

TEAM LINE-UPS: JULY 16 & 20

THE MIGHTY, MIGHTY stones

PRE-SEASON 2024-25
PROGRAMME £2



v Notts County
Tuesday July 16 2024, 7.30pm
v Millwall UNDER-21s
Saturday July 20 2024, 3pm

NOTTS CO



White/Black Stripes

- G Sam SLOCOMBE 1
- G Aidan STONE 26
- G Alex BASS
- Jacob BEDEAU
- Matty PLATT
- Rod McDONALD
- Dan CROWLEY 7
- Sam AUSTIN 8
- Jodi JONES 10
- Aaron NEMANE 11
- Will RANDALL 14
- David McGOLDRICK 17
- Matt PALMER 18
- Cedwyn SCOTT 19
- Scott ROBERTSON 20
- Adam CHICKSEN 23
- Junior MORIAS 27
- Lewis MACARI 28
- Alassana JATTA 29
- Curtis EDWARDS
- Nick TSAROULLA

WEALDSTONE



Royal Blue/White/Blue

- G Archie MATTHEWS 1
- Jack COOK © 2
- Deon WOODMAN 4
- Mason BARRETT 6
- Enzio BOLDEWIJN 7
- Craig EASTMOND 8
- Sean ADARKWA 9
- Max KRETZSCHMAR 10
- Todd MILLER 11
- G Jacob ADAMS 13
- Micah OBIERO 14
- Eliot SIMMONS 15
- Luke DREHER 16
- Dom HUTCHINSON 17
- Adrian MARIAPPA 19
- Sam ASHFORD 20
- Kallum TRACEY CESAY 21
- Trae COOK-APPIAH 29
- Brandon MASON 32
- Declan PHILLIPS
- London BROOKSHAW
- A TRIALLIST
- A TRIALLIST
- A TRIALLIST

MILLWALL

White/Navy or Orange

- Dillion ADDAI G
- George EVANS G
- Ethan WADEY G
- Nino ADOM-MALAKI
- Oliver EVANS
- Kamari GRANT
- Alex MITCHELL
- Chinwiki OKOLI
- Kyle SMITH
- Ralees BANGURA-WILLIAMS
- Sha'mar LAWSON
- Henry HEARN
- Tom LEAHY

WEALDSTONE NOTTS CO

Officials v Notts County Referee: Steve Parkinson
Assistant Referees: Dan Maljon and Ollie Kaya

WEALDSTONE MILLWALL

Officials v Millwall Referee: Jason Richardson
Assistant Referees: To Be Announced

MAIN CLUB SPONSORS



NEXT AT THE VALE: CRAWLEY TOWN (LEAGUE ONE)
PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY, TUESDAY JULY 23, 7.30PM



DYER ON FIRE
The evergreen Alex
Dyer on the attack at
Chesham on Saturday
PICTURE: JON TAFFEL



walking in a wealdstone wonderland

BY TIM PARKS PICTURES BY JOHN TAFFEL



Welcome back to the Vale... and don'tcha just LOVE pre-season!

Our wonderful club continues to evolve, both on and off the pitch with a raft of top-quality and experienced players signing up for Matty Taylor's Stones as we switch over to an almost-full-time environment at Brunel University.

The explosive ex-Notts County winger Enzo Boldewijn, former Sutton skipper Craig Eastmond and Watford defensive legend Adrian Mariappa are the standout captures but also looking good in pre-season (so far) are new young keeper Archie Matthews (ex Swansea and Swindon), midfield general Elliot Simmons (signed from Vancouver), ex-QPR centre back Deon Woodman, former Brighton winger Todd Miller and the goal-hungry Sam Ashford (ex Crawley). And with Luke Dreyer on his way back to full fitness it's like we have another new signing in the former Palace star!

Add on the successes of last season in Kallum Cessy, Sean Adarkwa, Mason Barrett, Brandon Mason, Micah Obiero, Dom Hutchinson and the evergreen Jack Cook and Max Kretschmar - not to mention the exciting talent of Trae Cook-Appiah - and you can see why it could be a mouthwatering 2024-25 for the new gaffer Matty and his assistant Paul Hughes.

