew at Lower Mead that late autumnal Saturday 50 years ago: Stones had turned in the best performance of the season and a lot of the football we played was reminiscent of the way England playmaker Francis and Terry Venables controlled the middle of the park for QPR. Our main men were Jim Godfrey and Paul Fairclough, who I recall spraying the ball wide to our wingers Terry Dyson and John Henderson. Fairclough, who went on to have a decent career in manage-

**Continued overpage**

**...and then denies the flying Bill Byrne**



**Magnificent top of table clash**

# 'Stones go second, it's push for promotion

By Phil Sugden

Wealdstone 2, Poole Town 0

WEALDSTONE moved into second place in the Southern League Division One South (South) table with a splendid and at times brilliantly contrived victory over promotion challengers Poole Town, and by so doing gave promise of things to come.

The top of the table now reveals an intriguing position. Waterlooville, beaten last week 2-0 by bottom club Bath, savaged Crawley 4-0 and remain top with 15 points from 12 games. Wealdstone are second with 15 from 10 fixtures, and Basingstoke are joint third with 14 points from 11 games.

All the numerical evidence suggests that 'Stones are at last in with a real chance of promotion. Certainly their football and the manner in which they disposed of the Derby County side suggests that they really can win promotion.

This was a true team performance. Everyone in Wealdstone's side played for everyone else. In defence the covering was probably the best I have seen them produce this season. They were much more positive in the middle of the park and always thrustful, hopeful and on the mark up front.

Fittingly, a magnificent game, watched by the biggest league gate of the season — in excess of 1,200 — produced the best football with hardly a foul worthy of the name and some splendid refereeing by our old friend Mr. A. S. Heselgrave, of Madstone, who as usual displayed a fine sense of humour coupled with a lot of good commonsense.

Really and truly, the result was rough justice for Wealdstone, for well as Poole's much vaunted side played — and it is a team which since last campaign has been considerably boosted by former league players of note — the Lower Mead lads always looked by far the better outfit.

If Wealdstone had scored five, no-one could have complained, as Poole officials agreed after the game. 'Stones were in rampant mood and if they can retain this form, particularly over the Christmas period — there are six hard games in December — I sincerely believe they will go up.

Somehow, in recent weeks, manager Sid Prosser has instilled a new sense of urgency and much more confidence. The boys are now playing the ball about apparently without fear of making mistakes.

Occasionally the watcher's heart comes into his mouth when short passes are made, but they are getting away with this gambit because everyone is watching and waiting for the half chance to gain possession.

Much confidence, I believe, has come with the return of Ray Fulton after injury. This so quick, young full back turns defence into attack in a flick of the eyebrow. He is not afraid to take on one or two men, beat them and push telling passes to Duck, Byrne or Henderson.

John McCormick has settled and had developed a good understanding with Kinneer, who to my mind does a tremendous job as a sweeper.

Godfrey is beginning to fulfill all his promise at midfield, Fairclough is coming back into his own and Dyson remains irreplaceable.

**JOY TO WATCH**

Bill Byrne, in and out of fate, looked much more like his old self on Saturday. He worked hard, linked up well with Duck and Henderson and some of his astute flicks were a joy to watch.

Poole owed much to Bill Dunbar, widely travelled in the Southern League but still an excellent goalkeeper. One lost count of the number of brilliant saves he made, coupled so often by swift and clever advances from his line. He was under fire for 75 per cent of the game but never lost his head.

He was under siege from the opening minutes when Byrne turned on a piece of sheer magic on the left to leave three defenders standing and send a searing cross-shot inches over.

Poole centre back Rawlins three times was forced to stop Byrne by unorthodox methods and from the third free-kick Dunbar had the crowd roaring with a superb save from a Duck thunderbolt shot.

Poole were not without their moments and their ever dangerous strikers, Ivan Hollett and Trevor Allen, left generally to plough through on their own, twice combined for Hollett to

test the reliable McCormick shots.

