

TODAY'S LINE-UPS

WEALDSTONE ROYAL BLUE/WHITE/BLUE



SOUTHEND UTD YELLOW/YELLOW/YELLOW

G Archie MATTHEWS 1	2 Gus SCOTT-MORRIS
Jack COOK 2	3 Nathan RALPH ©
Anthony GEORGIU 3	4 George WIND
Deon WOODMAN 4	5 Adam CROWTHER
Alex DYER 5	6 Ollie KENSDALE
Mason BARRETT 6	7 Jack BRIDGE
Enzio BOLDEWIJN 7	8 Noor HUSSIN
Craig EASTMOND 8	9 Macauley BONNE
Sean ADARKWA 9	10 Danny WALDRON
Max KRETZSCHMAR 10	11 Josh WALKER
Todd MILLER 11	14 Jack WOOD
G Jacob ADAMS 13	15 Joe GUBBINS
Micah OBIERO 14	16 Harry TAYLOR
Elliott SIMMONS 15	17 Cav MILEY
Luke DREHER 16	19 Aribim PEPPE
Dom HUTCHINSON 17	20 George MONCUR
Christian SCOTT 18	22 Keenan APPIAH-FORSON
Adrian MARIAPPA © 19	23 James MORTON
Sam ASHFORD 20	25 James HILLSON G
Kallum CESAY 21	26 Mikey FAULKNER
Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH 23	28 Oliver COKER
Henry SANDAT 24	30 Collin ANDENG-NDI G
Jack WELLS-MORRISON 25	
Elliott THORPE 26	
Declan PHILLIPS 28	
Callum McFARLANE 29	
G Sam HOWES 31	
Brandon MASON 32	

Officials Referee: Andrew Humphries Assistants: Conor Farrell and Thomas Whye Fourth Official: Daniel Bonneywell Observer: Philip Crossley

TODAY'S RESULT: WEALDSTONE SOUTHEND UTD

NEXT HERE AT THE VALE OCT 12: POSSIBLE HOME FA CUP 4TH QUAL TIE
OR: STONES v YEOVIL TOWN, SATURDAY OCTOBER 19, 3PM

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**PICTURE:
JON TAFFEL**

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Vanarama National League
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GROSVENOR VALE, SEPTEMBER 24: WEALDSTONE v SOUTHEND UNITED

With barely an intake of breath we move on to the next game!

Everyone reading this will have their own views on the 0-3 home defeat to Barnet three days ago but (as Stones boss Matt Taylor says in his column on the next page) everything has to be viewed with a large slice of reality.

We don't expect to be beating teams like Barnet, described by Matt as 'the best in the league', and in my view we can't judge the 2024-25 Stones until we've played some of the lesser lights.

And tonight's opponents Southend can't really be classed in those terms! They pulled off a terrific 4-2 win at Solihull Moors last Saturday and have been consistent performers despite transfer embargoes and points restrictions since they exited the EFL three years ago. Indeed, but for that 10-point deduction Kevin Maher's side would have been in the play-offs last season.

And now they've snapped up striker Macauley Bonne who may remember his previous appearance at The Vale! In November 2015, as a 20-year-old Colchester United striker he scored four goals as the League One side dumped us out of the FA Cup 6-2 in the 1st Round Proper.

The crowd that day was a ground-record 2,469 and one of those once-in-a-decade occasions... or so we thought then. A measure of how this club has progressed was that, in our fifth season of National League football we now have over 1,000 season ticket holders while 2,000 Wealdstone fans were in the ground for the game against Barnet last Saturday. It didn't quite replicate the occasion last season when just shy of that number saw the 3-2 win over The Bees - but thank you for just being here.

Next week supposedly sees the start of a controversial new cup competition that pitches 16 National League clubs against 16 Premier League 2 under-21 sides.

I say 'supposedly' because some of the details were still to be finalised at a meeting yesterday - after we had gone to print. At the time of writing, Stones are in the eight-strong Group A and will face Southampton, Fulham, Brighton &

Written in Stone

BY TIM PARKS



Supporters' Club chairman Mark Randall hands over a £10,000 donation to Stones' director Nick Symmons on Saturday

Hove Albion and Reading, all here at the Vale, by early next year. Our first game should be next Tuesday, Oct 1 when Southampton are the visitors (KO 7pm) followed by Fulham on Nov 5 (also 7pm) and Brighton on January 21 (7pm). The date for the game v Reading's Premier League 2 side has yet to be finalised. The other National League teams in our group are Aldershot, Maidenhead and Woking.

Of course, with several high-profile NL clubs like Barnet, Eastleigh, York and Southend declining to take part there have been mixed opinions - but the £1m prize fund donated to the competition by the Premier League (partly a sop to the smaller clubs after the axeing of lucrative FA Cup replays) means that each competing NL club will receive a considerable sum just for entering. More cash is on offer for each win, and progression into the knockout phase (two teams from each of the four divisions).