Notts lose Langstaff.... to Lions
THIS programme, of course, covers both the Tuesday night visit of League Two Notts County and the game against Millwall's under-21s. He's probably too old to qualify but it would be good to see the Lions' new capture from Notts, Macaulay Langstaff, having a run out at the Vale following his (reported) £750,000 signing. Gateshead, the prolific Langstaff's first club, are due a tidy £10% sell-on



Enzo Boldewijn



Craig Eastmond



Todd Miller



Simmons & Kretschmar



Archie Matthews



Sam Ashford

windfall but the biggest winners in that regard must be Maidenhead - who have reportedly trousered a whopping £4m as their own 10% cut of the Max Killman transfer from Wolves to West Ham. A nice sell-on if you can get it!

We tend to finance our own signings thanks to the generosity of the fans, and it was good to see The Stones Family responding to the appeal for extra transfer funding to help enable our own marquee captures. It undoubtedly strengthens the bond between players and supporters.

You may be wondering how we managed to get the full might of Notts County down the M1 to the Vale for tonight's first home friendly... well I reckon that the Stuart Maynard, and Matty and Craig Saunders connection might have played a small part!

After being lured up to Meadow Lane early this year, the trio have laid solid foundations for a promotion push this season - despite losing Macaulay the goal machine - and the club's set-up is surely deserving of a place in League One. It will be interesting to see how our teams compare this evening.

Young Lions are Champions!
THANKS also to Millwall for sending their U-21s across London for Saturday's clash, with the relationship between our two clubs strengthened by the successful loan spells of Kyle Smith and Abdul Abdulmalik last season. It's no secret that we have designs on four or five loan signings before the National League season kicks off so watch this space!

Their Under-21s had a sensational 2023-24 season, winning the Professional Development League (Southern Section) by eight points from distant runners-up Swansea and Bournemouth. Watford, QPR and Ipswich were all left in their wake as they won 17 games of their 29-game season. Millwall's 1st XI don't seem to have a game when we face them - sandwiched between friendlies against Gillingham and Nottigham Forest - so hopefully there will be a good turnout from London SE16.

It would be remiss not to pass on the

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Continued from page 2

condolences of all at Wealdstone Football Club for the tragically young death of the Lions' first XI goalkeeper Matija Sarkic, who was just 26-years-old when he fell ill in his home nation of Montenegro.

A new cup competition

ONE of the most intriguing developments of the summer has been the creation of a new midweek cup competition, comprising the top 16 National League clubs (yes, we finished 16th!) in four regional groups of eight, along with 16 Premier League academy sides, with the group games staged at the NL clubs. The top two in each group will qualify for the knock-out quarter finals, again staged by the National League clubs, with the final at a venue to be decided.

If the NL clubs had reservations about squeezing this into the 46-game League season it has been sweetened (apparently) by each club receiving £10,000 for taking part, £8,000 for each win and £4,000 for each draw in the group stage. Then they will collect £15,000 for a quarter final win, £30,000 for runners up and £60,000 for the winners.

That is quite a financial carrot being dangled! The attraction for the Prem clubs is to toughen up their young stars with properly competitive games against seasoned pros... but with the competition due to start in November there must be a temptation for NL clubs to play fringe or squad players.

However there is also a stipulation that at least four outfield players from the previous National League fixture must feature among the ten outfield players in the new competition. Fascinating stuff!

It has the promise of getting people down

to the Vale to watch good quality opposition on otherwise quiet midweek nights. So it's a win-win in my opinion.

A draw and defeat so far..

WITH the release of the National League fixtures last week (the full list shown right) the new season looms in sharp focus.

We'll have the full details from the early warm-up games in next week's double-header programme for the Crawley and Milton Keynes Dons games, but after kicking off with a 3-3 draw at Isthmian Premier side **Walton & Hersham** 10 days ago (a comedy own goal, Sean Adarkwa and Dom Hutchinson scoring) we had the pleasure of a trip to **Chesham United** for another warm-up game last Saturday.