Duck ran beautifully. Byrne cross to Poole over the bar and then a majestic shot inches over a quick one-two between Duck and the harrowing Henderson.

McCormick made a good run expected runs to Dyson corner into Dunbar's clutching firm in a flurry of pre-half tacks both Byrne and Henderson cleared from the

A goalless first half poor reward for a Wealdstone which had played superb football.

**SPECIAL**

Wealdstone's resolute break-neck pace with sending a rocket free wide and Fairclough one of his specials to post for Dunbar to perform another miracle.

Poole took a hand at the end of the game sent McKenzie flying a fine and then David C executed a neat little shot wide with only Mc to beat.

Back came 'Stones' sweet movement between son and Fairclough, Duck, who shot low and fully passed the far post.

Midway through it Wealdstone got the goal richly deserved. Poole corner their seventh corner game and Jim Godfrey's jump magnificently Dyson's corner powered Dunbar.

From the restart Godfrey's luck again with shot which almost beat Dunbar but Poole, finished, hit back and McKenzie had his work cut out to Allen's shot.

Duck headed in but the goal was disallowed for pushing eventually Wealdstone's came when one of the point Presland free kick pushed home by Henderson with four minutes remaining.



# REWIND SPECIAL CONTINUED

ement (notably with Stevenage and currently as the England non-League team boss) blew hot and cold but he was on fire this afternoon as I looked on, relieved!

Me and my mates went our separate ways at full time, then along the Met Line to Northwood and Eastcote and me up the Bakerloo line to Hatch End and it wasn't until Monday that I received their verdict.

"Not bad for a team a few divisions below Rangers" they reckoned.

"Actually, the first goal was a really good header"

"I didn't think the crowd would be that big, I thought it would be more like watching Ruislip Manor" said another.

"You coming to the League Cup game tomorrow night Tim?" asked Derek. "Sheffield Wednesday will be a tough one, and you're our lucky omen".

Rangers hadn't lost any of the four games I'd seen that season, so I agreed to go.... and QPR won 8-2 with a display of devastating football!

My pals were on top of the world after four successive wins in the First Division topped by the mauling of Wednesday... but as the weeks went by, leading up to Christmas, Rangers' form dipped and they were begging me to go and watch their team again.

I refused to miss a Stones match but

December 22 saw us travelling to far-off Minehead with the Rs facing high-flying Newcastle. "I'll go if you all come to the Wealdstone games on Boxing Day and December 29" I told them, and the lads agreed.

Rangers duly beat Newcastle 3-2 and they kept their end of the bargain to boost the Lower Mead crowds to the 1,000 mark over Christmas 1973.

And they bloody enjoyed it! More on those games to come....

**Next up, on this weekend 50 years ago was Dunstable Town on November 10 for a long-forgotten FA Trophy Second Qualifying Round tie.**

The Southern League Div One North whipping boys were no match for the on-song Stones and Dyson, Fairclough and an own goal settled a straightforward win in front of a 987 crowd.

## ...then four games against Wimbledon in the Southern Cup..weren't we sick of them?!

Thanks to Wimbledon historian Stephen Crabtree we can illustrate the Stones' four-match series against the Dons in the SL Cup second round, which stretched from **October 16 to**

**November 28 1973.** The 'prize' for the victors was a trip to Grantham on a Wednesday afternoon in December, kick-off 2.30pm... to be honest we weren't too bothered!

Tues 16/10/73: SL Cup 814  
Wealdstone (0) 1 Duck 47  
Wimbledon (0) 1 Crosby 49

### GAME ONE

With flu victim McCready joining Loughlan, Rice and Marchant on the injury list, the Dons rode the luck to earn a Southern League Cup replay at Lower Mead. First Division Wealdstone, conquerors of Barnet by three clear goals in the previous round, dominated the last half hour after the sides had exchanged goals straight after the break.