It will be a valuable exercise as regards game time for our squad members. There will be rules to prevent the NL sides fielding a totally youth squad and of course the Prem clubs are keen to get their academy stars into men's football action with seasoned National League professionals. Conversely, it also means that clubs can run the rule over possible

THE OTHER NL CUP PARTICIPATING CLUBS:

- Group B: Altrincham, Forest Green Rovers, Oldham, Rochdale, Blackburn, Man Utd, Stoke, Wolves
- Group C: Boston United, Gateshead, Halifax, Tamworth, Leeds U, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Sunderland
- Group D: Braintree, Dag & Red, Ebbsfleet, Sutton Utd, Nottm Forest, Tottenham, WBA and West Ham Utd.

Premier League 2 recruits in the future. It seems a win-win for those with a decent-sized squad of players chomping at the bit for action. Just so long as nobody else gets injured!

Big 'thank-yous' tonight go to match sponsors Smith & Latimer and also long-time supporter Tony Pauley for donating the match ball.

Apologies, incidentally, to another veteran fan Matty Snell for overlooking his donation of the matchball for the Barnet game. A big Thank You to him too! **Be loud, be proud! Tim**



WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2024/2025

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 2019 / 2020 National League South

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 1967 / 1968 Senior Cup
 1984 / 1985 Senior Cup
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 2010 / 2011 Charity Cup

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1997 / 1998 Isthmian League Division 2 (3rd)
 1998 / 1999 Isthmian League Division 1 (3rd, annulled)
 2003 / 2004 Isthmian League Premier Division

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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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- 2) No spectator ball games.
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- 4) Vehicles parked on the Grosvenor Vale site are at the owners' risk.
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- 6) No Smoking or Vaping inside the ground.

Wealdstone FC Board of Directors

THE GAFFER'S COLUMN: MATTY TAYLOR'S INSIDE TAKE

Good evening and welcome to tonight's opponents Southend United.

This gives us a chance to bounce straight back after the derby day defeat to Barnet - we can't feel sorry for ourselves and in football you have to move on very quickly. This is our chance to put that right.

Mad as it sounds, yes we lost 3-0 but there was much to be pleased about... what I really don't want is the players to have gone away thinking anything but that we weren't good enough in front of goal. That was the difference between the teams.

We lost that game through a penalty and a second-phase set play; we've not been cut open but we need to be more clinical at the other end. Our shape was good, our formation was good and so I'm extremely disappointed at the final result.

Our performance levels were good but you get punished by the good teams; Barnet are definitely one of them and took their chances. When we had ours, we're not quite at the level we need to be in that respect.

When you concede a goal it knocks your confidence but even at 2-0 down last Saturday I still thought we could get something out of the game - Elliot Thorpe (pictured above) put a great ball into the box and their defender was lying on the ball and smothered it, I'm not sure what the rules are there!

And Callum (McFarlane) had great movement all afternoon and he was unlucky to hit the post with that header. And when he was taken out by the goalkeeper, it should have been a red card.

So it certainly wasn't a 3-0 game. And now we face another very good side in



'We have played a lot of the top teams and only two of the bottom-half sides so we need a large slice of reality'

Southend, and follow that up with trips to Halifax and Gateshead. This league is relentless!

What I would say, though, is that we have played a lot of the top teams and only two of the bottom-half sides so we need a large slice of reality. I know the fans are with us; they can see the effort and hard work that every player, and the management team, is putting in but we have suffered a huge chasm with the injuries to Craig (Eastmond) and Sean (Adarkwa) plus the ongoing calf injury that Max (Kretzschmar) has picked up. I know how frustrating that injury is because I had the same soleus strain in my playing days and it's hard to treat. But he'll be back soon... Max desperately wants to help us out and yes, we need his experience and creativity.

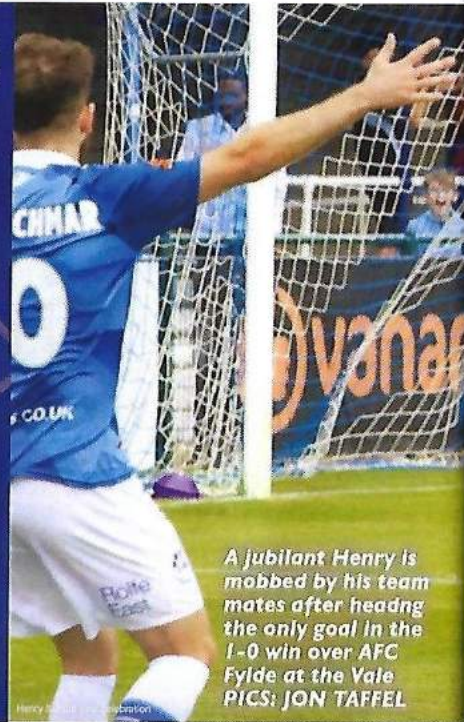
It was great to see Jaydn Mundle-Smith back on the pitch on Saturday and I know what a valuable part he's played in the last few seasons. He's been working really hard in training but even he can't go from zero to 100!