Again it was a mixed bag of opinions after the game; we dominated the ball for most of the 90 minutes but couldn't quite force clear openings against a defence well marshalled by ex-Stones Connor Stevens and Jack Cawley. And a goalkeeping howler gave the new National League South side a 1-0 win. But these are the games in which to make mistakes - and overall the 20-man squad, and two triallists, acquitted themselves really well. It's all about fine tuning.

Manager Matty Taylor confirmed that our ex-Vancouver FC midfielder Elliot Simmons should have recovered from his hamstring pull in time to play a part against Millwall.



New Stones signing Enzo Boldewijn (right) goes past Connor Stevens in the defeat at Chesham. PICTURE: Jan Taffe!

Stones Varamo National League fixtures (home games in bold type)

- Sat Aug 10 Dagenham & Red
- Sat Aug 17 Oldham Athletic
- Tue Aug 20 Sutton United
- Sat Aug 24 Hartlepool United
- Mon Aug 26 AFC Fylde, 3pm
- Sat Aug 31 Solihull Moors
- Sat Sep 7 York City
- Tue Sep 10 Woking
- Sat Sep 14 Forest Green Rovers
- Sat Sep 21 Barnet
- Tue Sep 24 Southend United
- Sat Sep 28 FC Halifax Town
- Sat Oct 5 Gateshead
- Sat Oct 12 Emirates FA Cup 4Q
- Sat Oct 19 Yeovil Town
- Tue Oct 22 Braintree Town
- Sat Oct 26 Ebbsfleet United
- Sat Nov 2 FA Cup 1st round
- Sat Nov 9 Aldershot Town
- Sat Nov 16 Rochdale
- Sat Nov 23 Eastleigh
- Tue Nov 26 Tamworth
- Sat Nov 30 Altrincham
- Sat Dec 7 Isuzu FA Trophy Rd 3
- Sat Dec 14 Oldham Athletic
- Sat Dec 21 Dagenham & R.
- Thu Dec 26 Maidenhead U, 3pm
- Wed Jan 1 Boston Utd, 3pm
- Sat Jan 4 Isuzu FA Trophy Rd 4
- Sat Jan 11 Altrincham
- Tue Jan 14 Sutton United
- Sat Jan 18 Hartlepool United
- Sat Jan 25 AFC Fylde
- Sat Feb 1 Solihull Moors
- Sat Feb 8 Gateshead
- Sat Feb 15 Yeovil Town
- Tue Feb 18 Braintree Town
- Sat Feb 22 Ebbsfleet United
- Sat Mar 1 Aldershot Town
- Tue Mar 4 Tamworth
- Sat Mar 8 Rochdale
- Sat Mar 15 Eastleigh
- Sat Mar 22 Woking
- Sat Mar 29 York City
- Sat Apr 5 Forest Green Rovers
- Sat Apr 12 Barnet
- Fri Apr 18 Boston United, 3pm
- Mon Apr 21 Maidenhead U, 3pm
- Sat Apr 26 Southend United
- Mon May 5 FC Halifax T, 3pm

Separated by 80 years, two players with some extraordinary Stones and Notts tales to tell...

EX-STONES midfielder George Nicholas had a disappointing football career but he can summon the memory of a fantastic night on the biggest of stages 15 years ago.

For the then 19-year-old George, in his second season as a young professional at League One Notts County, found himself playing against Juventus at the grand opening of the Italian giants' amazing new Delle Alpi stadium.

"It was unreal, absolutely unreal" said George, looking back in wonderment. As the Guardian football writer Richard Williams wrote the next day, Juventus' decision to invite the club standing 12th in English football's third tier to open the beautiful 41,000-seater stadium was 'probably the most elegant gesture in football history'.