Four times in the second half shots were kicked off the line or brilliantly saved by Dickie Guy as the visitors held on after an loan Aldershot man Malcolm Crosby had equalised George Duck's opener. Steve Langford and Ian Cooke made goal-line clearances and the goalkeeper pushed one header round the post and bravely took the ball of Duck's toe when he looked certain to score.

"Despite our injury problems we battled well and just about deserved the draw," Graham reckoned. "I hope it will be a different story when we get them back to Plough Lane." Guy, Stockley, Langford, Cooke, Crosby, Brown, Bloss, Lucas, Smith, Larkin, Gadston

Wealdstone 1, Wimbledon 1  
(Southern League Cup, Second Round)

IT was like a drunk staggering on the edge of a cliff—so close to smashing himself on the rocks and yet so mindless that he didn't have a care in the world.

Wimbledon were too besotted with injuries that if Wealdstone had put four goals past them it wouldn't have been less than they deserved.

To add to their cup of woe Dons had to take the field without Tommy McCready, Loughlan, out with torn knee and John Lynam.

This should have proved too much of them considering Selwyn Rice's protracted groin injury, Andy Marchant's broken leg, Joe Gadston's loss of form and Geoff Bryant's five months suspension.

The Dons limped in at half past the post. They Cooke came soon as the teams emerged after the break. Fulton knocked

in a free kick from the left, Byrne headed down and Duck blasted home.

Then the Dons equalised. Smith crossed, Dyson tried to control the ball and Crosby was through in pop in at the near post.

In a second they should have been knocked out of the cup. In fact the brave Langford saved them with a tremendous header off the goal-line from Byrne's shot which knocked Wealdstone pooled forward again and Guy poured all his

strength into pushing Duck's header past the post. Then Cooke came in to the rescue with another header to save—this time from Fairclough.

There didn't seem fit to be any more heart failures at the stroke of one. Duck was through—only for Guy to pinch the ball off his toe.

So the Dons survived a traumatic experience. Considered crushed Barnet 4-1 in the last round their makeshift side worked wonders.

With the old brigade hopeful, Guy back for the replay Wimbledon will probably cruise through—and leave Wealdstone kicking themselves for not doing the job properly on Tuesday.

Wimbledon: Guy, Stockley, Langford, Cooke, Crosby, Brown, Bloss, Lucas, Smith, Larkin, Gadston. Sub: Lawlor.

"Obviously it means some problems but I don't think we have too much on our plates at the present," chairman Beaven said when asked about a possible fixture pile up in the months ahead. "We would like to give the boys a rest, but we can't. That is the price of success."

With teenager Dave Lucas joining the club, Selwyn Rice back in training and John Loughlan ready to be close to fitness, the manager was soon to have a larger squad of players to choose from in busy weeks ahead.

Guy, Stockley, Langford, McCready, Brown, Bloss, Lucas, Smith, Cooke, Larkin, Moss

Tues 13/11/73: SL Cup 824

Wealdstone (1) 3 Duck, Byrne, Presland

Wimbledon (1) 3 Moss, Rice 85, McCready 89

Already facing a fixture pile up, the Dons produced the result they least wanted — another draw. With five minutes to go the visitors were 3-1 down only for Selwyn Rice, playing his first competitive game of the season, and the ever-reliable McCready to produce the goals that took the match into extra time. Having already played five and a half hours of football the two sides would now have to battle it out again.

WEALDSTONE 3 vs WIMBLEDON 3  
(Southern League Cup)

ANOTHER draw—and the way things are going Wimbledon and Wealdstone are destined for the Guinness Book of Records!

They have now been battling away in this Southern League Cup tie for 5½ hours and face a minimum of another 80 minutes in the next replay.

Yet with five minutes to go at Wealdstone on Tuesday the Dons were 3-1 down and facing, it seemed, inevitable defeat.

Then Selwyn Rice, playing his first competitive game of the season, pulled one back and in the dying seconds Tom McCready equalised.

Extra time produced stalemate soccer so the tie now goes to third replay, probably the week after next.

