

# HOW THE TEAMS LINE UP TODAY

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**v Gateshead**  
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Saturday  
September 13  
kick off 3pm

## WEALDSTONE ROYAL BLUE/WHITE/BLUE



## ROCHDALE WHITE/BLACK STRIPES

- Dante-Astor BAPTISTE 1
- Jack COOK @ 2
- Anthony GEORGIU 3
- Omar MUSSA 4
- Deon WOODMAN 5
- Mason BARRETT 6
- Enzio BOLDEWIJN 7
- Dylan KADJI 8
- Max KRETZSCHMAR 10
- Sak HASSAN 11
- Endurance JOHNSON 13
- Micah OBIERO 14
- Phillip CHINEDU 15
- Moussa DIARRA 16
- Dom HUTCHINSON 17
- Christian SCOTT 18
- Daniel NKRUMAH 19
- Nathan TSHIKUNA 20
- Jeffrey SEKYERE 21
- Connor McAVOY 22
- Nathan YOUNG-COOBES 24
- Alfie MASSEY 25
- Marcus DAY 26
- Sean ADARKWA 27
- Lucas COVOLAN 28
- Junior TIENSIA 29

- 1 Oliver WHATMUFF
- 2 Kyron GORDON
- 3 David TUTONDA
- 4 Ryan EAST
- 5 Liam HOGAN
- 6 Ethan EBANKS-LANDELL @
- 7 Tarryn ALLARAKHIA
- 8 Harvey GILMOUR
- 9 Emmanuel DIERSUYWE
- 10 Devante RODNEY
- 11 Anthony GOMEZ-MANCINI
- 12 Levi AMANTCHI
- 14 Tobi ADEBAYO-ROWLING
- 16 Casey PETTIT
- 17 Joe PRITCHARD
- 18 Aidan BARLOW
- 19 Jake BURGER
- 20 Tom MYLES
- 21 Connor McBRIDE
- 22 Dan MOSS
- 23 Bryce HOSANNAH
- 24 Corey EDWARDS
- 27 Liam HUMBLE
- 33 Sam BECKWITH
- 40 Ian HENDERSON

RESULT: WEALDSTONE  ROCHDALE

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Wealdstone v Rochdale  
Sat Aug 30, 2025, 3pm



Inside: The Big Interview with Nathan Young Coombes



matchday programme £3

**SHARP SHOOTER TSHIKUNA!**  
A jubilant Nathan came off the bench to rifle in the late winner at Woking  
Pic: JON TAFFEL





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## written in stone



BY TIM PARKS

**OUR GLORIOUS four-wins-on-the-spin start was rudely interrupted by Carlisle and Boston United over the Bank Holiday.**

But those Stones fans who jubilantly chanted "We're Wealdstone FC, we're top of the league!" didn't really come down to earth with a bump as I thought we played as well in those defeats as in the wins over Truro, Wolves, Halifax and Woking.

How did we fail to score against Carlisle? Or then again at Boston where the stats of 64% possession and 17 shots on goal compared to the Pilgrims' 8 summed up our afternoon. 'Old School' Boston boss Graham Coughlan ripped into his players after their defeat at Eastleigh on the Saturday - and he certainly got a reaction from his players with a gritty

### WRONG ENDERS!

Former Stones alumni Johnny Wright (ex-striker, top) and ex-kitman Tony Waugh (right) were pictured skulking in with the away fans at the Carlisle game. Both speak with funny accents so I suppose that it's understandable. Or not, if you know what I mean. Pictures by JON TAFFEL



Congratulations Hughie! The Stones' former England and Great Britain amateur international Hughie Lindsay celebrated his 87th birthday at the Carlisle game...and rather fittingly, the Boston United programme last Monday included him in their feature on all-time WFC goalscorers (above)

## Undeserved defeats that stylish Stones found hard to swallow

performance. After Micah Obiero's wonderful header from an equally wonderful Phillip Chinedu cross levelled it up at 1-1, however, he admitted that he thought his side would be blown away. Yet we failed to deal with a late set-piece and, remarkably, were heading home empty-handed. It was a similar gut-wrenching feeling to the aftermath of the Carlisle game which could also

have swung either way. A terrific home crowd of 2,025 (including Cumbrians) clapped both teams off at the end.

Today we face another much-fancied side, Rochdale, and with Southend United to follow next. Tuesday it's far from a comfortable ride!

But this is the perfect time for Sam Cox's new-look

### HUGH LINDSAY

England Amateur International Hugh Lindsay featured in Wealdstone's 1966 Amateur Cup final success. He trained as a teacher at London University and had a brief spell at Wealdstone in April 1958 before moving to Kingstonian. Appearing in the 1960 Amateur Cup final, he joined Southampton shortly before representing Great Britain in the 1960 Olympic Games. He rejoined Wealdstone in July 1962 and won 29 England Amateur caps. Possessing a ferocious shot, he netted 174 goals in 329 games prior to joining Hampton in August 1969. Later coaching back at Kingstonian and Hampton, he became a lecturer at the Richmond upon Thames College.



side to put down a marker and surge back up the table.

● A big thanks this afternoon to our match sponsors, *Clear Insurance Management*, and ball donor *Mark Snell* who is a serial contributor!

● And on that subject, the Supporters Club last week handed over a magnificent £15,000 cheque to the football club, largely from the brilliantly-operated Fan Zone initiative at The Vale. WFCSC's James Klarfeld is pictured (below, right) with the club's Financial Director Dominic Whyley.

**See you all on Tuesday and UTS!**



# WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2025/2026

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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:
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  - Entering the field of play before, during or after a game without prior authorisation
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  - 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
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- 4) Vehicles parked on the Grosvenor Vale site are at the owners' risk.
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**WELCOME to the Vale and I want to start by saying that your support has been absolutely fantastic across the first five National League games of this season ...both towards me and the whole playing squad.**

The message off the pitch has been very positive in general and so I must say a big 'Thank You' to all the fans. And how very disappointed I was not to come away with any points over the Bank-Holiday weekend.

Against Carlisle the boys put up a brave performance against one of the league favourites. I think Carlisle were professional in every area and come the season's end they will be up around the top of the table. They have really good players, great quality but we also created an awful lot and were unlucky not to come away with a point.

Against Boston you only have to look at the stats - I think it was 21 attempts on goal and 64 % possession - so we were really disappointed not to come away with a victory on the road... and I think that shows the progress we have made as a collective, that we are looking to go to these places, even away from home up against some of the league favourites and still try to take all three points.

We would have taken a draw and we really got into the game at 1-1 with that fantastic move down the left and the great cross from Phillip Chinedu, perfectly executed by the head of Micah Obiero. I thought there was only one team to go on and win the game after that - but disappointingly we then conceded from a set piece which was hugely frustrating.

So from the performances across the five games I think there were a lot of positives but it won't happen overnight... we had that great start, with four wins on the bounce including the National League Cup but it's

# Gaffer's column

SAM COX

still a work in progress. The boys are getting to know each other better with that camaraderie and team-building improving, both on and off the pitch. **And so we go into today's game with Rochdale, one of the title favourites who were unlucky not to go up last season through the play-offs. This year, in my eyes, they will no doubt be the best footballing team in the division.**

We are in for a really good

game of football, with both sides wanting to play in an attractive, possession-based way and both trying to dominate the game. It will be a real tactical encounter.

Their gaffer James McNulty is someone I really admire for the way he has got the Dale playing with such style.

We'll just have to make sure that we're heavily tooled-up after such a tough schedule and can effectively rotate the players to make sure we utilise the whole squad.

To be honest, I'm really looking forward to it as it will be a huge test for us.

**Enjoy the game and God bless you all**  
-Coxy

**'I'm really looking forward to today's game because I believe Rochdale are the best footballing side in the division**



# Taking it to the

M<sub>3</sub> A<sub>1</sub> X<sub>8</sub>

By Max Kretzschmar

**HELLO everyone, and welcome back (again!) to the Vale. Today will be another tough game against Rochdale, who I fully expect to be in the promotion picture this season.**

They play a good brand of football and have brought in some tried and tested players at this level, which makes them an even stronger side.

Looking back at the past week, we've had two frustrating results. Against Carlisle I felt we performed well overall. When involved in the thick of it, I felt they were a proper League One or League Two outfit — physically strong, well-organised in defence, risk-averse in possession and able to press us very effectively in the first half.

They got their goal from a corner (which is frustrating because it's an area we fancy ourselves this season with our height in the team), but I thought we grew into the game. In the second half we really pushed on, and despite losing some headway midway through, we were knocking on the door in the closing stages.

Unfortunately, we just couldn't find the breakthrough our play deserved and Carlisle returned home with the three points.

**Then, just 45 hours later, we were back in action at Boston United.**

We dominated the game from start to finish, so

to concede two sloppy goals was very frustrating. One came from losing possession close to our own goal, and the other from another set piece. We know playing out from the back is our philosophy, and we won't compromise that, but we do need to be a bit more alert with our concentration and decision-making in those situations - weighing up the risks and rewards carefully in every moment of the game.

**Stick with us.... We can feel the pride you show despite defeats**

At the other end of the pitch, we had more than enough penalty-box action and goal-line scrambles to have scored more than once, so to come away with just one goal was a grave disappointment. Still, the performances are there and if we maintain those standards the points will follow I'm sure.

That said, back-to-back defeats mean it's only been a steady start so far now, so it's important that we get back to winning ways today.

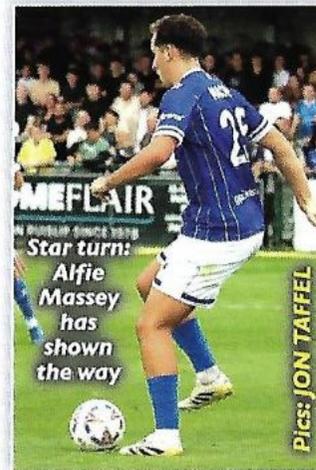
Across pre-season and the opening five games in our National League campaign, we've shown we can play at a high level for long spells — now it's up to us to turn those performances into points again. Stick with us. We can feel the positivity and pride you've had in us despite our last two defeats.

The bare minimum for us players is to work our socks off and play an attractive brand of football which will keep punters coming back for more

and getting the new generation of fans (which is growing) excited! **Come on you Stones!**



**Frustration: Luke Armstrong (29) heads the Carlisle winner**



**Star turn: Alfie Massey has shown the way**

**Pics: JON TAFFEL**

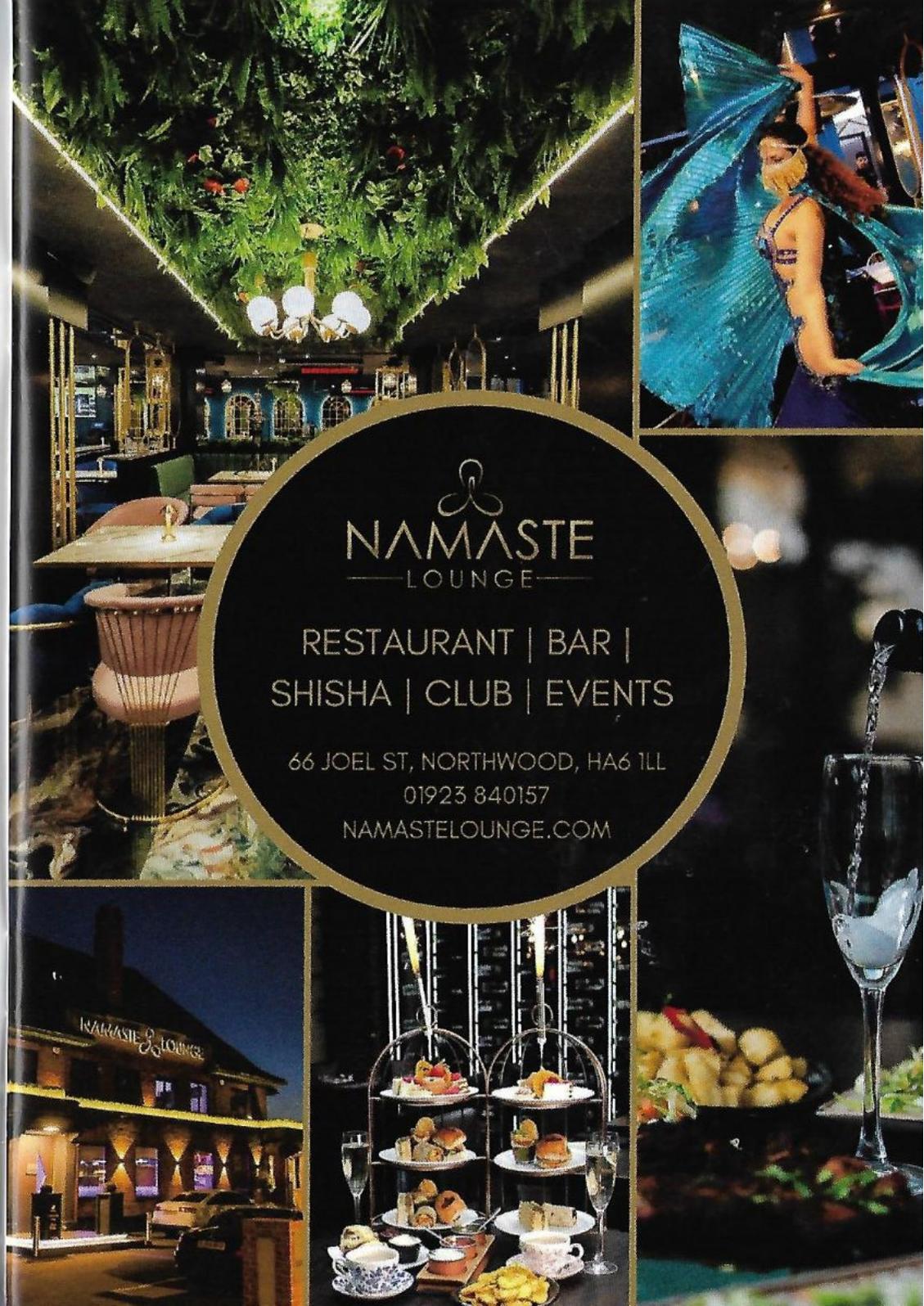
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©Elmslie Ender was among the first wave of football club magazines when it replaced 'Long Ball Down the Middle' as the Wealdstone fanzine in the mid-1980s. LBDTM's forerunner 'Wealdstone Whispers' was famously THE very first football fanzine in Britain when it was published in 1971. Another slice of history for our ground-breaking club!