But why Notts County? And why give an 18-year-old playing time on the same pitch as Alessandro Del Piero, Gigi Buffon and Andrea Pirlo, while legends such as Dino Zoff, Giampiero Boniperti, Luis Del Sol, Fabio Capello, Marcello Lippi, Claudio Gentile, Roberto Bettega, Ciro Ferrara, Angelo Di Livio, Edgar Davids, Paolo Montero and Fabrizio Ravanelli watched from the stands?

It all goes back to 1903, when Juventus member John Savage, an Englishman, asked then-top flight Notts County for a set of black and white striped shirts to replace the pink jerseys they'd worn since their founding by a group of students six years earlier. Fast forward 108 years, and County tentatively contacted Juventus with an invitation to visit Nottingham for a match to celebrate their 150th anniversary. The response was more than they could have imagined! Juve imme-



Juve players applaud the crowd at the final whistle and George (3rd right) tries to take in the enormity of the occasion

diately called to suggest that they might become the first visitors to the new ground, which was built on the site of the unloved Stadio delle Alpi in Turin's northern suburbs.

"The whole thing was fantastic to have been a part of," recalls George, who hails from Stanmore. "They looked after us so well, accommodation and a state of the art training ground, and I got to play the last 30 minutes – and I got on the ball quite a bit because Juventus weren't in your faces... not until you reached the final 3rd anyway!"

Could Del Piero, in his 678th game, score his 285th goal and Juve's first in their new home? The nearest he came was a shot over the bar from the edge of the area.

Robert Burch, the Notts goalkeeper, saved a penalty from Fabio Quagliarella eight minutes in the second half but Luca Toni slid the rebound home. One-nil would have been a great result for County... but, amazingly, they equalised in the 87th minute when a free-kick squirmed out of the hands of Alex Manninger, the Juve keeper. George Nicholas prodded the loose ball across the six-yard box and Lee Hughes slammed it home. What a night for George – an assist on one of the great occasions in Italian football history!

Sadly, after having made his League One debut against Brighton at the tail end of the 2010-11 season, he was destined not to play again for County and ended up being released at the end of the 2011-2012 season. George was also unable to claim a regular place in Stones' boss Gordon Bartlett's play-off chasing side the next season... but he did make a bit of a name for himself soon after joining Northwood at the end of 2012 – when he was talent-spotted by a modelling agency (pictured above) and spent some time on catwalks in New York and around the world.

OUR RECORD v NOTTS COUNTY:
P7 W0 D1 L6 F6 A24



Eight decades later, Harold Smith moves the other way: Notts County sign the young midfielder for just £10 and a set of shirts!



Smith, the latest Notts County recruit, who played briefly this afternoon at Meadow Lane

BY ROGER SLATER
Harold Smith, born in 1908, made his first appearance for Wealdstone Reserves as a 16-year-old but it was not until the start of the 1925-26 season that he took his place in the First XI.

Initially playing as an inside forward, he soon reverted to the half back line where he became noted as a tough tackling centre-half with good passing ability. Later in the season, his prominence was noted by other clubs... and he was to become the first player to transfer from Wealdstone into the professional game when signing for Notts County.

As he was an amateur, there was no formal transfer fee involved. He expressed his desire to leave and the club granted his wish – in fact he left just a matter of days later – however Notts County did offer compensation to their amateur counterparts and the first ever transfer fee received by Wealdstone from another club is duly recorded as £10 0s 0d, a full set of shirts for the first team and confirmation that Notts County would bring down a full first team for a friendly match later in the season!

The Harrow Observer kept Wealdstone fans in touch with his career, reporting in March 1931 (Smith joined Notts County in November 1930) that "Smith is making excellent progress and has created a highly favourable impression in Third Division football. His play has frequently been praised by the critics and in a recent game, for example, Losely, the Gillingham centre forward, had a poor match against the much-improved centre half who outshone Dewsey and Kemp in the Notts County half back line".

On April 29th 1931, the promised match with

Notts County was staged and the Harrow paper reported: "A crowd of 2,300 saw Notts County, the Southern Section Third Division Champions, engage with Wealdstone, the local Athenian Leaguers. Smith, who up until November was Wealdstone's centre half and captain, soon made good on turning professional. After three games with the 'County Reserves, he secured his place in the first team and retained it for the remainder of the season by his consistent good form. Mr H Henshall, the Notts County manager told an Observer representative that Smith had done remarkably well and Notts County would wish to have a few more like him from Wealdstone!"