WIMBLEDON 2, WEALDSTONE 2  
(Southern League Cup, Second Round Replay)

AFTER 210 minutes Wimbledon and Wealdstone are still at it. The Dons failed to bring the week to a triumphant close because a skilful Wealdstone side refused to bow to the strength of their senior opponents.

A disappointing Tuesday evening crowd at Plough Lane just 897—saw the Dons threatened to whip Wealdstone off the map by a 2-0 lead.

But don't take anything away from Wealdstone—they played well, especially the big boys up front.

With ex-Spurs "double" Terry Dyson still knocking the ball around with clockwork precision the Dons were plenty of open space for the Wealdstone forwards to exploit.

Yet they managed to scrape together two extremely lucky goals both of equalise superb Wimbledon efforts.

Once again Tony McCready and Steve Langford played well though there were the occasional lapses—but man of the match was full back Alan Brown who as composed a game as you could see.

Wimbledon started the game at a gallop, full of confidence after their win over Maidstone and eager to get the game out of the way.

It took them only 10 minutes to go into the lead. Graham South beat his man on the edge of the box, sped to the line where he chipped a fine cross to the back of the area. Andy Larkin, not the world's greatest player at shooting straight, this time made no mistake and the ball hurt off his boot and into the net.

But with the show running so successfully something just had to go wrong—and it did. A magnificent maul in the Dons area, with every Wimbledon defender looking at each other, enabled old John McCormick to slide in Dyson's corner in

## GAME THREE

Tues 28/11/73: SL Cup 873  
Wimbledon (2) 3 Crosby 9, Stockley 29, Cooke 87  
Wealdstone (0) 0

After seven hours of football the Southern League Cup marathon was finally settled in Wimbledon's favour. A surprisingly one-sided game was effectively over by half time as goals from Crosby and Stockley put the Dons in control and with Langford giving a towering performance at the back the home goal was rarely threatened. Afterwards the manager praised the returning Selwyn Rice and Malcolm Crosby for providing the midfield platform that led to the victory.

Meanwhile Bobby Moss returned to Barnet. "He did not impress me enough to offer him a contract," Graham commented. "We will have to start looking for someone else." One man who was under consideration was Guildford's high scoring forward Tony Burge. "He would make a tremendous difference," Jack Beaven was quoted as saying before adding he would not be deterred by a transfer fee of several thousand of pounds.

The Chief Superintendent of the Norfolk Constabulary wrote to supporters' club secretary Ken Chaplin about the events at King's Lynn. "It would be remiss of me not to close by paying tribute to the attitude and behaviour of supporters from your club and the players and officials, who in my opinion were above reproach." Guy, Stockley, Langford, McCready, Loughlan, Crosby, Bloss, Rice, Lucas, Cooke, Smith

WIMBLEDON 2, WEALDSTONE 2  
(Southern League Cup, Second Round Replay)

MALCOLM CROSBY made an impressive return to the club on Wednesday with a well-earned half display that saw the Dons finally through their second round Southern League cup tie after seven hours' play.

The line the Dons made no didn't have anybody to tell him what was going on. They were too busy by the far post.

Twenty minutes later Crosby produced an own goal and a third hour of play was a third hour of confusion before the end.

Crosby's midfield aggression and vision made a vast difference to a Wimbledon side that had seemed like a convicted criminal.

Wimbledon kept up the pressure on the second half but had to wait until three minutes from the end before they scored again.

It was a fine performance after the disappointing loss to Lynn experience and the Dons then travelled to Grantham for their third round tie.

Other notable successes in the side were the amazing pairing of Steve Langford and Graham South, Langford who has lifted it all the back admirably, and one of the best games of the season.

When the time came for Geoff Bryant to press his claim it was going to be a difficult choice between him and Tommy McCready. Smith played admirably, however, but was completely out of a hand in front of the goal.