Thanks for your support and UTS!

'Now we face another very good side in Southend, and follow that up with trips to Halifax & Gateshead. This league is relentless!'



Henry's the boy from Southend keen to put ball in the Shrimpers' net tonight



A jubilant Henry is mobbed by his team mates after heading the only goal in the 1-0 win over AFC Fylde at the Vale
PICS: JON TAFFEL



We've been so hit by injuries you couldn't write it, but the goal I scored against Fylde was a great relief - that first one is so important just when you're wondering 'when is the first one going to come?'

"But you have to stay positive."

I asked him if he'd always been a striker?

"Well, I started off as a central midfielder and then at under-16 level I moved up to a number eight and then for the under-18s I was wearing the 10 shirt or playing as a striker". And who do you think you would work best with in a partnership (pre-Callum McFarlane)?

"I'd say me and Sam, although he likes to drop off into the same sort of areas as myself. I've not yet played with Sean Adarkwa, but I saw him play on the other side when Southend played Wealdstone last March and he was a nightmare to play against!"

"Just watching him that night was an education".

Last season, Henry played up front for Southend with Harry Caldwell (now at Forest Green Rovers) who was the perfect foil for a player like Henry who likes to operate in a deeper position.

"At Wealdstone we tend to play one up top, but with two No.10s who are more like strikers. Max Kretzschmar is great in that role; he's contributed four of the assists for our six goals this season so you can see how valuable he is."

Although Henry was born in Southend, attending Eastwood secondary school, he didn't grow up a Southend fan as his dad Scott is a die-hard Arsenal season ticket holder. And Henry has followed in his footsteps.

"I went to watch games at Roots Hall because I had to as an academy player, but not with my family. To be fair, my dad does sack off Arsenal and come and watch me play now - not the long trips, just the home games"

And one fun fact about Henry Sandat is that he could technically play for France as his grandad was born and brought up in that country before moving to England ... hence the unusual surname.

But Henry wouldn't turn his back on the chance to play for England should it ever arise. Preferably playing alongside the man he models his game on: Harry Kane.

"I probably shouldn't say this but

I try to play like Harry Kane. As a Gooner I should've kept that quiet!

"Obviously I'm nowhere near that level but I love to learn off him. In fact Kane was a late developer, not really reaching his peak till his mid 20s, so I've still got time!"

STONES' on-loan striker Henry Sandat is as frustrated as anyone at the team's inability to score goals... and on the eve of tonight's game against his hometown club, he was candid enough to point the finger at himself.

"I think I'm technically good, but when I get my chance I have to be clinical in front of goal," said the 19-year-old Hull City player. "I've been good in-between the boxes, but not in the box."

Henry, at the Vale until the end of the season, has just the one goal to his name in the 1-0 win over AFC Fylde. And he's haunted by his missed chances against Oldham and then at Woking.

"The header I put wide at Woking was so disappointing - the defender gave me a nudge, but I tried to be too clever, placing my head into the corner instead of just making sure I hit the target".

I asked him also about the odds-on penalty that the referee ignored as the Stones drew 1-1 at Hartlepool.

"The referees in this league are shambles" said Henry. "It wasn't a pre-arranged move from the free kick but some quick thinking between me and Alex Dyer gave me the chance to get on the ball... But my heels were clipped and I was also pushed in the back!"



Henry, who lives with his family in Southend and was born in the Essex town, made his debut for the Shrimpers as a 17-year-old after spending eight years in the club's youth system.

"It was Southend's first season in the National League and I made my debut off the bench at Aldershot in a 2-0 defeat. Then on my full debut against Gateshead at Roots Hall I scored the only goal in a win over Gateshead... it was a tap-in really after Callum Powell's shot had been half-saved by the goalkeeper".

It was Henry's only goal of the season, but Hull saw the potential in the teenager and signed him on a two year deal with a further option of another season.

But they quickly loaned him back out to Southend where he became a first team regular for the Shrimpers, hit by a transfer embargo.

"That's how I got my chance that season" said Henry. He was in the right place at the right time to score the equaliser against Wealdstone when the teams fought out a 1-1 draw in March last season.

"Hull are a great club but it's so tough to break into a championship squad - you have to be exceptionally good. Last season I was involved with the 1st XI in training, and on the bench for a few games and then

spent the rest of the season with the under-21s. In January I was back at Southend on loan and this summer I was wondering if I'd get another loan chance to improve myself as a player.