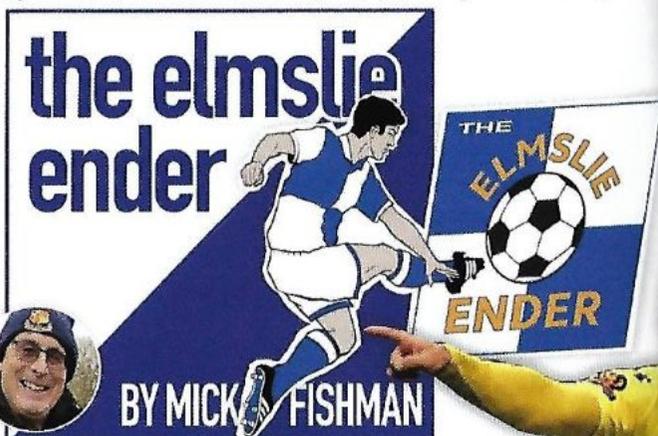
**T**arryn Allaraka will almost certainly be lining up for Rochdale today. But will the talented winger come back to haunt us?

For football fans one of the golden rules, or perhaps expectations, is that ex-players return with their new clubs and stick it to them by scoring a goal or goals, running the midfield or putting in a colossal defensive display. It always happens, doesn't it?

Or does it? I thought I would consult an unimpeachable source of information (my memory) to try and establish if that has been the case with us at Wealdstone.

In my view Tarryn was one of Stuart Maynard's shrewdest signings. We had seen him briefly on loan back in Bobby's time and he looked very promising. Then he was in and out of the Crawley and Woking sides but when Stuart signed and gave him the left-wing berth to do his thing, he matured into an important member of the team. I think it's fair to say that, when he moved to Rochdale, he had become popular among the fans, and he went with our regrets and best wishes. He scored for the Dale in their 4-1 victory over the Stones at Spotland last season but was thankfully largely anonymous in the return fixture at The Vale, which we won 2-0. But we know how deadly he can be and he's started the new season in sparkling, goalscoring form.

So who were the others who have returned to face the Stones, and twisted the knife? The first player that springs to mind (for me) is **John Connell**. You would need to be a bit of an old fart to have seen Connell play since we are mostly talking about the 1960s. For two or three years he formed part of a lethal front



## Our ex-stars always come back to haunt us... is it fact or just a footballing myth?

trio for Finchley with Jim Cooley and Les Eason. We snaffled Connell for our first season in the Isthmian League fully expecting him to hammer in bundles of goals. He managed 12 from 35 games. Of course when he left us to join the odious Enfield, the impish little Irishman couldn't stop scoring especially in games against the Stones. He re-joined us for the start of the 1969/70 season, stayed four games and then hot-footed it back to Enfield where he effort-

lessly picked up his goalscoring exploits. He left Enfield and joined Slough Town where he top scored and then joined Hendon to help them win the FA Amateur Cup in 1972. Would you believe he returned to Lower Mead for a 3rd time early in the 1972/73 season and managed just 4 goals in 15 games before deciding enough was enough.

Another player from the dim and distant amateur days was a skilful young right winger called **Peter Anderson**. He broke into our first team as a 17-year-old in November 1967 and retained the No 7 shirt for the remainder of the season.

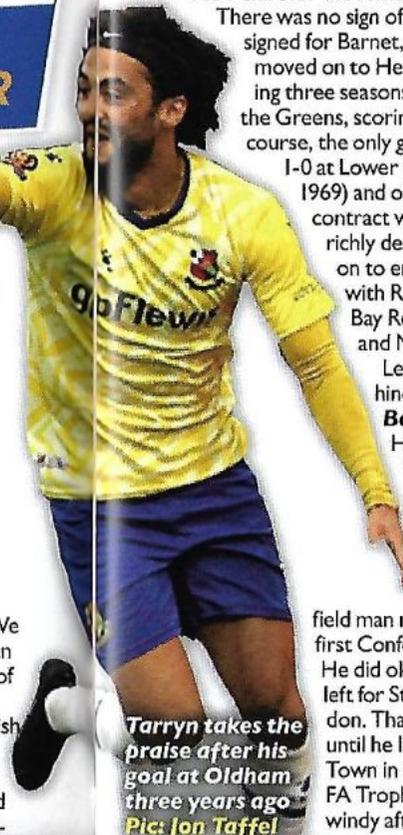
There was no sign of him after that as he signed for Barnet, stayed one season and moved on to Hendon. Over the following three seasons he played 83 games for the Greens, scoring 35 goals (including, of course, the only goal when Hendon won 1-0 at Lower Mead at Christmas 1969) and obtaining a professional contract with Luton Town. It was richly deserved. Anderson went on to enjoy a terrific career with Royal Antwerp, Tampa Bay Rowdies, Sheffield United and Millwall.

Leaving pre-history behind, our old friend **Matt Ball** deserves a mention.

Having scored two "worldies" against us for Farnborough in a 2-1 defeat, Gordon Bartlett appeared to pull off a bit of a coup by signing the mid-

field man midway through our first Conference South season. He did okay, but after two years left for St Albans and then Hendon. That was all pretty innocent until he lined up for Biggleswade Town in November 2018 in the FA Trophy. On a filthy, wet, windy afternoon, the Stones put

**Tarryn takes the praise after his goal at Oldham three years ago**  
Pic: Jon Taffel



in a dreadful, lacklustre performance and lost 2-1, with one of the goals being scored by Matt Ball who celebrated long and hard in front of our disgruntled and drenched supporters. For a while he was deservedly public enemy No 1.

Fast forward to our covid-interrupted but title winning 2019/20 season and one of our ex-forwards, **Elliott Benyon**, did his best to derail our promotion charge with a stunning individual goal for Oxford City. It deserved proper celebration but Elliott had the good grace not to taunt our fans and did not end up becoming a short-term pantomime villain.

Sadly, our 2 greatest goalscorers deserve a shout. The greatest of all, **George Duck**, formed a part of the only Harrow Borough team of note, the very good one that carried off the Isthmian league title in 1982 (and then turned down promotion to join us in the Conference). That was the season we won everything the Southern League had on offer, and when the Borough visited Lower Mead in the FA Cup there was every expectation we would put them to the sword. They murdered us. A booming David Howell header and a George brace (one header, and one a brilliant finish after rounding our keeper Ray Goddard) helped take us to the cleaners, 4-1. Even the 4th goal was scored by ex-Stone **David Pearce!** We faced up them again that season in the FA Trophy and won the replay, 4-0, but the next season we faced Borough in the Final of the Middlesex Senior Cup and lost 2-0 with the great George netting another sharp goal.

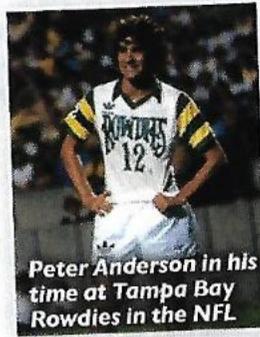
Our other great goalscorer in history, **Richard Jolly**, also played his role in returning to haunt us. The 2009/10 season had seen the Stones enjoying a fine, if exhausting, run that had taken them to the cusp of a promotion play-off place. The final game was against Carshalton Athletic who, despite having a team packed with top players for the standard, had struggled for much of the season and needed a win to save themselves from relegation.

The front pairing of Byron Harrison and Jolls took the game away from the Stones by scoring four times in the first half hour. Jolls scored one and assisted in another for Harrison to complete his hat-trick. As the players left the field at the end of the game I congratulated Jolls with the bitter words, "Well played Jolls you little b\*\*\*\*\*d." Bless him, he looked sheepish and mouthed, "Thanks. Sorry."

So, is it reality that ex-players usually return to haunt their previous employers? I think probably not. Most likely it stems from a fear that they will and the fact that, on the rare occasion that they do so, it sticks in the minds of supporters to the point of forming a permanent scar.

So, here's a question for you: How much are you looking forward to 28th February when **Alex Reid** returns to The Vale wearing the shirt of his new employers, Hartlepool United? His goals saved us from the drop last season but am I looking forward to seeing him turn out for Pools against us? Very much, not!

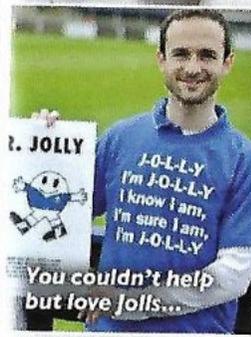
**George Duck (far right) celebrates a Wealdstone goal but he definitely slapped us in the face in 1981 and 1983 for Harrow Borough. Grrrr!**



**Peter Anderson in his time at Tampa Bay Rowdies in the NFL**



**Matt Ball (left) in the horror show at Biggleswade**



**...and Alex Reid**



**...and Alex Reid**

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# the stones interview

It's Nathan Young-Coombes

TODAY the spotlight turns on 22-year-old striker Nathan Young-Coombes, the former Brentford B and AFC Wimbledon hot-shot who who signed a short-term deal on the cusp of the new season.

A hamstring injury inside 20 minutes of his full Stones debut, against Wolves, sidelines Nathan today but he reckons he'll be back in contention in the next couple of weeks...

**Whereabouts were you born and brought up, Nathan?** I was born in Sutton and grew up just outside of Croydon, SE London.

**Do your family still live in that area?**

Yes, moved houses a fair few times but still in that local area.

**Do you have any relatives who have played the game, to any level?**

Yeah, I have an older cousin, Adam Coombes who has played in the EFL, and even had a couple of games for Wealdstone I believe.

**Have you always played primarily as striker, back to your youth team days at Crystal Palace, Chelsea and Rangers?**

Yes always been a number 9, too busy focusing on scoring goals to be anything else.

**Do you support a football team? Either now or as a kid?** Not particularly, I enjoy watching it but never supported anyone.

**Who has been the most important figure in your football career so far?** Just my family and

# 'I was out for almost a year so really it's just about enjoying playing...it's been tough but I'm getting fitter and fitter and soon the goals will start to flow'



friends, been a long and tough journey but their support keeps me going.

**Do you know very much about Wealdstone FC and its rich history?** Not as much, but fans have told me all about it since I have joined.

**What do you think are your main strengths, and does Sam**

**Cox envisage you playing up front in a two?**

I'm a number 9 who tends to always be in the right place at the right time, pressing and running in behind. The gaffer has his ways of playing and the boys are fully committed to it, and in the first couple of games we've come away with big wins so if I'm honest I'll leave the tactics to him, and however he chooses it we'll execute the plan.



NYC is pictured in pre-season for the Stones and (inset below, left and right) for Brentford and AFC Wimbledon for whom he scored three times in 11 EFL games  
Pics: Jon Taffel

**Have you known any of the Stones players before signing?**

Apart from my cousin Adam, I knew Dom Hutchinson through a couple of people I've played with before, but other than that not particularly.

**How short is your deal at Wealdstone?**

I've been out injured for a long time, so my deal is only a month long so just have to wait and see after what happens.

**Did you play at all last season? Is the hamstring injury serious?** No, it isn't serious and I should be back up and running in the next couple of weeks. I've actually never had any muscle injuries, but I've been out for a long time so niggles are bound to happen... it's just about easing myself back into it all

again. I unfortunately didn't play at all last season, after sustaining multiple dislocations on my shoulder throughout the previous season, and I ended up getting surgery in April last year. However, three months after my rehab I kept on getting persistent pain and found out that I had an infection from the surgery - and needed another surgery to wash out the bacteria.

And unfortunately that wasn't the end of it as I was still getting pain, and ended up getting a third surgery in February which uncovered that my nerves had been intertwined with the scar tissue from the previous surgeries!

Sadly, Brentford weren't any help and I had to find my own strength and conditioning coaches along with finding my own physio - so it's been a long ride, but through the strength of God and my family I got there in the end and I'm now ready to get back to it.

**What have been the three highlights of your career so far?** Playing for Rangers; making my Premier League debut for Brentford (off the bench at Southampton); and scoring my first goal on loan for AFC Wimbledon in League Two.