Steve Langford's corner was headed down by Crosby after he had made a run for it. McCready and the national man

**The four-game epic came to an end at Wimbledon on the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov 28 ...because of the fuel crisis caused by striking miners, floodlights were banned from earlier in the month making the organisation of games almost impossible!**

STEVE HOWARD



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 <b>WOKING</b> Tuesday 26th September Vanarama National League	<b>The Vale Social Club</b>
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 <b>BOREHAM WOOD</b> Saturday 21st October Vanarama National League	<b>Stuart Kane</b>
 <b>OXFORD CITY</b> Tuesday 24th October Vanarama National League	<b>Vinusan Padmarasa</b>
 <b>ROCHDALE</b> Saturday 11th November Vanarama National League	<b>Jim Kane</b>

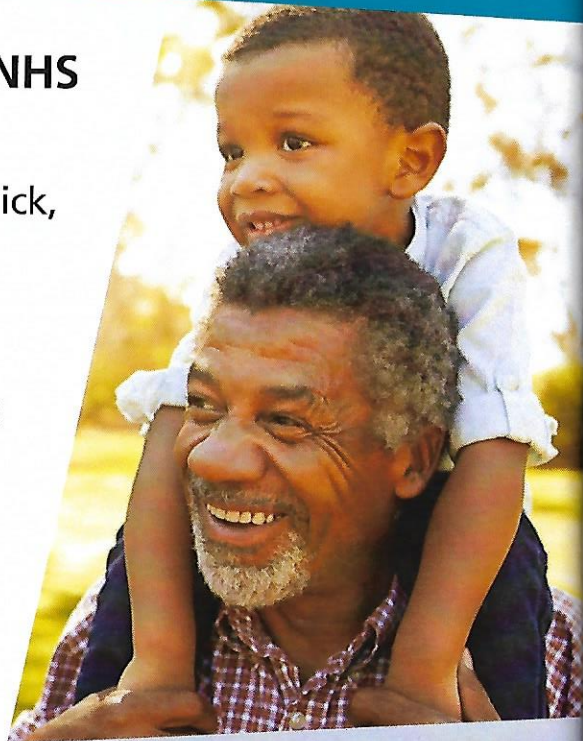
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 <b>FC HALIFAX TOWN</b> Saturday 27th January Vanarama National League	<b>Sponsor 1 Available</b>	<b>Sponsor 2 Available</b>
 <b>GATESHEAD</b> Saturday 17th February Vanarama National League	<b>Sponsor 1 Available</b>	<b>Sponsor 2 Available</b>
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 <b>EASTLEIGH</b> Saturday 9th March Vanarama National League	<b>In memory of Tony Drew</b>	<b>Sponsor 2 Available</b>
 <b>BROMLEY</b> Tuesday 12th March Vanarama National League	<b>Wealdstone FC Supporters Club</b>	<b>Sponsor 2 Available</b>
 <b>KIDDERMINSTER HARR.</b> Saturday 23rd March Vanarama National League	<b>David, Adam &amp; Guy Edwards - in Memory of Rowland Edwards</b>	
 <b>SOLIHULL MOORS</b> Monday 1st April Vanarama National League	<b>Terry Hissey</b>	<b>Sponsor 2 Available</b>
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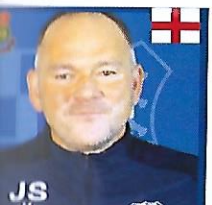
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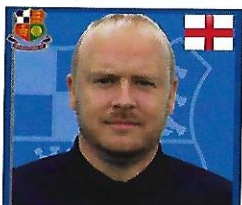
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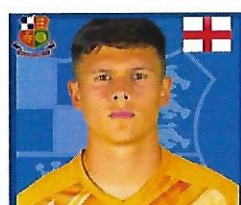
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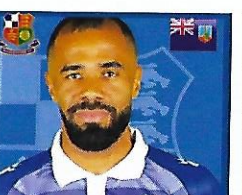
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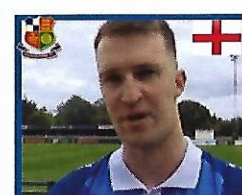
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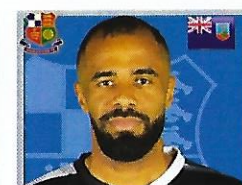
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Tuesday  
26th December  
3:00pm