"There were a few clubs interested - I weighed up the options and Wealdstone was the most interesting. The manager called me up, we did a zoom session and found out that we had the same vision.

"I now travel across from Southend for training and matches... it's a long way, but you do anything for the sport you love."

Henry doesn't quite get the long-distance award as Enzo Boldewijn (interviewed in the last programme)

lives in Cheltenham, but the cross-London journey can be just as frustrating.

Said Henry: "The manager's put his trust in me and it's now up to me to repay him by scoring goals for this team. To be honest I didn't expect to have started so often but Matt (Taylor) is a great guy and a good coach.



Henry scores the only goal on his full debut for Southend v Gateshead two years ago



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FA CUP IS COMING... AND HOW STRANGE WAS 2020-21?

Around this time, four years ago, the Stones were embarking on our first season back in the National League in the strangest of circumstances.

With the draw for the FA Cup 4th Qualifying Round just round the corner next Monday, I thought I'd remind you of those bizarre times... not only was the COVID virus forcing every game to be played behind closed doors, but our very first game in the National League (v Chesterfield) was rained off... and crazily, the fans had been told they could watch the game on big screens in the social club but not in the stadium! Starved of football, I thought I'd cap one of most bonkers weeks in football history by attending a local FA Cup 2nd qualifying round game, only to stumble into further football bureaucracy.

It was AFC Dunstable v Hemel Hempstead. Level 4 Dunstable v 'Elite' Hemel from Level 2... which meant that Hemel fans were banned by the Government from attending.

Anybody else on the planet could pay their £8 to get in, but not the people really interested in going.

So I turned up at AFC Dunstable's Creasey Park ground, just 10 miles up the road from me, at ten to three and joined a long line of dark-coated men of all ages. No colours were showing. No Hemel scarves or hats, Nothing. Who were these mysterious strangers? I was allowed in as a neutral, once I'd checked in using my NHS track & trace app, and then noticed former Stones physio James Smith standing inside the gate. He's now helping out at Dunstable, as he lives locally, and was equally amused.

"It's just crazy" he said. "Why differentiate between fans of Level 1 and 2 clubs, and Levels 3 and 4? They are just football fans."

I took a few pictures and ambled up behind the goal that Hemel - the hot favourites - were attacking. Hemel's younger fans, the teens and early-20s, were conspicuous by their absence.. until I noticed they were all standing along one touchline trying to look inconspicuous. A couple of middle-aged guys were chortling among themselves. "Who do

'This disease is so clever it can differentiate between which level of team you support'



Tape on the barriers spell out the 'safe distancing' message

This 'neutral' act continued long into the game as the usually-vociferous Hemel fans were forced to pretend that they were merely half-interested bystanders. These neutrals were remarkably cross when Bernard Christie levelled on the hour mark with a terrific cross-shot.

"Bloody hell Hemel! What are we doing, drawing with this s**t?!" Other fans looked askance and the infuriated supporter hid inside his anorak.

But it's not as if anybody was going to apply the laws. I spoke to another Dunstable official before the final whistle - Hemel running out 2-1 winners thanks to a late penalty - and he said: "The rules are just baffling. It's like Covid-19 is so clever that it can differentiate between which level football team you support.

"We are desperate for any sort of income but we had to say that Hemel fans could not come to watch this game.. there are 218 here today, twice our normal number but under normal conditions there would be 400-odd for a local FA Cup derby.

"How can we police the no-away-fans rule? Well, there are Hemel officials here watching out to see that nobody they recognise is in attendance. All I can say is there are an awful lot of neutrals here today!"

-Tim Parks





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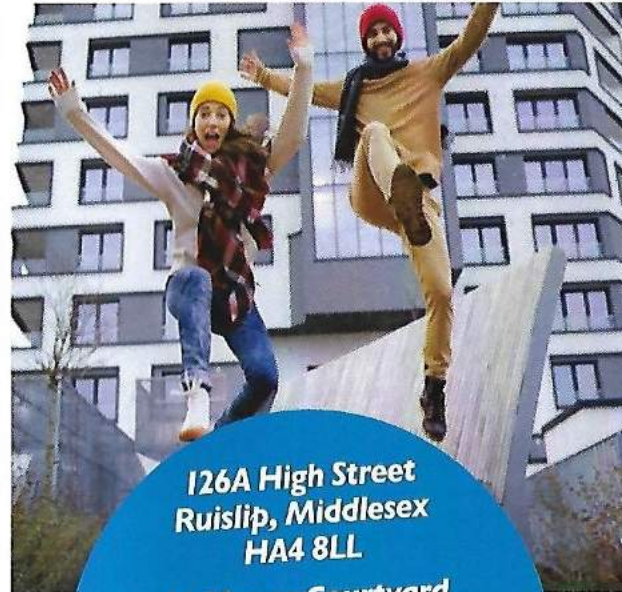


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The Fan in the Stand SPOTLIGHT TURNS ON ALEX KILROY, A DEVOTED TEACHER OF STONES HISTORY

'My first impression when walking into the Vale was of the soul, the character of the club. Dad described it as a family and he was right. As soon as I was old enough to understand it I was totally hooked'



Alex relaxes with a lemonade at The George pub, Nailsworth

Your name and age? Alexander Kilroy, 24.
Where do you live, Alex? I currently reside in Kings Langley. I must say it is a lovely part of the world.