**Why was your time with Brentford B so productive.. 28 goals one season?** I got along very well with the staff, and they had a key role in highlighting areas to focus on. We played to my strengths and reaped the rewards.

**Did you ever think you'd break into the Brentford Premier League team?**

It was always going to be very difficult with the quality we had at the time with Ivan Toney, Brian Mbuemo and Yoanne Wissa. For Brentford it was obviously the club's first season in the Premier League, and I definitely needed to go out on loan and gain experience - but I fell out of favour towards my last year contracted there.

**Was your ankle injury a real setback?**

I suffered an ankle injury a month before I was supposed to be going out on loan so it definitely disrupted my progress, but these things happen in football.

**Did you enjoy your loan spell at AFC Wimbledon?**

I loved my time at Wimbledon - as a club we were going through a tough time but the fans were probably the best part of it, my first experience of men's football, and the supporters really welcomed me and that's probably the reason why my performances were so good. You get a real

CONTINUED OVERPAGE >>>

# the big stones interview continued

## FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

energy from them. The boys were tip-top as well, and I definitely enjoyed my time whilst I was there

**Who are the all-time best players you've played alongside?**

**And against?** I've been fortunate enough to have been able to play with and against some real players. The list would never end, but when I was younger Bukayo Saka was far by the best I've played against when I was at Crystal Palace, and probably alongside Ivan Toney for Brentford.

**What is the best goal you've ever scored? And describe it!**

Probably the best goal I've ever scored was when I was at Rangers in an u-18s Youth Cup Final final match against Celtic. It was just a flick-on header from a free kick, but because it was against them made it a whole lot better!

**What is your favourite restaurant and fave meal?** I'm basic, nothing beats a good steak.

**What's the best holiday you've been on?**

When I went to Cancun in Mexico. Best holiday ever... it had me wanting to sign for teams in Mexico!

**What's playing on your airpod at the mo-**



The unfortunate NYC limps away from the action in the Wolves National Lge Cup game

**ment? Gunna's new album! What's your feeling about the club and the squad that Sam is assembling at the moment?**

I've only been here a month but it's been good. The Gaffer and his team have their way of playing, keeping the ball with a lot of rotations. It's an exciting brand of football and I don't think many teams will be able to compete with it. We're three wins from three in all competitions at the time of writing this, and it's it hard for oppositions to come here and take points off us. We've got a lot of good players in the squad: definitely an exciting time ahead.

**Is your intention to get back into the EFL, or is it more about enjoying your football?**

As I've previously stated I've been out for over a year now, so really it's just about enjoying the game again. It's been tough to get back to this stage but within time I'll be getting fitter and fitter...then the goals should follow. That's all I am focused on right now.

Interview: Tim Parks

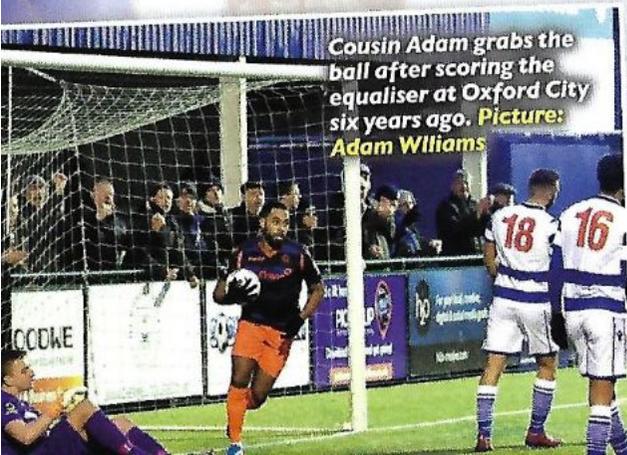
## Remember Nathan's cousin Adam?

ADAM COOMBES, Nathan's 34-year-old cousin now plays for Cray Valley Paper Mills in the Isthmian Premier Division after a long and distinguished career that did, indeed, include four games on loan for the Stones from Welling United at the turn of the

year in 2019-20. He made his debut in the 1-0 home win over St Albans City on December 30 and scored his solitary goal in the 3-2 defeat at Oxford City a week later, when he came on for Ross Lafayette with 20 minutes to go. His header brought

the scores back to 2-2 but Oxford were also strong in the air and headed a winner in the dying moments.

This wobble didn't stop the Stones from winning the National League South on points-per-game when the season was prematurely ended by the Covid pandemic. I wonder if Adam was rewarded with a medal from that campaign? Like Nathan, he was in Chelsea's academy but his main claim to fame came after signing for Notts County in August 2013. On Aug 27th he scored the equalising goal - with his first touch - after coming on as a substitute against Liverpool in a 4-2 defeat at Anfield in the League Cup.



Cousin Adam grabs the ball after scoring the equaliser at Oxford City six years ago. Picture: Adam Williams

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# stones fan in the stand

Alex  
Laidman

**Your name and age?** Alexander Laidman, aged 47.

**Whereabouts do you live, Alex?**

I currently live in North Finchley although I grew up at Grosvenor Vale in Rosebery Vale, the current home of the mighty Stones.

**Have you always lived in that area?**

I have lived in Finchley since November 2010, although I grew up watching Ruislip Manor as a young boy.

**When was your first Stones game?**

My first game was actually the last-ever game at Lower Mead on 25/4/1991 against Cambridge City. My memories, at just 13, were ones of sadness but also love and an affiliation to the Stones as my dad had brought me to the match. I remember being excited at the prospect of going to a stadium to watch a new local team, having already been to Arsenal with my dad as well as my local team Ruislip Manor. So now coming to see Wealdstone again is an absolute pleasure.

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

Ones of sadness as I said... as a child you don't sometimes fully understand why and how it's going to affect the entire infrastructure of the club and its supporters. You just hope the club can pull through.

**What was the first football match you ever saw live? Or on TV?** That was Arsenal v Wimbledon in 1986/87, Arsenal winning 3-0 at the old High-



Alex is pictured with some iconic front covers of *The Gooner*, which he sold and wrote articles for

## Prem football is now just one franchise... here, it is exciting

bury. The first match I watched live on TV was the 1986 World Cup quarter final between Argentina and England with the infamous *Hand of God* goal from Maradona, as well as his brilliant individual goal which was really something to behold... the world's best showing the rest of the world how it's done.

**Do you follow any other team?** Yes, I follow Arsenal both home and away and have done since a little boy and I occasionally see both Watford and Brentford as well.

**Tell us about your involvement with *The Gooner* magazine and how much commitment that takes?** I've been involved with *The Gooner* since August 2000, ahead of the 2000/2001 season when Arsenal played Leeds United. I started enquiring about selling the magazine and it's gone

from strength to strength. I've also written several articles in *The Gooner* and *Gunflash* over the course of a number of years in a style similar to *Elmslie Ender* which of course is still a regular feature in the Stones' match day publication. I've sold the magazines at away games and also on an aeroplane... fans responded with chants of "You've only come to sell *The Gooner*"! ... and also on a train to Eindhoven on a European trip: "You've only come to make a fiver!"



Alex's first game was the last at Lower Mead: Stones' Tony Kelly goes round the Cambridge keeper at the Elmslie End for the opening goal in the 1-1 draw

Over the years though I've managed to meet so many supporters from different backgrounds and ages but the fanzine tends to be geared nowadays towards a very niche market in terms of clients who purchase it on a monthly or a weekly basis.

**How does Arsenal compare with the Wealdstone Experience?** I would say Arsenal is becoming less of an interest. The Prem is now becoming less appealing to me than the National league as the Prem nowadays is just one huge cash cow for

tycoon billionaires. In a way it's just one huge corporate franchise. Where as with Wealdstone this is an exciting and completely different experience: the club is welcoming and encouraging the working man and woman through the turnstiles and into the club and the club shop on a weekly basis. That's why more punters are snubbing the Prem for non league football at every available opportunity for the factors of cost, convenience and value for money.

## huge corporate and affordable

The Premier league is heading towards a lucrative Super League and the average fan is being priced out of the game. And Prem clubs are doing very little to combat this - the younger generation are just being taken for granted and the clubs will regret it.

**What's the most memorable game you've EVER seen?** It must be the Liverpool v Arsenal

championship decider at Anfield in May 1989. For Roy of the Rovers drama this had absolutely everything and will live with me for the rest of my life!

**And the best Wealdstone game?** My best-ever Stones game was the final match of last season when we beat Halifax 3-1 to retain our National league status. The day was gripping from start to finish: Drama, emotion, atmosphere, jubilation and relief.

**How big a part of your life is the game?** The game is a massive part of my life and I live for Saturdays and the upcoming matches with a zest - and with Wealdstone now embarking on a new era under the tutorship of Sam Cox surely exciting times are ahead for the club.

**Do you have other hobbies?** Yes, I'm also a big cricket lover attending matches all over the country when time permits. I also enjoy tennis, snooker and rugby and outside sport I love music, tropical fish and animals... I have a three-and-a-half year-old cockapoo called Elton who is my world.

**How do you fit watching football in with your family/working life?** I live on top of work in North Finchley and I try and I try and juggle as much as I can to make it work, although I have to admit at times it can be very full on.

**Who are the best Wealdstone players you've ever seen?** Think there are several obvious choices like Stuart Pearce and Vinnie Jones who have to be up there... and the modern-day heroes like Max Kretz, Jack Cook, Alex Dyer and Jermaine Beckford who have all been involved in some special moments.

**Where do you think the Stones will be in five years?** I see Wealdstone in a good position as now they are entering their 6th consecutive season in the NL gaining so much vital experience along the journey. And gaining more support and a bigger following.

**...And how do you see the future of the written publication?** I think written publications can most definitely survive - even in this digital world - with the hard work and dedication and input from guys like the prog team at the Stones, and me for *The Gooner*, putting ourselves out to keep alive an institution for the older supporters.



Mountbatten View, recently completed in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire



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### The Role of Stretching

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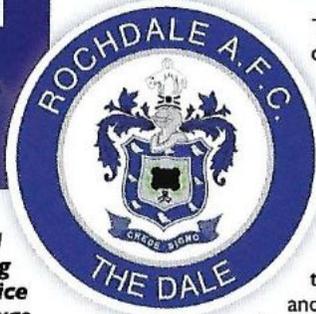
**Rochdale Association Football Club was founded in 1907 following a meeting at the Central Council Office in Fleece Street. The club was accepted to the Manchester League a fortnight after its formation and joined the Lancashire Combination a year later. Two previous attempts had been made to launch an Association Football Club in the town, but Rochdale AFC as we know it was officially launched in 1907.**

After gaining admittance into the Lancashire Combination the club won the competition in 1911. This led to an application being lodged with The Football League. Herbert Hopkinson, probably indignant that Dale received the support of just one club, called for the powers that be to expand their numbers and create a Third Division. His proposal was considered but scuppered by countless objections.

The club's next application to join the game's elite came in March 1919. The League had decided to expand following World War One and six places were available. While Rochdale gathered more votes than they had attracted on their previous effort – for the record seven clubs were in favour – they were still some way behind those chosen. There was some controversy regarding the decision as admittance did not seem to have been based on performance. All the clubs selected had poorer League records than Rochdale. This latest rebuff led some to call for the winding up of the club.

Nine years after Herbert Hopkinson's brainchild of a Third Division, it was finally adopted in 1920. Unfortunately Southern League clubs pushed it through and as a consequence took all the places made available. The notion of allowing Northern and Midlands clubs to form an equivalent division was set to take place a year later. Dale were one of 14 clubs recommended by the Football League Management Committee for acceptance without a vote. Thankfully the proposal was rubber stamped.

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ROCHDALE AFC,



The first ever Football League opposition came in the shape of Accrington Stanley. That game took place on 27th August 1921 with the game finishing 6-3 in favour of Rochdale. It took a little longer to obtain our first away win; almost six months to be precise but it came at Lincoln City courtesy of an own goal.

Despite the good start to the season the club still finished bottom of the league and so had to reapply for membership.

Survival was granted on that occasion and Dale picked-up over the next few years, actually finishing runners-up to Wolves in 1923/24.

The Football League decided to scrap its regional structure and create four national divisions in 1958 and Rochdale were desperate to avoid being placed in the new Fourth Division. Season 1957/58 saw Dale feature in the promotion race until a backlog of fixtures scuppered their chances of going up. However, a tenth-place finish was good enough to secure a place in the new-style Third Division. Goal average was the deciding factor on who was placed above and below the lucky line.

Dale didn't last long in the restructured Division Three and were relegated after just one season, finishing bottom of the league. The club remained in the League's bottom division for a further decade.