County paid Wealdstone the respect of fielding their strongest possible side and the home team turned out in new colours, black and white halves replacing the usual Royal

Blue (these were the shirts provided as part of the transfer by Notts County, becoming the club colours for three seasons).

The cheer, which greeted the County players as they took the field, was obviously largely a personal one for Smith, who captained them for the occasion, and the cheering was resumed when he shook hands with C Davies, the home captain, and won the toss.

As was to be expected the County side proved too good and ended up 8-3 winners. Poulson, the home goalkeeper was continually in action throughout the first half, and earned the appreciation of the spectators by many clever saves.

The County's 5-1 lead at the interval was largely due to the opportunism of their clever young inside-left, Hall, whose accurate first time shooting earned him four goals.

Between 1930 and 1935, Harold Smith played 117 times for County, scoring five goals and was in the County team that won the Division Three South Championship in 1931.

He transferred to Cardiff City in 1935 making 55 appearances before transferring again in 1937 season to Peterborough United, then in the Midland League, making a further 40 appearances in his first season – but was then injured after helping Posh through five FA Cup ties to reach a first round tie against Bristol Rovers. War broke out and he only turned out one more time for Peterborough in the 1939-40 season. The famous Mr Smith died in 1979.

We've only lost once to Millwall...but it was the one game that really mattered

BY TIM PARKS



It's 1966 and the FA Cup 1st Round: Millwall keeper Alex Stepney (of later Man Utd fame) dives to save from Stones' Johnny Ashworth (No. 5, 2nd left)



Just look at that Wealdstone record v the Lions at the foot of this page!

On the face of it, pretty impressive until you realise that four of the five previous meetings have been friendly matches, or long-ago London Challenge Cup clashes against a Millwall reserve side with a sprinkling of first teamers.

In fact the only time we've faced the full might of the South Londoners was almost 60 years ago on Saturday November 13th 1965 when the Isthmian League Stones were drawn away to Division Three leaders Millwall at the Old Den. It's safe to say that little old Wealdstone's travelling army of just over 1,000 fans in the 11,742 crowd thought their main worries revolved around sourcing rosettes and scarves in gold and black, our unpopular second choice colours. Millwall were in blue and white stripes.

But once the game started our supporters were surrounded by hordes of belligerent-looking Lions and - although Millwall took a early 2-0 lead - the tinderbox atmosphere was fuelled when our centre-forward Jim Cooley smashed the ball past the England under-23 keeper Alex Stepney.

Stones fan Ray Kemp, probably one of the few current supporters who were there that day, said years later: "I don't mind telling you that it might have got very ugly, in those days of non-segregation, until Millwall got a late third goal. I was quite relieved to see that

go in".

The Lions had taken the lead through their striker Mickey Brown (who later starred for the Southern League Stones between 1971 and '73) before McKendry beat Brian Goymer for 2-0. Rowan headed the clincher after 82 minutes from Len Julians' cross.

Three of the other four clashes between our sides came in the London Challenge Cup: the first in 1962 when two-goal Hughie Lindsay and



It's 1972 and George Duck (No. 10) leaps to head Stones ahead at Lower Mead

Archie Knox saw Athenian League Stones beat the professionals 3-0 at a waterlogged Lower Mead... and then a memorable couple of games in early 1972-73 when we had the thrill of visiting Cold Blow Lane again for a tie that ended 2-2 in a real thriller. Ex-Lion George Duck was brilliant against his former team mates - there were four Millwall first team players in their line-up including Frank Saul who grabbed one of the goals. Dixie Hale and Eddie Presland gave Stones a 2-0 interval lead but the

Lions showed their teeth to force a replay. But there was no respite at Lower Mead a week later.