Have you lived there long? I have only been here for around 6 months having previously lived in Harrow Weald and Bushey Heath.

What was your first game, and first impressions? My first real game was East Thurrock at home in late 2016. I do not remember all that much to be honest. Only that we had won 1-0. I think we scored late on. It took me till my 18th Birthday (for obvious reasons) for me to start going regularly. First Impressions... well, many of my impressions were instilled into me by my old man. My Dad is a Stones fan and was a regular at Lower Mead in the 80s. As a youngster he told me about the 'good times'. The '85 double, Stuart Pearce, the magic of Lower Mead. He also taught me the club's more recent and sad history; the sale of Lower Mead; the

Watford and Yeading years and most importantly PEP! So my first impression when walking into the Vale was of the soul, the character of the club. My dad described it as a family, and he was right. As soon as I was old enough to understand it I was totally hooked and never looked back.

What was the first live game you ever saw? My first-ever game was in the 2004/05 season. My mother's side of the family are all Chelsea fans. Season ticket holders. My first game at the Bridge was against Sheffield United, a 3-0 win. I must admit that for much of my childhood I was a Chelsea fan first and Stones fan second. Maybe it was the glitz and glamour of the Kings Road and Premier League football. Maybe it was the brilliance of Jose. God only knows. But once I matured, I realised the error of my ways.

What was the first TV game you saw? The first telly game I remember is not the game itself but just sitting with my dad in the living room seeing Zola just dance round Carragher making him look like he belonged in the Combined Counties League. Must have been the '03-04 season. From that point on I was hooked on football. I have Zola to thank for that.

Do you still follow Chelsea? Nah not really. My love of Chelsea has waned slightly since the crazy money now at the top of our game. The money, the VAR nonsense. That is not football. To Chelsea I am a number among millions. To this club, I am valued: the board, the players and the staff value each and every one of us whether we go home or away. That is

what makes this level of football but also this club so unique.

What's your most memorable Wealdstone moment? Too many to think of! Can I do a top three? Well, I'll do it anyway. In third place is Havant and Waterlooville away, when I first believed we would go and win that title. I love you Moses Emmanuel. In second, It sounds crazy and is rarely mentioned but Grimsby at home. Our first proper BELT win. For years while we were languishing in the Connie South I had been dreaming of beating a league club or ex-league club. For that to become a reality was something special. And I will go out on a limb here. Best atmosphere at the Vale, that last 20 mins... never heard the Bulla quite like it. And at No.1, for those who know me they know this one. Barker against the Cuckoos. Need I say more?

The emotion of that goal was too much for some. I have never admitted it until now even though there is photographic proof. But that brought tears to the eyes.

...And the best Wealdstone game? See above, Barnet at home. Just that moment for me. It was perfect. Nothing could have made that moment sweeter. Charlie Barker... thank you!

Who introduced you to the Stones? My old man introduced me to the Stones. I was drawn by the stories of days gone by. A giant of non-league football who (at the time) were wallowing in Connie South or lower. I was drawn to it in my teens and caught the bug big-style by the last season of Bobby Wilkinson. Which is surprising as the football was dire.

What level of football do you prefer? Stop asking silly questions, Vanadrama is the best. End of story.

How big a part of your life is football? How big? Well, it gets me through a working week looking forward to the next 3pm kick off, whether it's shorts weather or as cold as the Arctic I'm excited to go down to the Vale or some absolute dive in Canons Park. So yeah I would say Huge.

How do you fit watching football in with your family/working life? Football, girlfriend, work - in that order.

Where do you work? As many know, I am a History teacher at a school in Harrow. As well as being a history teacher I feel I am a Stones ambassador. I am forever showing my students Wealdstone highlights. I

even showed my year 11 class the Dorking at home highlights from last season. They didn't get it, sadly. They just laughed and said that Wealdstone are rubbish. I bit back and called Liverpool and United rubbish, and that I was right and they were wrong. Students were not happy with that. Detention was given for blasphemy from students.

Do you ever follow the Stones by the live stream? Yes I did watch the livestream in the Covid season until the league dissolved into chaos and we ended up signing people from Hennessey's or wherever to play for us. Those were dark times. I pray we never return to that. Just even thinking about it gives me the shivers.