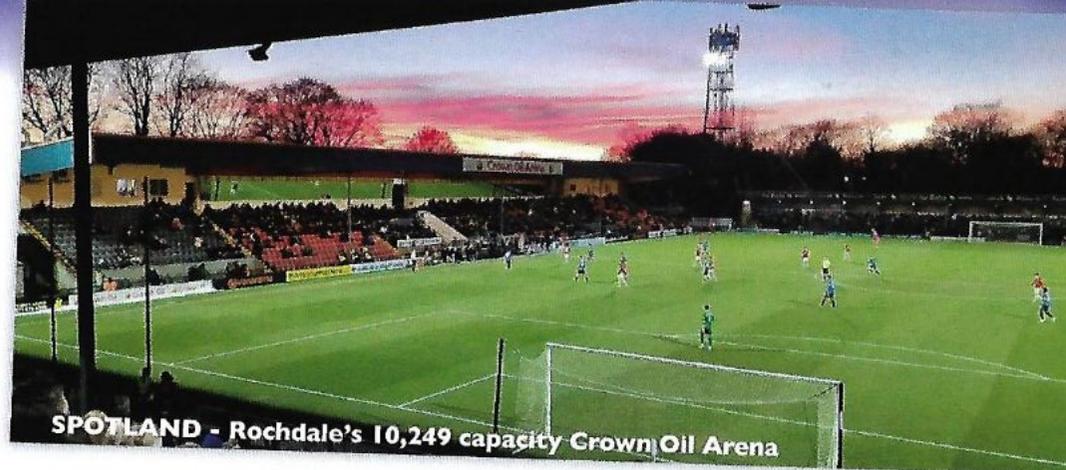
During the 1961/62 season Rochdale reached the final of the League Cup before losing to Norwich City over two legs. On the way they beat Southampton, Doncaster Rovers, Charlton Athletic, York City and Blackburn Rovers.

It wasn't until the 1968/69 season that Dale fans tasted success again, but this time it was the ultimate dream as the club won promotion for the first and only time in its history.

The team this time lasted five seasons in Division Three before relegation at the end of the 1973/74 season. Just two games were won all season and crowds dropped into three figures on more than one occasion.

Dark days followed at Spotland as Rochdale failed to even finish in the top half of the league's basement division for 14 years. Attendances were poor, as you'd imagine, and financial hardship hit home on more than one occasion. The only real highlight from this dark era was when Steve Taylor won the Adidas Golden Boot in 1986 with 25 goals in 45 matches in what was a poor Dale side.

The club was thrown into turmoil in the mid-80s



SPOTLAND - Rochdale's 10,249 capacity Crown Oil Arena

when comedian Tommy Cannon (of Cannon & Ball fame), portrayed as the club's saviour initially, allegedly caused controversy and uproar in the town when the new look Board of Directors made a series of decisions deemed not in the best interests of the club. After much financial wrangling they were replaced by the previous Board of Directors who saved the club from meltdown.

The club's finances were boosted during the 1989/90 season when Terry Dolan's men reached the Fifth Round of the FA Cup for the first time, the additional prize money and gate revenue helping the club to pay off a large amount of its debts.

The rest of the 90s didn't quite reach the same height but they did record the highest league finish for 26 years in May 2001 when they came 8th.

Bookmakers made Dale odds-on favourites for relegation in 2004/05 but finished in a creditable ninth place.

In the 2006/07 Dale never really got a good run of results going and it was no surprise when Parkin and his assistant Tony Ford left Spotland by mutual consent in December.

Youth team manager Keith Hill took over in a caretaker capacity, but did such a good job that he was offered the full-time position until the end of the season. They eventually finished in ninth place.

In 2007/08, the club's Centenary Year, Rochdale enjoyed arguably their best ever season to date, apart from 1968/69.

Dale were so good on the road, setting a club record of 14 away games without defeat and qualified for the play-offs with little trouble.

They lost 2-1 at Darlington in the first leg of the semi-final. However, on an afternoon of high drama, the match went to penalties after a 2-1 win to the Dale. Both teams scored their first four spot-kicks, before Darlington missed. Ben Muirhead rifled home Dale's fifth to send Spotland into ecstasy and the team to a Wembley final against Stockport.

Unfortunately the dream ended on a rainy day at Wembley when County won 3-2,

Twelve months later Dale again reached the play-offs, only to fall at the semi-final hurdle this time after a 2-1 aggregate defeat to Gillingham.

However, in 2009/10, over 40 years of heartache were ended for Dale fans when the team eventually clinched their second promotion from the basement division.

Dale led the table from December to early-April and although a late season blip cost them the league title, it didn't dampen the spirits when Chris O'Grady scored the winning goal against Northampton to seal their place in League 1.

In 2011/12 the team finishing bottom of League One having accrued only 38 points.

Despite making a decent start to the 2012/13 season, form soon tailed off and with crowds dwindling, the club sacked Coleman.

Meanwhile, Hill had suffered the same fate at Barnsley a few weeks earlier and he jumped at the chance to re-join Dale and kept Dale away from relegation that season and despite bringing in a host of new players, he moulded a promotion-winning squad in 2013/14 as Dale finished in third place behind Chesterfield and Scunthorpe.

Dale were tipped to struggle in League One in 2014/15, but they looked very comfortable among much bigger clubs, including several who had played in the Premier League, and ultimately finished in eighth position, which was the club's highest-ever final placing.

The following two seasons saw Keith Hill's team create more history by reaching 69 points, which is a club record for the third tier.

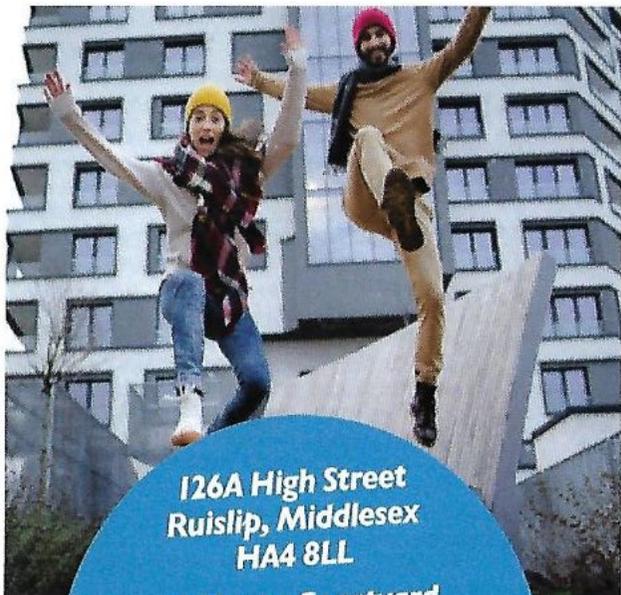
Subsequent campaigns saw Dale struggle in League One and after finishing outside the relegation zone on points per game during the Covid-hit 2019/20 season, they were relegated a year later, albeit by a single point.

The 2021/22 season saw Dale struggle in the lower reaches of League Two and eventual relegation to the National League.

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# The Dale who's who



## 1 - OLIVER WHATMUFF Goalkeeper

Oliver is a goalkeeper who is with Dale on a season-long loan from Manchester City. Since joining City the 17-year-old has progressed his way through the Academy ranks at the Etihad the highly-rated youngster has been a regular in the England set-up throughout the age groups and featured in the U18s win over Morocco in May.

## 2 - KYRON GORDON Defence

Kyron joined Dale in January 2024. A product of the Sheffield United Academy, Gordon made ten appearances for the Bramall Lane side. After loan spells at Boston United and Boreham Wood, Kyron departed his boyhood club in 2023

## 3 - DAVID TUTONDA Defence

David linked-up with Dale in July 2025 after leaving Morecambe. Born in the DR Congo, Tutonda moved to London at the age of five. He was spotted by Cardiff City in 2012 and signed his first professional contract two years later. Loan spells at Newport County and York City followed, before a permanent move to Barnet at the beginning of 2017. A move to League One with Bristol Rovers.

followed. He joined Gillingham the following summer ahead of a move to the North West with Morecambe last season, where he played 42 times.

## 4 - RYAN EAST Midfield

Ryan is a midfielder player who signed with Dale in 2023 after spending the first half of last season on loan from Bradford City. The 26-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.

## 5 - LIAM HOGAN Defence

Liam joined Dale in 2024 after leaving neighbours Oldham Athletic. Liam signed for FC Halifax Town in 2010 from Woodley Sports. He joined Fleetwood Town in 2013. Spells at Macclesfield Town, Tranmere Rovers and Gateshead followed, after which Hogan helped Salford City to two consecutive promotions as they reached the EFL. A move to Stockport County followed, where Liam

again won promotion from the National League in 2022. He joined Oldham that summer.

## 6 - ETHAN EBANKS-LANDELL Defence

Ethan signed 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 season. The centre-half joined Dale having spent three years with Shrewsbury Town, clocking-up over 100 appearances in League One. A product of the Academy system at Wolves. Ethan made his professional debut in November 2012 while on loan at Bury and went on to play Championship football for the Molineux outfit and in League One in loan spells at Sheffield United and MK Dons.

## 7 - TARRYN ALLARAKHIA Midfield

Tarryn is a winger who joined Dale in July 2024 from Wealdstone. A product of Leyton Orient's academy, Allarakhia joined Aveley at the age of 17. He moved to Maldon & Tiptree a year later, before joining Colchester United in 2017. After a year with The U's, Tarryn signed for Crawley Town, but spent most of his first season there on loan at Wealdstone, helping them to the National League South play-offs. He later made over 40 appearances for Crawley in League Two and then moved to Woking for a season, making the permanent switch to Wealdstone in the summer of 2022. In January, he made his senior international debut for Tanzania against Egypt – and Mo Salah. He was also selected for the Africa Cup of Nations.

## 8 - HARVEY GILMOUR Midfield

Harvey joined Dale from FC Halifax Town in 2023. Originally on Sheffield United's books, the 26-year-old gained his first experience of league football after moving to Tranmere in summer 2018. Harvey spent the 2020/21 season with Stockport, before joining Halifax, where he made around 80 appearances and helped The Shaymen lift the FA Trophy in 2023.

## 9 - EMMANUEL DIESERUVWE Forward

Emmanuel joined in July 2025 from Hartlepool United. The 30-year-old finished as Pools' leading marksman in both campaigns. Dieseruwwe progressed through the ranks with Sheffield Wednesday before loan moves to Hyde United, Fleetwood Town and Chesterfield followed, before signing permanently for The Spireites in 2015. He spent time on loan at Mansfield Town before joining Kidderminster Harriers in the summer of 2016. During his time at Aggborough, he had a loan spell with Boston United, ahead of a permanent move to Salford City in 2017. In the summer of 2021,

he moved to Tranmere Rovers, but was on loan at Grimsby Town for the majority of the season, again winning promotion to the EFL.

## 10 - DEVANTE RODNEY Forward

Devante joined Dale from Walsall in 2022. The 27-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, Rodney enjoyed loan spells at FC Halifax Town and Stockport County. He went on to join Port Vale in 2020 before linking-up with Walsall for an undisclosed fee in January 2022.

## 12 - LEVI AMANTCHI Forward

Levi joined Dale on loan from Walsall until January. He signed for Chesterfield at age 17, spending time on loan at Mickleover Sports and Blyth Spartans, as well as appearing in the National League for The Spireites. Spells at non-league clubs such as Workington, Darlington and a return to Blyth followed during the turbulent COVID-19 era, before Amantchi regularly notched goals in spells at Braintree Town, Brackley Town and Maidstone United. He joined Bromley, in 2023, going on to be part of the squad that won promotion to the EFL.

## 14 - TOBI ADEBAYO-ROWLING Defence

Tobi joined Dale in 2024 following the expiration of his contract at Notts County. The 28-year-old won promotion from the National League with County in 2022/23, before making 19 appearances for them in League Two last season. Adebayo-Rowling was part of the Brighton & Hove Albion Academy as a youngster, ahead of spells at Eastbourne Borough and Peterborough United. Two-and-a-half years in Ireland with top-flight clubs Sligo Rovers and Cork City followed, before Tobi returned to England at Bromley in the summer of 2018 followed by two seasons with Ebbsfleet.

## 16 - CASEY PETTIT Midfield

Casey is a midfielder who joined Dale on a two-year deal from Maidenhead United in July 2025. Pettit began his career in West Ham United's youth ranks before a spell at Millwall. He then joined Luton Town at the age of 16. In January 2022, Casey joined Lewes FC on a loan. Maidenhead sealed his signature in the summer of 2023.

## 17- JOE PRITCHARD Midfield

Joe is a midfielder who joined Dale in July 2025, having spent time last season in the National League with Oldham Athletic. The 28-year-old, who made over 100 appearances for Accrington Stanley earlier in his career; started out at Tottenham Hotspur, where he spent five years and made two appearances in the EFL Trophy, before his departure in 2018. He then moved north to Bolton

Wanderers for the 2018/19 season, but left The Trotters for Accrington Stanley 12 months later before a transfer to MK Dons in June 2024. After only seven outings for The Dons, Joe linked-up with Oldham Athletic in February 2025.

## 18 - AIDAN BARLOW Midfield

Aidan linked-up with Dale in July 2024 following the expiry of his contract at Eastleigh. Aidan started his footballing journey at Manchester United at the age of six, progressing through the ranks to sign his first professional contract in December 2017. Whilst with The Red Devils, he spent time on loan at Tromsø in Norway and also represented England at U17 and U18 levels. After leaving Old Trafford, Barlow joined Doncaster Rovers, making over 50 appearances, before spending a season with our fellow National League side Eastleigh, where he played 19 times.

## 22 - DAN MOSS Defence

Dan is a right-sided defender who joined Dale in June 2025 after opting to leave Woking. Moss began his career as a scholar in Burnley's academy before linking up with Millwall in the summer of 2019, where he captained the U23 side. He spent time on loan at Yeovil Town and Leyton Orient during his time at The Den, ahead of moving to Woking on a permanent deal in 2022.