Eire international Eamonn Dunphy bolstered the Millwall side but he was powerless as Stones scored through Duck, Alick Brown and a Presland penalty to overcome Holmes' early strike for the Lions. The 1,189 crowd acclaimed a 3-1 win.

Our most 'recent' clash came in April 1981 when a young Millwall side were smashed 7-0 at Lower Mead in a friendly. Nigel Johnson scored four, Stuart Pearce, Neil Cordice and Paul Bowgett from the penalty spot.

OUR RECORD v MILLWALL:
P5 W3 D1 L1 F16 A6

WEALDSTONE BATTLE HARD BEFORE LOSING TO MILLWALL

Stones 1, Millwall 3

'Pre-season has been the toughest ever...we want to play a pressing game and fitness levels are a key part of that'

2000s which featured Matty Taylor (now gaffer) playing for Portsmouth, Bolton and West Ham. So it has been a little surreal adjusting to this new dynamic but one that has been easy of course. Even with the fairly small amount of time I've spent with the gaffer on the phone and on the training pitch, it's clear he's done in-depth analysis on last season. What we did well and where we can improve both as players individually and as a team.

Pre season has been tough and the hardest I've encountered since being at Wealdstone. It's clear that we want to play a pressing game and with that extra training session on a Monday-morning now, it is the hope that fitness levels can be improved and tactically we can work on things more too, given the extra hours on the training pitch. The new hybrid training model and the fantastic facilities at Brunel University have given the club and players a more professional feel.

Competing in the National League financially is way beyond the capabilities of a Wealdstone in all honesty, and our player recruitment has reflected this in recent years. Signing young, talented and

maybe previously misunderstood players and giving them the platform and playing structure to really prove themselves and sell for profit. And this will continue.

I'm sure, however, that with the signings of Craig Eastmond, Adrian Mariappa, Enzo Boldewijn and myself, there's cause to optimistic that with this extra, added experience we can strike up a perfect mix of experience and hunger.

We were 13th in the National League when Stuart Maynard departed in January so it's clear we have the potential to achieve great things here. With the positive news off the pitch and the squad we are gathering, I'm confident we can fulfill and even surpass our lofty aspirations.

That's the beauty of every pre season. No matter what happened the season prior, every fan and player is met with that optimism of what could be this year...

Enjoy the games and up the Stones!

Hello everyone and welcome back to the Vale. It's been long and overdue but FOOTBALL IS BACK!

I know how it can be so agonizing for football fans to wait and try to busy themselves on a Saturday afternoon... trips to the garden centre or shopping escapades with the other half just don't cut it do they?

There's nothing quite like football on a Saturday in England.

In contrast, I think us players needed that rest from last season, particularly off the back of that gruelling stretch of games towards the end of the season. And it was gruelling.

To play Saturday - Tuesday - Thursday - Saturday - Tuesday - Saturday, with the stakes as they were, is a credit to the players and the departing Sam Cox, who I wish all the best at Oxford City this season. He looks like a great fit there on paper.

Looking back at the 23/24 season as a whole, we mentioned on the Stonescast that it read like a soap opera. With three managers and a long and overdue cup run. There were the highs of the home matches against AFC Fyde, Dorking Wanderers and Chesterfield to the lows of Kidderminster (away) and the Solihull Moors (at the Vale) FA Trophy penalty shootout. It really was a rollercoaster of performances and emotions. But the players are refreshed and recuperated to go and do it all over again this season!

As a 30 year old now, I grew up with possibly the prime of the Barclays Premier League during the mid



Walton & Hershaw away and...Max is on freekicks again!

Don't miss my revealing vlog >>> youtube.com/@maxtalksfootball

YOU may have noticed, incidentally, that this programme is a little less glossy than usual, and that's because our usual printer (Stones fan Martin Lacey) is away on holiday and we've decided to do our bit to save the planet by using **Hillingdon Greenprint**, which is based here in Ruislip, for our (three in total) pre-season issues. They use plant-based ink and fully recycled paper, and can be found at www.hillingdongreenprint.co.uk. They are also very affordable!