How would you compare Lower Mead to the Vale? It does not compare not at all. Nothing compares to hearing *Move On Up* by Curtis Mayfield as the players walk out onto hallowed turf.

Who are the best Stones players you have ever seen? Again, a top three is in order (but only players that I have seen in the flesh) 3rd Northy; 2nd Jacob Mendy; 1st Ross Lafayette - "he's our striker he's our number 9, plays for Wealdstone, Blue and White, scoring goals is what he does best and he goes by the name of Lafayette."

'I even showed my Year 11 class the Dorking at home highlights from last season. They didn't get it, sadly. They just laughed and said that Wealdstone are rubbish. Detentions were handed out'

Can you name a best-ever Stones side? Again I can't rate players I have not seen. So let's call this a Best-Stones-Side-Post-Margate-Title-Win. in a 4-4 (effffinn)-2 formation.... GK: Wickens, RB: Jayden Sweeney, CB: COOOOOKIE, CB: Conor Stevens (yes I know he's jumped ship), LB: Mendy, CM: Godfrey Poku, CM: Billy Clifford, LM: Allarakhia (to the tune of Karma Chameleon - He comes and goes... plays

for the Sto-oh-ones), RM: Danny Danny Green. Need to fit him in somewhere. Miss those Adidas Predators, CF: Lafayette. The best there was, is or ever will be. ST: Browney...man, why did he have to go to the Cuckoos? What a player he was. Thanks for the free money. Would've got you a beer but now, no.

What's the best awayday experience so far? Halifax, hands down. If you have not gone, go. Unreal place.

Do you think Stones can aspire to playing in the EFL? Where do you think the future of the club lies? Yes I do think we can be EFL. Obviously new ground permitting. But we are a club on the up and have been since the turn of the century, if not before. We are in a good place. Have faith in our board for they have not steered us off course yet. Put our faith in this manager. Back the boys week in week out.

UTFS!



Delirium and despair as Barker scores!



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ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT **SOUTHEND UNITED**, THE SHRIMPERS

Today's opposition in focus

Oganised football in the Borough of Southend-on-Sea really started taking hold in the late 1890's. Clubs such as Southend Victoria, Southend Amateurs, Southend Corinthians, Southend Ramblers and even Southend Wesleyans were on the local scene at this time. .

A team called Southend United were recorded as early as 1898 but it is not known where they played. One thing is for sure is that they are in no way related to our club. At the same time over at Marine Park, which incorporated a football pitch among its attractions, Southend-on-Sea Football Club were establishing a reputation as a top amateur side. The clubs' colours were white shirts and blue 'knickers'. By 1900 this side has changed its name to Southend Athletic, and although Marine Park was later to become The Kursaal, Athletics' ground was radically different to the one occupied by Southend United in their early Football League days. It consisted of a railed off pitch surrounded by a 'trotting' track and a large pavilion with absolutely no spectator accommodation. Also during 1900 a new pitch was laid out adjacent to the large property in Victoria Avenue called Roots Hall. Ironically one of the first teams to stage games there was Southend Athletic. However the face of football in the Borough was to change forever following a meeting held in the Blue Boar Public House on May 19th 1906. It is well documented that Southend United were formed at this meeting convened by landlord Oliver Trigg and a band of fellow enthusiasts. In 1920 the Southern League clubs, including Southend United, were elected en bloc to form the new Third Division of the Football League. A year later this became the Third Division South as a northern section had also been introduced.

The 1955/56 campaign was to prove one of



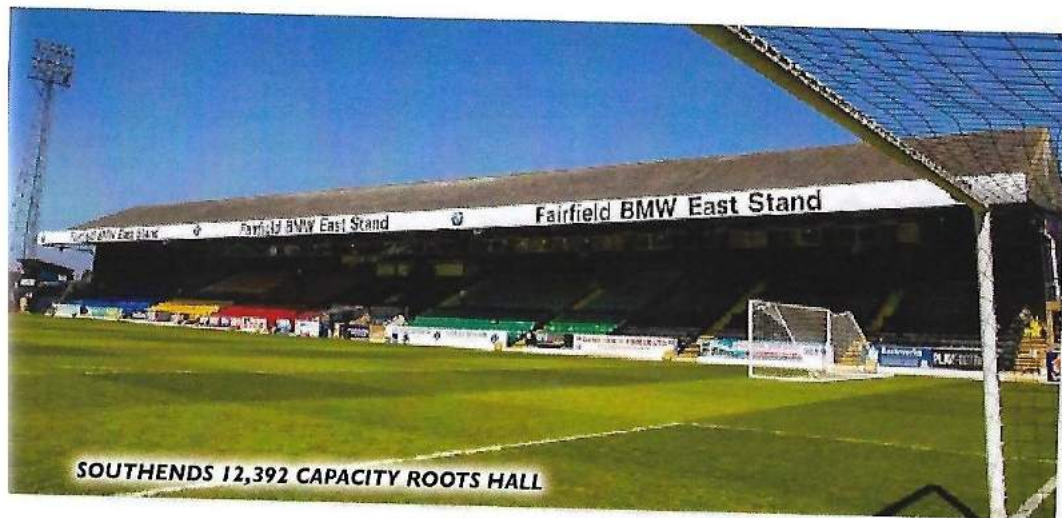
the most pivotal in the club's history. After 21 years at the largely unpopular Southend Stadium the Blues moved into their new home.