## 33 - SAM BECKWITH Defence

Sam penned a two-year deal with Dale in July 2024. Beckwith joined Luton Town at age seven. He was loaned out to Maidenhead United for the 2021/22 season, joining The Magpies permanently at the end of the campaign. Last season, Beckwith made 43 league appearances, scoring four times and creating a further eight. He was named in the Vanarama National League Team of the Season, as well as being named the League's Player of the Month for April.

## 40 - IAN HENDERSON Forward

Ian is Rochdale's all-time record goalscorer and finished the 2024/25 season with 160 goals for the club in all competitions. The striker also ended the campaign on 486 Dale appearances, only 45 behind Gary Jones in the club's all-time appearances list. Initially with Norwich, 'Hendo' featured almost 80 times in their first team, before joining Northampton in 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. Brought to Rochdale on a short-term deal Hendo immediately made a big impression. The onset of Covid saw him released by Dale at the end of the 2019/20 campaign. After two years with Salford City, Henderson returned to Spotland in July 2022.

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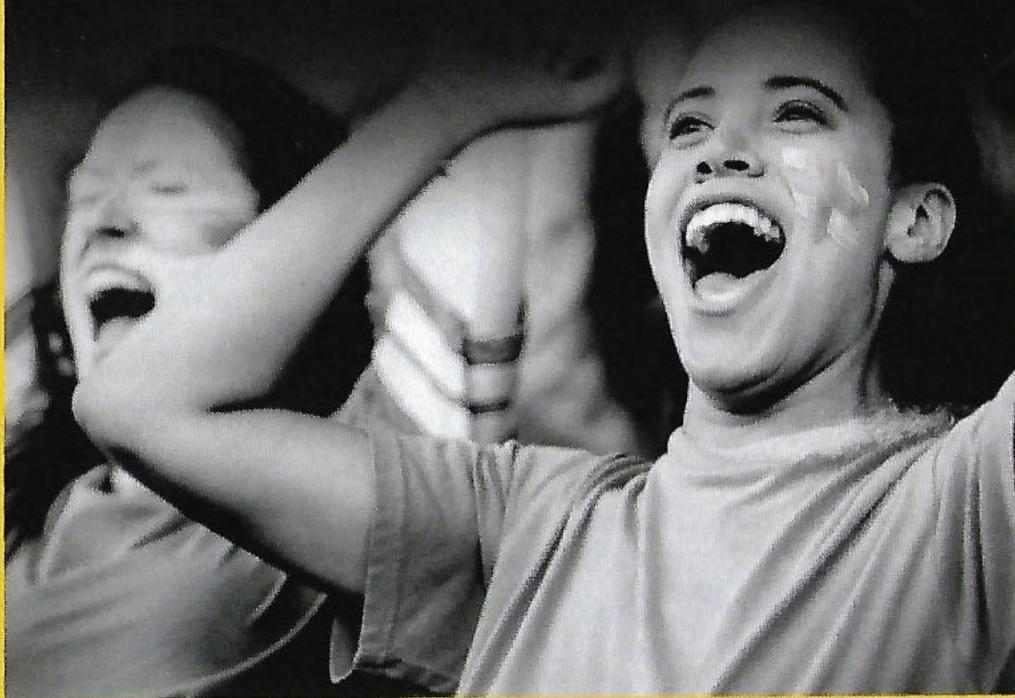
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Bruce-Mills

RNB



14

Nicole  
Cho-Yee

Pete Edwards & Nick Symmons



5

Danni  
Holland

VERSION



8

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2

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3

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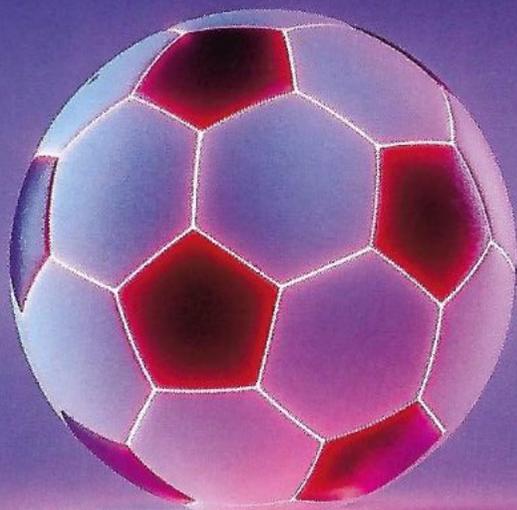
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### ROCHDALE SATURDAY

### 30th AUGUST 2025

# SUPPORTERS CLUB UPDATE

## BY JOHN YOUNG

**Good afternoon to our visitors from Rochdale, hope you had a good journey getting here.**

I am not attending today's match as my eldest son is getting married today. I will of course be checking my phone every 10 minutes to see what is happening.

I have been asked not to cheer out loud when Stones score because it's likely speeches will be going on.

Last season both sides won at home, and in my opinion our away performance was one of the poorest of the campaign.

One of my favourite players of the last 10 years Tarryn Allarakhia in a stones shirt scored a peach of a goal against us in the away defeat, and he appears to be as popular with the Rochdale fans as he was with the Stones fans. No repeats of last season please.

At time of writing this the SC with the aid of Jez and Roger are putting together a way for every Stones fan to help generate funds towards player recruitment. This will be vital to help Coxy get players into the club. In the past funds have been generated by a minority of fans who have raised amazing amounts. With the huge increase of fans over the last few seasons, we want to get everyone involved and feel even more of a connection to our great club. So you will find information here in the programme, online, an email, and posters around the club. Or come to speak to myself or Wobs in the Captains Lounge next to the Bullar stand. Every penny will count. With the future of a new stadium looking it is vital we stay in this division, so please do your bit and join in with the others to raise as much as we can.

Lastly I hope those who attended the Luther Vandross evening had a great time and look out for the next gigs coming, arranged by our Music Man James Klarfeld.

Have a great afternoon and my prediction is a 2-0 Stones win.

**JOHN**



# FSA.

## FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION

Wealdstone FC Supporters Club are Affiliate members of the Football Supporters' Association

**Wealdstone FC Supporters Club was founded in 1958.**

We work to raise awareness and the profile of our club in the local community and to raise funds to support the club.

We also run our fantastic Megastore where you can find everything a Wealdstone supporter could ever want with most items are also available online at **WFCMEGASTORE.CO.UK** if you can't wait until the next game.

Over the course of the season, we look to organise a number of fundraising events such as after dinner speakers and race nights.

We also present the prestigious Jock Law trophy to the supporter-voted Player of the Season along with the Stuart Pearce shield to the Junior Stones Player of the Season. At the end of the 2024-25 season Alex Reid was voted Player of the Season and Kallum Cesay was voted the Junior Stones Player of the Season.

Membership details can be found on our webpage

**WFCSC.CO.UK**

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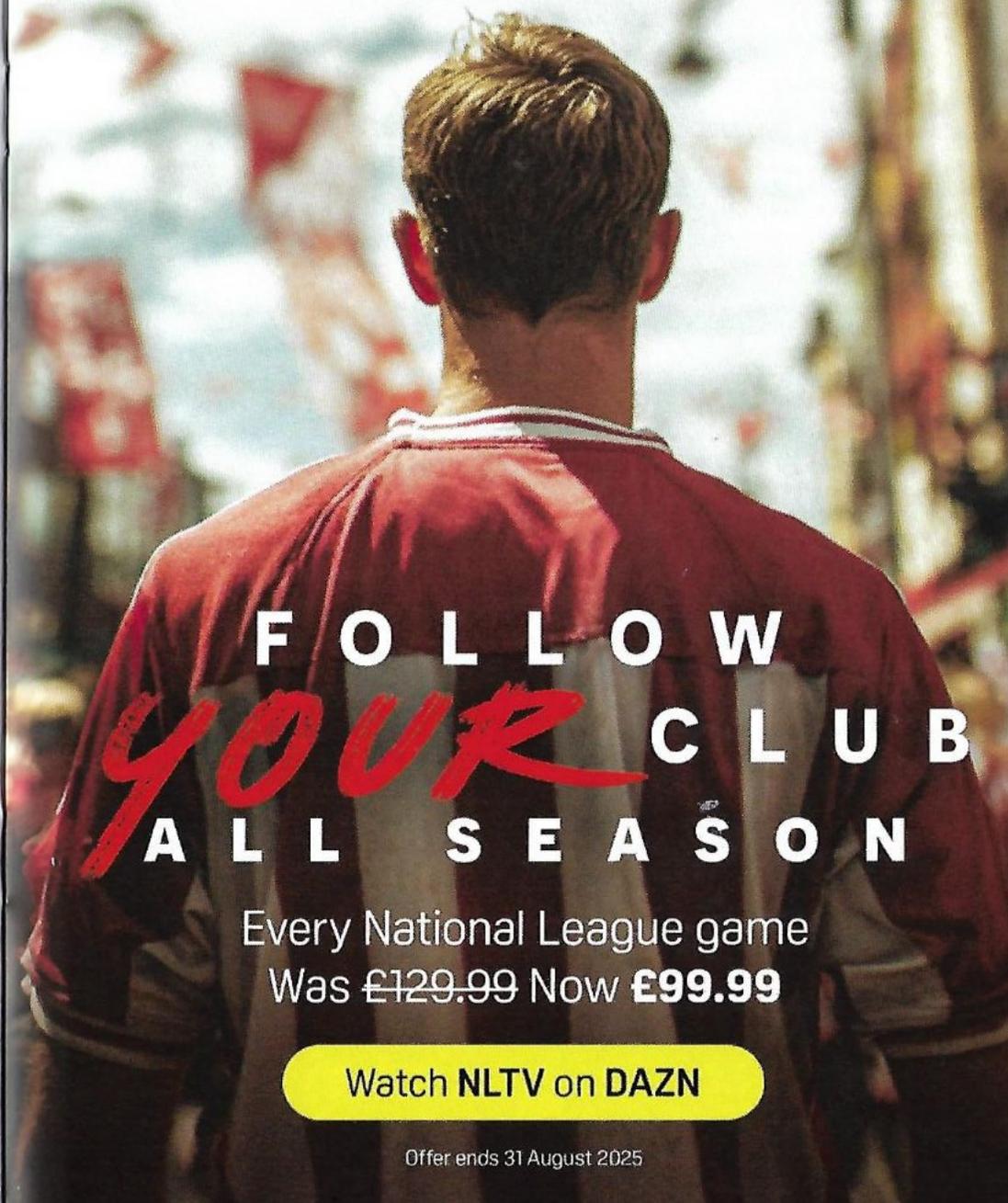


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# view from the away end

Rochdale fan  
Mark Wilbraham

THERE was a rather surreal moment in the middle of August when I flicked on the hotel room television at 7.30 in the morning to see the jolly BBC Breakfast Time presenters deep in discussion about non-League programme production. Talk about coals to Newcastle! I quickly checked that it was not some elaborate hoax, and then settled back to watch Rochdale prog editor Mark Wilbraham explaining the joys of buying and reading the Dale's matchday programme... all based, presumably, on the threat of all-consuming digital media to brilliant productions like Mark's. It was then a no-brainer to contact him and ask him about his 'View from the Away End'...

**Your name and age?** Mark Wilbraham, 56

**Whereabouts do you live, Mark?** I live in a village called Littleborough, which is about five miles north-east of the football ground.

**Have you always lived in that area?** Yes, I was born and brought up there and apart from my student days, when I was in Leeds, it's always been my home.

**When was your first Rochdale game?** The 11th December 1982 v Wimbledon. We lost 2-0, with one of the goals coming from an underhit backpass on a muddy pitch! And although we lost, I couldn't wait to go again the week after against Aldershot.

**What were your first impressions of the club?** I was aged 13 when I first went, so my first impressions were really confined to being so close to the pitch and the players, and enjoying the abuse the

**Mark Wilbraham**  
Editor, Rochdale AFC programme

BBC BREAKFAST

## 'I'm a bit concerned at the future of printed programmes.. they're a fantastic resource'

opposing goalkeeper used to get. It amused 13-year-old me anyway. As time passed, I began to learn that we were cash-strapped, poorly-supported, had a ramshackle ground and had never won anything. Yet here I still am, 43 years later...

**Who introduced you to the Dale?** It was a man called Raymond Burns who was a neighbour and worked in the local shop. Think Granville off 'Open All Hours'!

**So, talk us through your appearance on Breakfast TV... did it come out of the blue?** It did! They contacted the club on the Thursday, they asked me if I was available, which I was, so I set the



Left: Mark looking every inch the Breakfast TV star. Right: The club's award-winning prog for the Stones game last season, and for 2025-26 season (right)



alarm for 5.15am on Friday and the taxi was there within 30 minutes. It was only a brief appearance talking about the future of programmes and I lost my tongue at one point, but it was a good experience. Charlie and Naga were very nice, as were all the behind-the-scenes staff. I was back home for 8.45am!

**Are you positive about the future of printed programmes?** I'm a bit concerned about them, to be honest. More clubs seem to be stopping them every season.

**Is quality and exclusivity (and entertainment) the key?** I think so. I don't necessarily agree with "you can find the information online", as there is a difference between finding things on a website and turning them out in an attractive, readable form. Programmes are also a fantastic historical resource and when you're trying to locate a specific fact or piece of detail, it is a lot easier in your hands as opposed to the world wide web!