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## VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE TABLE AS AT SUNDAY 6/11/2023

	ALL					HOME					AWAY					GD	PTS	RESULTS			
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D			L	F	A	(H)
1 Chesterfield	17	14	2	1	43	22	8	7	1	0	23	11	9	7	1	1	20	11	21	44	2-3
2 Barnet	18	13	3	2	38	22	9	7	2	0	19	9	9	6	1	2	19	13	16	42	
3 Bromley	18	10	5	3	28	18	9	7	1	1	19	8	9	3	4	2	9	10	10	35	1-1
4 Solihull Moors	18	9	7	2	27	19	9	4	4	1	14	8	9	5	3	1	13	11	8	34	0-1
5 Altrincham	17	7	8	2	31	23	8	3	4	1	16	10	9	4	4	1	15	13	8	29	0-0
6 Halifax Town	18	7	7	4	21	17	9	3	4	2	10	8	9	4	3	2	11	9	4	28	
7 Aldershot Town	18	8	3	7	32	32	9	5	3	1	23	15	9	3	0	6	9	17	0	27	1-3
8 Gateshead	17	7	5	5	36	25	9	4	2	3	17	15	8	3	3	2	19	10	11	26	1-2
9 Rochdale	18	6	6	6	31	29	9	2	3	4	16	16	9	4	3	2	15	13	2	24	
10 Oldham Athletic	18	5	8	5	26	27	9	3	4	2	16	9	9	2	4	3	10	18	-1	23	1-1
11 Eastleigh	18	6	5	7	27	31	9	4	3	2	18	16	9	2	2	5	9	15	-4	23	0-0
12 Woking	18	6	4	8	20	20	9	2	2	5	11	14	9	4	2	3	9	6	0	22	1-0
13 Dagenham & Redbridge	19	6	4	9	21	25	9	3	0	6	10	15	10	3	4	3	11	10	-4	22	0-2
14 Hartlepool United	18	7	1	10	29	34	9	5	0	4	15	14	9	2	1	6	14	20	-5	22	1-2
15 Southend United	18	9	4	5	34	18	9	7	0	2	23	6	9	2	4	3	11	12	+16	21	
16 Dorking Wanderers	18	6	3	9	21	27	10	3	2	5	13	16	8	3	1	4	8	11	-6	21	1-3
17 Wealdstone	18	5	5	8	20	25	9	5	3	1	13	9	9	0	2	7	7	16	-5	20	--
18 Boreham Wood	18	4	8	6	20	25	9	2	3	4	7	9	9	2	5	2	13	16	-5	20	1-1
19 Ebbsfleet United	18	5	2	11	23	34	9	4	0	5	13	9	9	1	2	6	10	25	-11	17	2-1
20 Fylde	18	4	4	10	28	36	9	2	3	4	14	17	9	2	1	6	14	19	-8	16	3-2
21 Maidenhead United	18	3	7	8	18	29	9	2	5	2	9	9	9	1	2	6	9	20	-11	16	
22 York City	18	3	7	8	25	37	9	1	5	3	15	17	9	2	2	5	10	20	-12	16	2-1
23 Oxford City	18	3	5	10	24	36	9	3	1	5	14	13	9	0	4	5	10	23	-12	14	3-1
24 Kidderminster Harriers	18	3	5	10	12	24	9	1	4	4	5	9	9	2	1	6	7	15	-12	14	0-1



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[FCHalifaxTown.com](http://FCHalifaxTown.com)



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7:45pm

[SouthendUnited.co.uk](http://SouthendUnited.co.uk)



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National League  
Saturday 16th  
December  
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