The new Roots Hall had been built entirely by internal labour with Sid Broomfield leading a small band of men to build the stadium we know and love today. The entire cost of the stadium, save for a small grant from the Football Association, was met by the Supporters Club and their extensive fundraising programme.

Southend United joined the new national Third

Division in 1958, where they remained until 1966 when they suffered their first ever relegation, into the Fourth Division. The club had to wait six seasons until 1972 to experience the club's first ever promotion as runners-up behind Grimsby Town. In 1976 Southend suffered relegation again before taking another runners-up spot behind Watford in 1978. Another relegation in 1980 was directly followed by one of the most successful seasons in the club's history as they won the Fourth Division Championship in 1981, breaking a series of club records in the process. Despite success on the pitch and low admission prices, the club's gates were low and condemned as "a bad reflection on the town"]

In 1984, the club was relegated to the Fourth Division (Bobby Moore was manager), and the following season finished 20th, narrowly avoiding having to seek re-election to the Football League. However, Southend gained promotion in 1987. Although relegated again in 1989, successive promotions in 1990 and 1991 saw Southend United reach the second tier of the Football League; in 1992, under manager David Webb, the club finished 12th in the old Second Division, having briefly topped the division on New Year's Day, 1992. In 1995, former Liverpool player Ronnie Whelan became player-manager & Southend finished 14th in Division One, but were relegated a year later and Whelan left the club. He was replaced by Alvin Martin but Martin was unable to avoid a second consecutive relegation. Martin left in April 1999, with Southend fifth from bottom in the Football League. Alan Little was manager for a brief



SOUTHENDS 12,392 CAPACITY ROOTS HALL

spell before the club turned again to David Webb, then Rob Newman, Steve Wignall and, in late 2003, former Southend United midfielder Steve Tilson.

Under Tilson, Southend reached their first national cup final, meeting Blackpool in the final of the Football League Trophy but the team did not rise to the occasion and Blackpool won 2-0. Tilson then led Southend to promotion to League 1 in 2005, while making a second successive appearance in the Football League Trophy final, which the Shrimpers lost 2-0 to Wrexham, but the third appearance at the Millennium Stadium in the League Two play-off final against Lincoln City brought success giving the club its first promotion via the play-off system and their first major silverware since 1981.

In May 2006 Southend became League One champions after beating Bristol City 1-0 at Roots Hall - the club's first title in 25 years. Tilson was named as the League Manager Association's Manager-of-the-Season for League One.

In 2006/07 the Shrimpers were relegated back to League One & the 2009-2010 season was tougher: a run of just one win in 2010 left Southend deep in trouble, and relegation to League Two was confirmed.

A transfer embargo at the start of the 2012-13 season saw the club start its campaign with a depleted squad. However, a successful loan signing - Britt Assombalonga from Watford - helped Southend to a run of 14 games unbeaten which saw them reach 4th in the table. League form dipped in early 2013. Phil Brown was brought in as manager but picked up just one win in his eight games in charge as Southend finished the season in 11th position. In 2015 Brown led the team, via a play-off final against Wycombe Wanderers (decided

LAST SEASON

TUE 5TH MAR 2024 - D 1-1 (A)

TUE 9TH APR 2024 - L 1-2 (H)

OUR RECORD AGAINST SOUTHEND
P17 W3 D4 L10 F18 A30 GD -12

7:6 on penalties), into League One.

On 22 October 2019, Sol Campbell was appointed manager of Southend. Financial difficulties, including a winding-up petition heard on 22 January 2020, resulted in non-payment of players' and other employees' wages. The winding-up petition was dismissed after debts were cleared.

On 9 June 2020, Football League clubs in Leagues One and Two agreed to end the 2019-20 season; Southend were relegated to League Two. On 30 June 2020, manager Campbell and three assistants left the club by mutual consent.

On 13 August 2020, Southend United appointed Mark Molesley, formerly manager of Weymouth, as their new manager on a three-year contract. On 9 April 2021, Molesley was sacked by Southend United having only won 8 games out of 45. The club were 23rd, five points from safety with six games remaining. Phil Brown returned as manager but could not rescue the situation; Southend suffered a second successive relegation.