**Do you follow any other team?** No!  
**What level of foot-**

**ball do you enjoy, and**

**why?** Mainly Football League, but now that has extended to the National League. I find the games and the players more honest, while the matchday experience is less-sanitised than at higher levels. Don't get me wrong, it is good to visit the bigger grounds on occasions, but I wouldn't want to do it every week.

**What's the most memorable game you've ever seen, live or on TV?** I remember watching England beat Germany 5-1 in Munich on TV in a World Cup qualifier a few hours after Dale won at Carlisle. That was a good day.

**And the best Rochdale game?** Beating Darlington on penalties to get to the play-off final in 2008 (Ben Muirhead nets the winning penalty, left) is probably up there, as it meant we were making our first visit to Wembley. There was also a fantastic 3-0 win over Bury in August 2009, which greatly upset the visiting fans :)

continued  
overpage >>>



# view from the away end continued

**From previous page**

**How big a part of your life is the game?** Massive; I devote the vast majority of my spare time to it, mainly through producing the club's matchday programme, as my girlfriend would testify!

**Do you have other hobbies?** Yes, I love cricket and regularly watch my local team, Littleborough CC, as well as England on TV. I am an avid cryptic crossword solver too, although there is a limit to how difficult they have to be. I also like watching detective programmes and some quiz programmes on TV... I was on *The 1% Club* on telly earlier this year and got down to 10%. I'm still kicking myself now, £31,000... I've also been on *Countdown* (in 1997) and *PopMaster* on Radio 2 with Ken Bruce (2021).

**How do you fit your family/working life in with football?** See an earlier answer! As regards work, I took early retirement from teaching last year, so it has been much easier to fit things in.

**What are your thoughts on the National League Cup?**

Financially, it has apparently been the best competition for us since relegation, so from that point of view, it's a good thing. We also tried a bit of innovation by playing our opening game Burnley under-21s on a midweek afternoon to attract the kids on school holidays, with free admission - and we had a 1,300 gate.

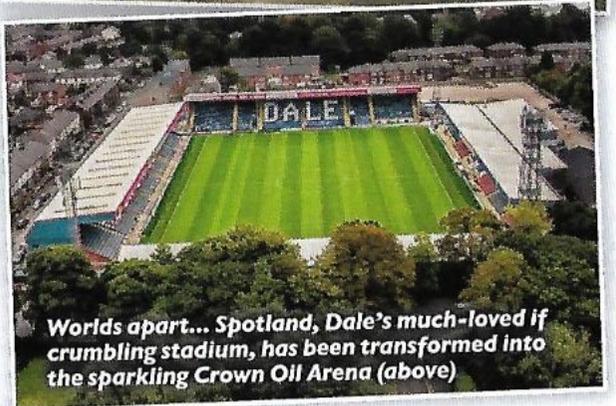
That's the pros, and as for cons, I just found some of the reasons given for its formation rather spurious, especially when FA Cup replays disappeared (which I'm not entirely 100% against in the early rounds).

**Will you be at the game today, and have you ever been to Grosvenor Vale before?** Yes, both times. Played two, lost two! I've enjoyed it though. A small club close to a major city, surrounded by much bigger clubs, but with a small, loyal fanbase. Sound familiar?

**Who is the best Rochdale players you've ever seen?**

**Could you name a best-ever XI, 1-11?** Best-ever is a really tough

one to answer, but I think for his longevity



**Worlds apart... Spotland, Dale's much-loved if crumbling stadium, has been transformed into the sparkling Crown Oil Arena (above)**



and consistency, it would have to be our evergreen striker Ian Henderson (pictured below).

My best XI would be: Keith Welch, Wayne Evans, Dave Grant, Dave Frain, Craig Dawson, Alan Reeves, Dave Thompson, Gary Jones, Grant Holt, Ian Henderson, and John Ryan

**Who are the players to make a difference for Rochdale this season?** Mani Dieruvwe up front and Joe Pritchard out wide have both impressed so far. Mani scored two on the opening day so hopefully he will continue in that vein.

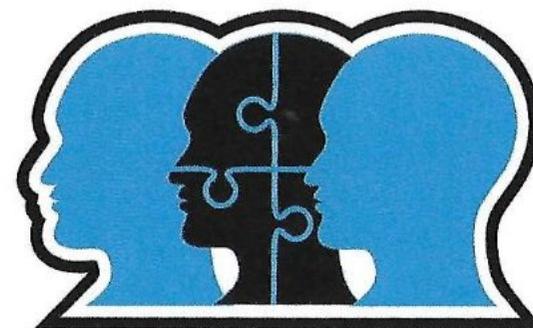
**What is your prediction for today's game, and where will our respective clubs finish this season?** I'll play it safe and go for a 1-1 draw. I'm hopeful we can finish fourth or higher, while I think the Stones could be mid-table to lower. But I'm hopeless at predictions!

**By Tim Parks**

# HEADS UP!

## MENS MENTAL HEALTH GROUP AT WEALDSTONE FC

BY IAN STAPLETON



### HEADS UP!

YOU CAN'T FIX YOURSELF  
IF YOU DON'T TALK  
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With support from the Wealdstone FC Foundation and Head In The Game we are pleased to announce the formation of Heads Up!

Starting on Wednesday 1st October and meeting every Wednesday at Ruislip Social Club between 1900 and 2000, Heads Up! Is a group to allow men from the community over the age of 18 to meet and talk through their struggles. Be it them suffering from mental health issues or supporting someone who is, the aim of the group is to give men the space to talk and support each other without judgement.

Suicide is the biggest killer of men

under the age of 50, with 75% of suicides being men. By creating this peer lead support group we hope to encourage men to break the stigma related to mental health and talk through their issues rather than bottle them up.

The meeting will be informal and will use the facilities available to us in the Social club such as pool, darts and the open space outside to create a safe, friendly, relaxed environment where men can openly talk and support each other.

Please register your interest to join the group by emailing the address below.

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# 49 years ago, a trip to the seaside and a cautionary football tale....

rewind:  
on this  
day



BY TIM PARKS

Bank Holiday Monday, August 30 1976, Southern League Premier Division: Minehead 2 Wealdstone 1

A MATE of mine wandered into Minehead's AFC's quaint Irnham Road ground while on summer holiday a few years ago to join the sparsely-populated crowd for a bit of Somerset League Division One action.

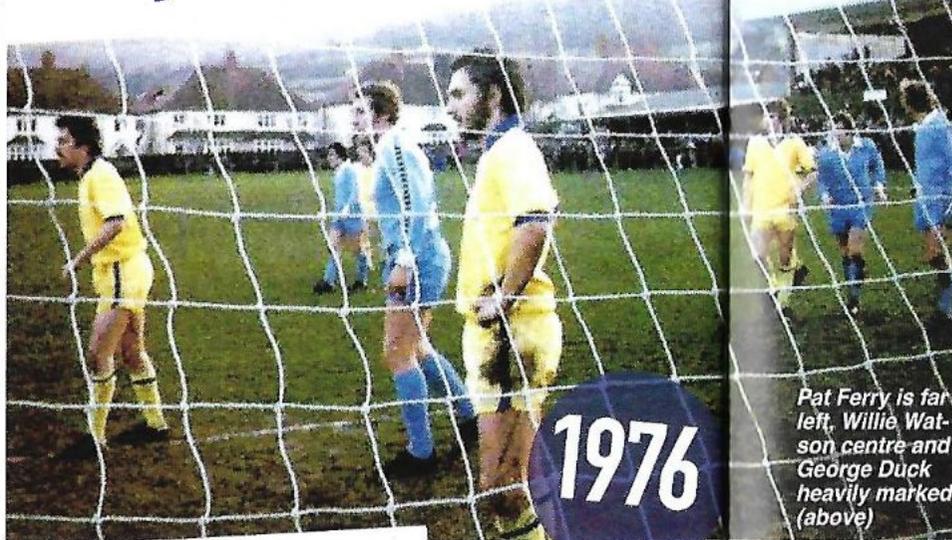
He remarked to the lady behind the tea bar that the main stand was unexpectedly large. And that you could probably fit the entire season's crowd inside.

She shook her head, put down the milk jug and appraised him, in no uncertain terms in her West Country brogue, that her club had been the best outside the Football League four decades ago with crowds of thousands filling the ground - and had beaten Swansea City in the FA Cup, to boot.

This need Googling! And my pal was amazed to see that, indeed, Minehead had finished second in the Southern League Premier Division to Wimbledon in 1977. And Wimbledon were elected to the Football League that summer.

Of course, he had only needed

CONTINUED OVERPAGE



Stones (in yellow) on the attack at Irnham Road in January 1978, captured by a young Jon Taffel

Pat Ferry is far left, Willie Watson centre and George Duck heavily marked (above)

# Duck's lone efforts fail to save 'Stones

Minehead 2, Wealdstone 1

ALTHOUGH Minehead were slightly the better all-round side by virtue of having a more lethal attack than Wealdstone possessed, the visitors were a little unlucky not to take a point after one of the finest matches seen on the local Recreation Ground several seasons.

This was Minehead's first home appearance in the Premier Division and they have retained nine of the team which raced away with the Division One South championship last season.

They are unbeaten at home for 18 months and on this evidence will have a fine season in the higher grade, whereas Wealdstone will have to do something about their front line, where Duck received absolutely no support, his front running colleagues — especially Halliday — being completely out of touch.

To a casual observer it appeared criminal that a player of Duck's skills should not be complemented by a similar striker prepared to take on the defence.

## INCREDIBLE PACE

But Minehead's tall twin strikers, Jenkins and Leitch, dominated the game, showing incredible pace, skill and shooting ability.

In Jenkins at number 10 Minehead have a player seemingly out of his class, and time and again he left Wealdstone's defence wrong-footed.

Even the tall Lawrence was beaten a lot in the air, although Bryne had a wonderful match, ably supported by Kinnear and Fulton.

That Wealdstone's defence contained such a hostile attack to two goals is a measure of how they played.

Marshalled by the superb Light, whose ability to spray superb passes in a variety of directions on a dreadful pitch was one of the features of a game which had the 1,000 crowd applauding both teams off the field.

Wealdstone could have taken a third minute lead when Woolgar broke quickly on the left and a ferocious shot skimmed the bar, with Macey groping at the air.

They continued to show delightful skills in the build up — even if laboured at times with too many square balls — but devoid of all penetrations; every move virtually burned itself out before the penalty box was reached.

It was if anything against the run of play that Minehead took the lead with a magnificent goal from Durban who thumped a header well wide of Morton from Jenkin's pin-point cross.

Just before the interval Bryne had a chance but scooped the ball over the bar with only Macey to beat.

## SHOW OF FLAIR

But within four minutes of the restart Wealdstone equalised when Halliday eventually had a brief show of flair to lob a good ball out on the right into the patch of Duck, whose shot was turned in to his own goal by Clausen.

With only Light really functioning well in the visitors mid field, where neither Arnold no

Moss were particularly out standing, Minehead began to get the upper hand and Leitch crashed a pile-driver against the bar, Morton seemingly losing the ball in the lights, and the writing was on the wall.

Finally Leitch showed fantastic speed off the mark to escape Lawrence and beat the onrushing Morton to score another fine goal.

Yet Wealdstone had two fine chances to actually win in the last five minutes, first Arnold tripping over the ball when in a good position and then Macey saving from point blank range from Duck, who albeit was in an offside position, but allowed to go on.

Earlier both Duck and Arnold had been unfairly penalised by a linesman who too often anticipated Minehead's off-side play in the closing stages.

Watson substituted surprisingly for Moss 20 minutes from the end but could make little impression, and significantly Wealdstone looked more threatening in attack in the final 10 minutes when Bryne pushed up front with Duck.

Wealdstone: Morton, Kinnear, Woolgar, Bryne, Lawrence, Light, Arnold, Moss, Fulton, Duck, Halliday. Sub

## Soccer Notes by — BOB BOYD

Good evening, everyone! (Player/Manager, our SUPPORTERS and a "welcome" to the MANAGER, PLAYERS, DIRECTORS and SUPPORTERS of WEALDSTONE AFC.

To-night's match as you all well know is the MOST important fixture ever to be played on the RECREATION GROUND — the FIRST HOME FIXTURE in the HIGHEST sphere of non-league football in this country. A target and obsession we have been aiming at for many years and now it is HERE! I am sure from my past memories of our opponents tonight that we could have opened with no better or entertaining opposition. I still remember well their last visit when we were beaten 3-4 with their winner coming on a fine after we had fought back to almost salvage a point. Before that their other visit produced a narrow win for us when ROGER SEYDOUN scored from the spot a few minutes from our two SOUTHERN LEAGUE CUP matches with OMBLET-DIMAN TOWN in both games we were very attractive to watch with our non-stop attacking displays. It is pleasing to get into the draw for ROUND 2 for the first time since joining the league. Like you all we are hoping for an attractive NON fixture in the next round and a long run in this mid-week competition.

To take a point at YEOVIL is a most creditable feat at anytime — but our 2-2 draw there last weekend in our debut as a PREMIER DIVISION club was particularly pleasing — although I believe we were worth both points. (Continued on "Club News" page)

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## Today's Line-up

1976	1977
1. JOE LACEY	1. JOE LACEY
2. ALAN DUFFY	2. ALAN DUFFY
3. SCOT CHAMBER (cap)	3. SCOT CHAMBER (cap)
4. SCOT CHAMBER (cap)	4. SCOT CHAMBER (cap)
5. PAUL ORWELL	5. PAUL ORWELL
6. MICHAEL HURDIS	6. MICHAEL HURDIS
7. ROBERT BROWN	7. ROBERT BROWN
8. DAVID WELBY	8. DAVID WELBY
9. JIM LEITCH	9. JIM LEITCH
10. JIM JENKINS	10. JIM JENKINS
11. BILLY DUNN	11. BILLY DUNN
12. KEVIN BRUCE	12. KEVIN BRUCE
13. GAVIN HEDDLE	13. GAVIN HEDDLE

Referee: Mr. G.E. TOLPIN  
 Linesmen: Mr. Keith R. SMITH (Whitlock) Orange  
 Mr. B. PEARSON (Whitlock) Red Flag.  
 TEAM MANAGER: Master CHERRY HURDIS  
 BALL BOYS: Steve Lynch, Peter Anker, David Steele, Phillip Bailey, Dennis Compton.  
 + MATCH BALL DONOR: We acknowledge with grateful appreciation the MATCH BALL which has been donated + for this historic match by MISS IYAN LEACH.

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## MINEHEAD A.F.C. 1976-77



Champions — Division One (South) 1975-76  
 5p. Official Programme

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

to ask me about the Minehead story. For I was one of the 1,000 crowd present at Irnham Road on this day 49 years ago when the Somerset side played its first home game in the top division outside the full-time ranks....

**"The most important fixture ever to be played on the Recreation ground"** according to the histrionics in the match programme on the previous page, written by club captain and centre-back Bob Boyd.

Minehead, promoted as runaway winners of the Southern League Div One South, had a fantastic debut season in the SL Prem with their 'Holy Trinity' of giant strikers Andy Leitch, Derek Bryant and Jimmy Jenkins scoring 96 goals between them in all games.

Leitch, who had left Swansea that summer after becoming disillusioned with League football, returned to The Vetch to score the only goal in an FA Cup First Round tie that winter, and Minehead then were drawn away to Division Three Portsmouth (managed by Ian St John) and were narrowly beaten 2-1.

But back to this August Bank Holiday Monday fixture. It came in the middle of the famous 1976 heatwave, when no rain fell between April and October leaving every patch of grass parched and yellow. Standpumps were erected in the streets and hosepipes were banned, leading to a fine if you were caught trying to save your garden (or football pitch). Sure enough, Irnham Road was hard, rutted and a shade of yellow and our travelling fans weren't best pleased. Especially as we had set off from Harrow on the supporters coaches (yes, at least two every game!) expecting a 3pm kick-off, when in fact it had always been scheduled for 7.30pm.

There was surprisingly little to do in this seaside resort at the height of summer, apart from the obvious, so our inebriated teenage group berated the players as we slumped to defeat. At it turned out, losing 2-1 to Minehead wasn't such a bad result after all.

● Strangely, almost as quickly as Minehead FC flared into life, they suddenly hit the doldrums, finished fourth from bottom the following season and were relegated. And relegated again. And relegated again... in fact, they had dropped four levels within the next ten years, into the second strata of the regional Western League and even fell through that trapdoor into the Somerset County League by 2010. Which was the 'park football' level my pal found himself watching three summers ago, before they dropped one more rung into the SCL Division One.

It has you wondering if any club could ever climb back more than the five divisions that Wealdstone did to resurrect former glories? That would be some story!

# The Dale are staying up! But maybe old pals' act did them a disservice..

*Saturday August 28, 1976, Football League Division Four: Rochdale 1 Colchester Utd 0*  
**THE same Bank Holiday weekend that Stones were losing at Minehead (having won 2-0 to kick off the season at Margate 48 hours earlier) Rochdale beat Colchester United at Spotland in front of a 1,440 crowd with Keith Hanvey netting the only goal on the hour mark .**

It had been a decent start to the season for the Dale - an opening day 1-0 win at Scunthorpe followed by a home draw with Cambridge Utd (2-2), the win over Colchester and then a goalless draw at Halifax.

The first defeat (at Exeter City) preceded a five-

*Rochdale's Spotland ground (now rather smarter and re-named the Crown Oil Arena) in the 1970s and (below left) the Dale-Colchester programme of 76-77*

match-unbeaten run, but the Dale's modest aspirations were matched by their eventual finish of 18th out of 24 clubs... and you wonder if the strong start was a result of the expected ending of the 'old pals act' in the summer of '77. At the end of each season the FL went through the charade of 're-election', the club chairmen routinely voting for their own while cold-shouldering aspiring non-League clubs... but Wimbledon were knocking forcibly on the Football League door after winning the Southern League in 1974-5 and 1975-6. Surely a hat-trick of titles would see Allen Batsford's side replace one of the strugglers?

It did, but Rochdale's decent season saw them look on with relief as the remote Cumbrians of Workington FC finished bottom of the table and were voted out by 27-12. But after finishing at the foot of the pile, 24th out of 24 the very next season with an average crowd of 1,246 and just 24 points from 46 games, the football Gods seemed pacified by Workington's sacrifice and spared the Dale.

Not that they had much to fear after Wimbledon - because the few clubs put forward by non-League even included our very

own Stones, bolstered by our FA Cup run to the 3rd round and our aspirational if somewhat unrealistic chairman David Martle.

But there was still more Rochdale drama to come. The Lancashire club pulled off its biggest Houdini act four years later following the arrival of the Alliance Premier League, which was formed to concentrate top non-League outfits into one league and offer up just ONE applicant for FL membership.

Step forward Altrincham, who won the APL in its debut season and were surely nailed-on to replace the tail-end strugglers at the close of that first '79-80 season: Rochdale FC, finishing bottom again with 27 points from 46 games.

Alty's Moss Lane ground was given the League's suitability rubber-stamp... but remarkably the League chairmen outvoted them in favour of the Dale (26 -25) and then again the following season (when they again won the APL title) by Halifax Town, 41-15.

Non-League football didn't help itself, to be honest, by then nominating a series of FL candidates whose stadium were just not up to scratch. The APL's 1982 win-

ners, Runcorn, could not apply as their rudimentary Canal Street ground fell short... runners-up Enfield didn't meet the strict requirements either so third-placed Telford were pushed forward, only to be outvoted by Hartlepool (48-13).

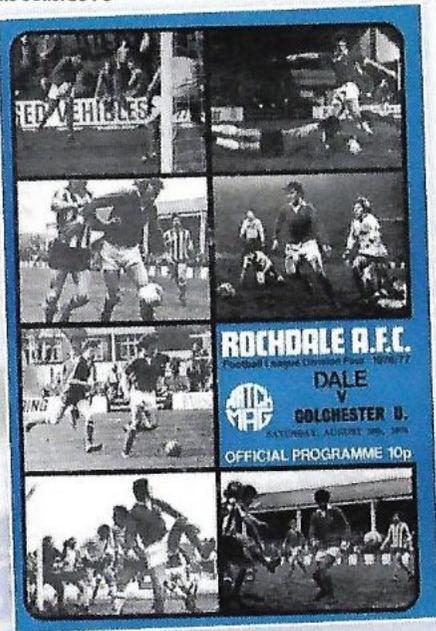
Ditto in 1983 with Enfield again turned down, second-placed Maidstone polling 26 votes to Hartlepool's 36, and in 1984, champions Maidstone pulled in 22 points only for Hartlepool to again win favour with 32.

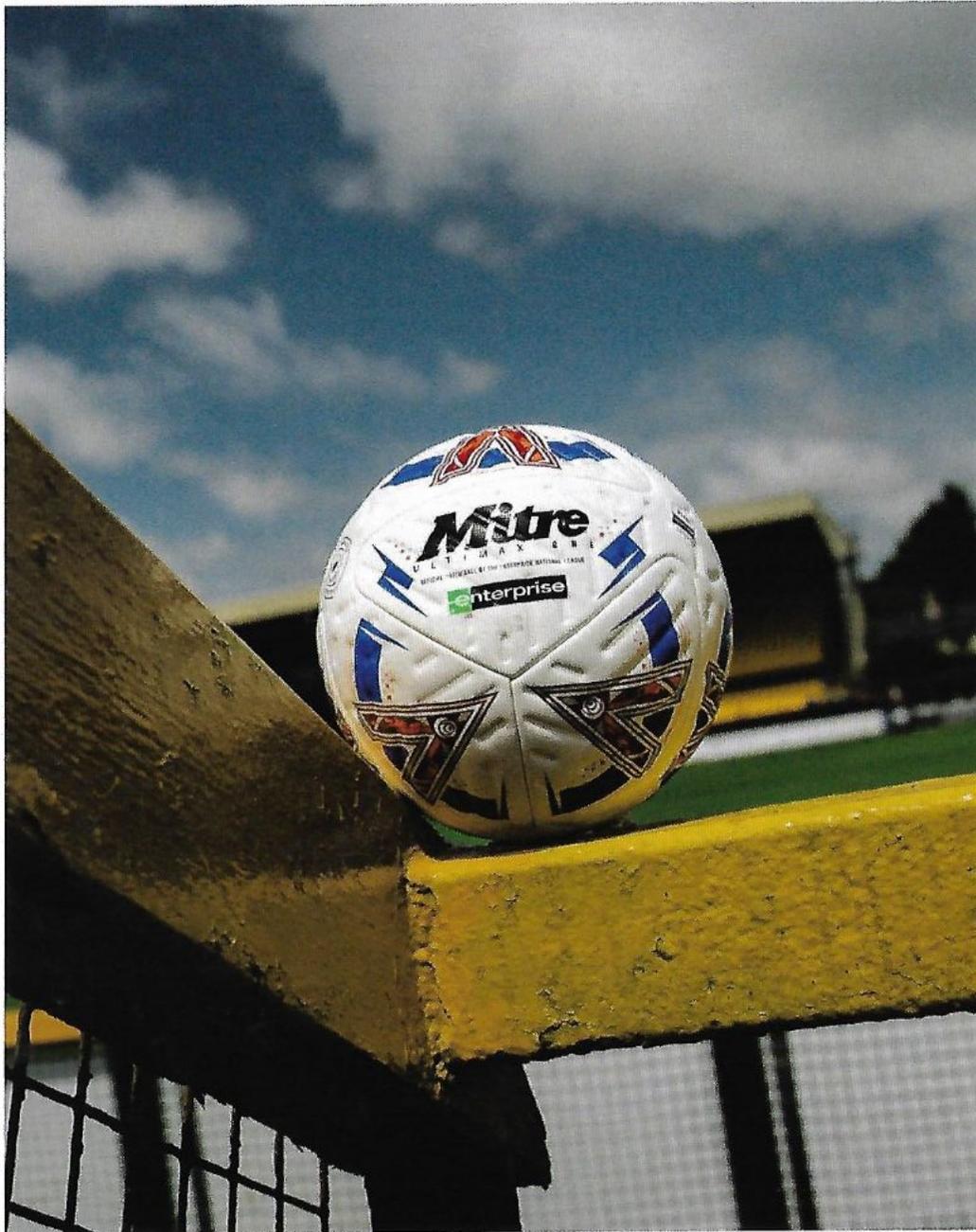
**In 1985 (this is the one you've been waiting for) Wealdstone won the league but Lower Mead (surprise surprise) didn't meet the league requirements - and I doubt we'd have won more than a derisory number of votes anyway.** Runners-up Nuneaton didn't come up to scratch either... ditto 4th-placed Dartford and thus Bath City were offered up for promotion, only lose to Halifax by 48 votes to 8.

Thus to the present day, with the change to two up, two down between the EFL and the National League now providing free movement and a much richer (in every sense) pool of clubs in Step Five. It's now a dogfight for the BELTS ( Big Ex League Teams, or Bitter Ex League teams if you'd prefer) to outspend each other in a bid to return to the EFL.

As for Rochdale... well it was largely a miserable 20th century but since the new millennium today's visitors have enjoyed a terrific dozen topsy-turvy years with two promotions, two relegations and an eighth place finish in League One until they surprisingly suffered two relegations in three years and finally fell out of the League.

After finishing 4th last year, the Dale look strong candidates for the play-offs this time around and their crowds are indicative of a new-born club. Perhaps it might have been a positive step to have been voted out of the Football League all those years ago!





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## 2025-26



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**To secure your favourite contact Call Peter Worby on 07967 698370 or John Young on 07874 846785**

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Many of the photographs in this temporary set of kit donor images courtesy of Jon Taffel

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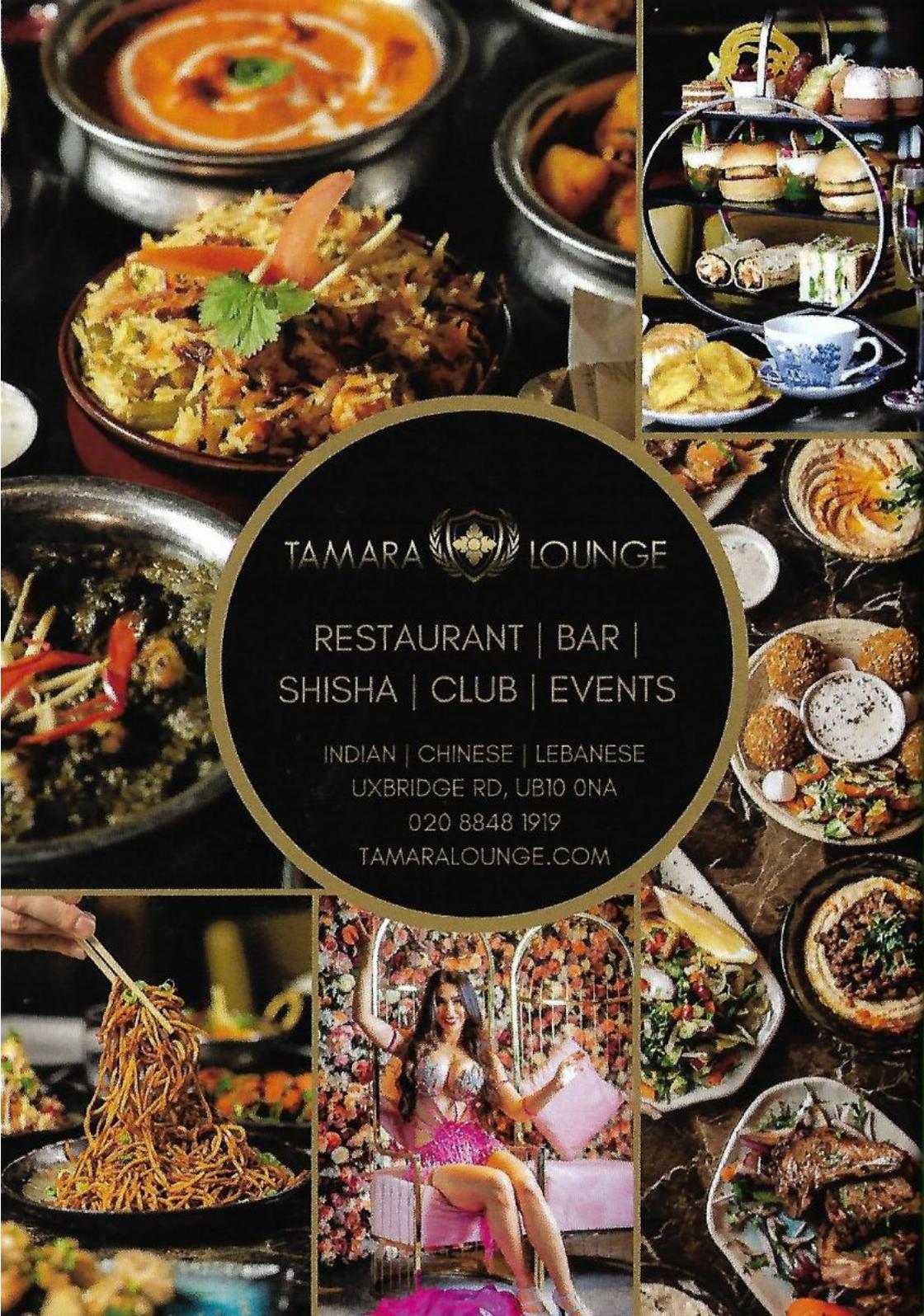
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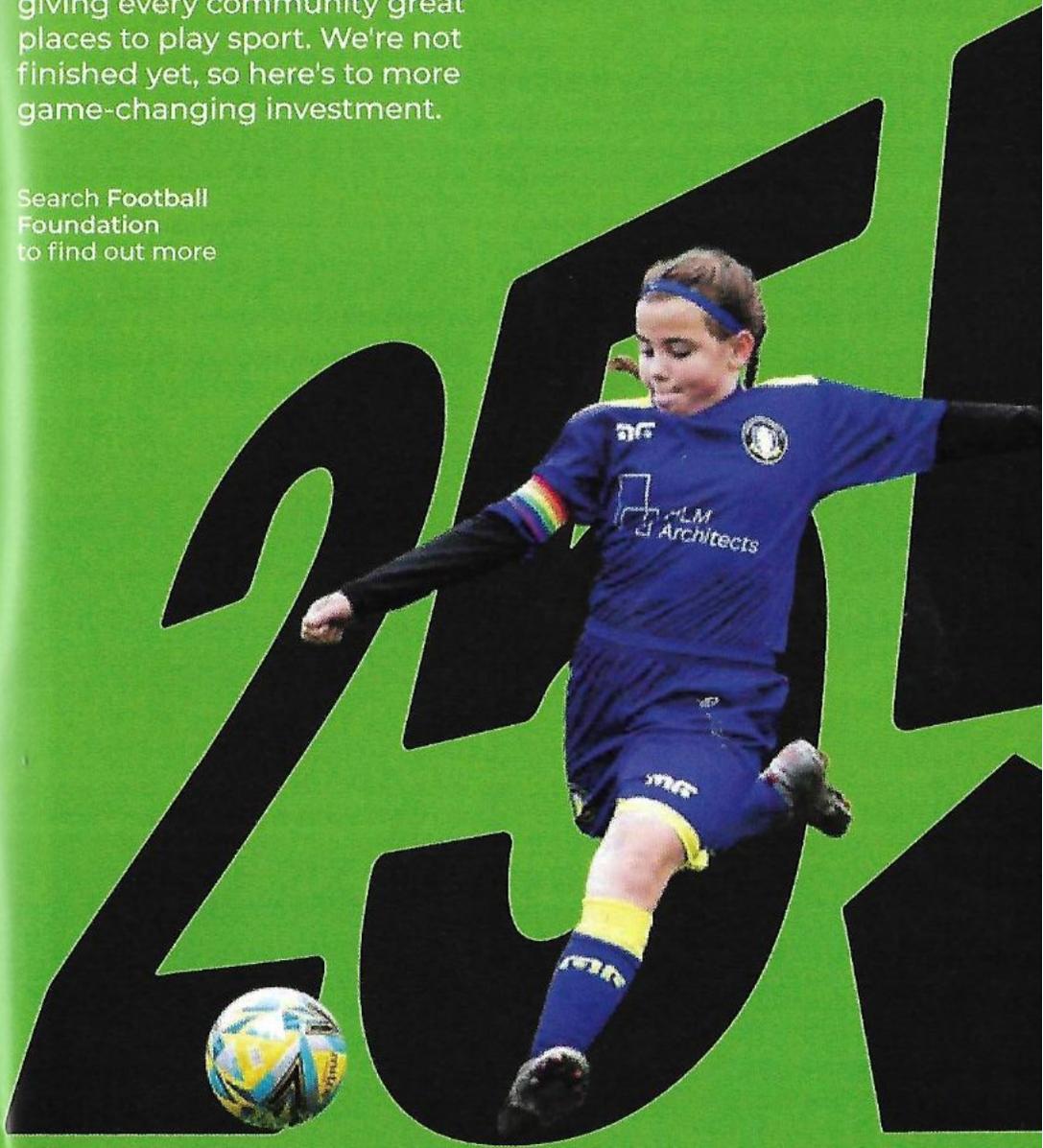
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2025-26

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**SLOUGH TOWN** Pre-Season Friendly  
BALL DONORS: Wealdstone FC Community Trust

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**ROCHDALE** August 30, Enterprise National League  
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**SOUTHEND UNITED** August 30, Enterprise National League  
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**GATESHEAD** September 13, Enterprise National League  
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**EASTLEIGH** September 27, Enterprise National League  
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**WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS** National League Cup  
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**ALTRINCHAM** October 4, Enterprise National League  
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**SUTTON UNITED** October 25, Enterprise National League  
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**HARTLEPOOL UTD** February 28, Enterprise National League  
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**SOLIHULL MOORS** March 14, Enterprise National League  
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**YEOVIL TOWN** March 25, Enterprise National League  
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**BOSTON UNITED** March 28, Enterprise National League  
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**ALDERSHOT TOWN** April 6, Enterprise National League  
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**SCUNTHORPE UNITED** April 18, Enterprise National League  
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# Upcoming Fixtures 2025/26

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## Home



### Southend United

Tuesday 2nd September, 7:45pm  
Enterprise National League



### Gateshead

Saturday 13th September,  
Enterprise National League



### Leicester City

Tuesday 16th September, 7:00pm  
National League Cup

## Away



### Scunthorpe United

Saturday 6th September, 3:00pm  
Enterprise National League



### Morecambe

Saturday 20th September, 3:00pm  
Enterprise National League

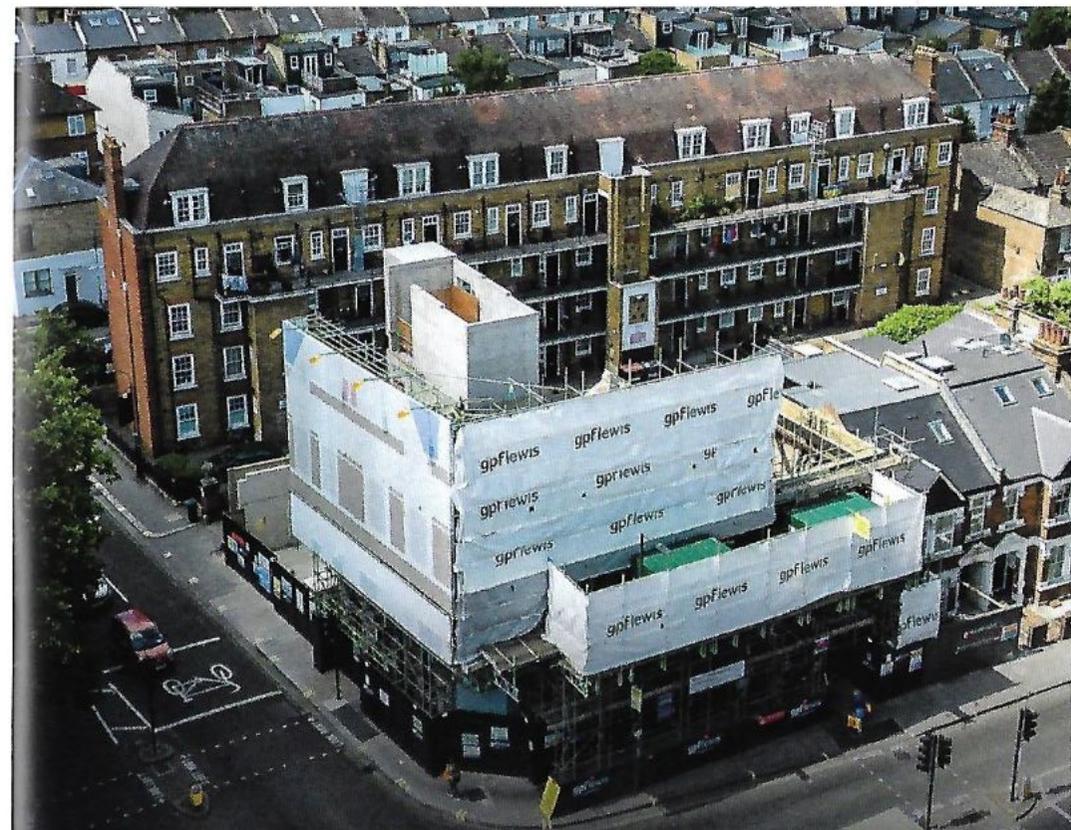


### Tamworth

Tuesday 24th September, 7:45pm  
Enterprise National League

## Enterprise National League 2025/2026 @ Monday 25th August /2025

	P	HW	HD	HL	AW	AD	AL	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts	H	A
1 Forest Green Rovers	5	3	0	0	1	1	0	4	1	0	11	3	8	13		
2 Rochdale	5	3	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	1	10	3	7	12		
3 Carlisle United	5	1	2	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	12	4	8	11	0-1	
4 Hartlepool United	5	2	0	0	1	2	0	3	2	0	8	1	7	11		
5 Southend United	5	1	2	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	7	1	6	11		
6 Scunthorpe United	4	1	1	0	2	0	0	3	1	0	9	5	4	10		
7 Wealdstone	5	2	0	1	1	0	1	3	0	2	7	5	2	9		
8 Gateshead	5	1	0	1	2	0	1	3	0	2	8	11	-3	9		
9 Brackley Town	4	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	5	4	1	7		
10 Boreham Wood	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	7	7	0	7		
11 Aldershot Town	5	1	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	3	15	10	5	6		
12 York City	4	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	3	0	5	3	2	6		
13 Altrincham	5	2	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	3	7	8	-1	6		
14 Boston United	4	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	5	6	-1	6	1-2	
15 Eastleigh	5	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	3	5	6	-1	6		
16 Braintree Town	5	2	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	3	5	9	-4	6		
17 Tamworth	5	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3	5	7	-2	4		
18 Yeovil Town	5	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3	5	8	-3	4		
19 FC Halifax Town	5	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	4	8	-4	4		
20 Morecambe	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	5	-3	3		
21 Solihull Moors	5	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	3	2	4	10	-6	3		
22 Sutton United	5	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	3	4	10	-6	2		
23 Woking	5	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	4	3	11	-8	1	2-1	
24 Truro City	5	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	5	1	9	-8	0	2-0	



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