On 3 October 2023, the club confirmed that they had reached an agreement for the sale of the club to the Justin Rees consortium and After 15 months, Southend's transfer embargo was lifted on 28 December 2023

Who's who for the visitors

2. GUS SCOTT-MORRIS - Defence

The right back joined Hemel Hempstead Town from Royston Town in 2021 and went on to make over 40 appearances for the Tudors in 2021/22. Scott-Morriss became the fourth addition to Kevin Maher's squad in the 2022 summer transfer window

3. NATHAN RALPH - Defence

Arriving from Scottish side Dundee in 2019, Nathan Ralph's first season at Southend was disrupted after dislocating his shoulder. Formerly of Peterborough, Yeovil, Newport and Woking, with loans at Kettering Town and Aldershot Town, Ralph won Dundee's Player of the Year award in 2018/19.

4. GEORGE WIND - Defence

Wind joined from Billericay Town, where he made well over 100 appearances for the Isthmian Premier League club. He previously played for another Essex outfit in Bowers & Pitsea, where he made his senior debut just 16, joining Billericay two years later.

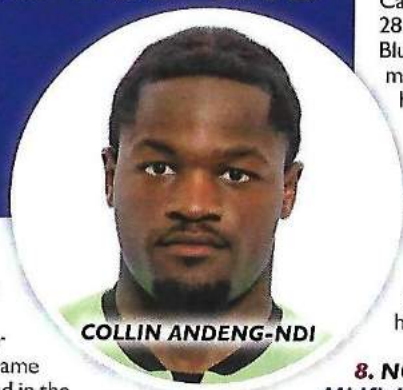
5. ADAM CROWTHER - Defence

Centre-back Adam Crowther joined Blues on a two-and-a-half year deal on 10 January 2024. The 6ft 4 defender signed from King's Lynn Town, where he played 65 league games across a season and a half.

6. OLLIE KENSDALE - Defence

Ollie Kensdale joined Southend United in January 2021 for an undisclosed fee from Concord Rangers. The defender progressed through Colchester United's youth system, making his first-team debut in November 2018. He made six appearances in total for the U's, also spending time out on loan at Maldon & Tiptree, Bath City and Braintree Town.

7. JACK BRIDGE - Midfield



COLLIN ANDENG-NDI

The midfielder started his career at Blues, and departed in 018 to join Northampton Town. In 2019, Bridge signed for Carlisle United. The 28-year-old was on trial at Blues in 2020, but when a move didn't materialise, he signed for Concord Rangers where he caught the eye of Bromley. Bridge spent the second half of the 2020/21 campaign with the Ravens before a return to his hometown club.

8. NOOR HUSIN - Midfield

The former Reading, Crystal Palace, Notts County and Stevenage centre midfielder arrived at Roots Hall on a two-and-a-half-year deal after Blues agreed an undisclosed fee with the National League South club. Husin, is an Afghanistan international, appearing 20 times for his country since his debut in 2019.

10. DANNY WALDRON - Forward

On 19 January 2024, striker Danny Waldron signed for the Shrimpers on an 18-month deal. Joining from Rushall Olympic, Waldron worked his way through the non-league pyramid, also playing for Leamington and Alvechurch. He scored a brace against Cheltenham Town in Alvechurch's remarkable run to the second round proper of the Emirates FA Cup in the 2022/23 season, in addition to 26 league goals across two seasons for the Church.

11. JOSH WALKER - Forward

On 8 July 2024, striker Josh Walker signed for the Blues on a two-year deal. Joining from League One side Burton Albion, Walker had previously played in the National League with Barnet and Dagenham, appearing 106 times in the division and scoring 32 goals.

14. JACK WOOD - Midfield

Jack Wood signed for the Shrimpers from Kings Langley in January 2022. He joined the seventh-tier side in 2019 at the age of 16, and signed for Southend on a two-and-a-half-year deal. Wood spent time on loan at National League South side Tonbridge Angels in 2022/23, netting eight goals.

15. JOE GUBBINS - Defence

On 8 July 2024, centre-back Joe Gubbins signed for the Shrimpers on a two-year deal. Released from Championship side Queens Park Rangers after four years with them, Gubbins previously featured in the National League with Aldershot and also had a stint on loan with the Blues in the 2021/22 season, appearing 10 times. In the 2023/24 season, Gubbins featured 37 times in League Two for Accrington Stanley, helping the side comfortably avoid relegation and keep 10 clean sheets along the way.

16. HARRY TAYLOR - Defence

In 2022, Harry Taylor joined the Blues on a two-year deal with the option of another year. He signed from Barnet, where he made over 185 appearances over an eight-year span. Capable of playing in midfield or in defence, Harry began his career in Chelsea's youth team before joining Barnet's academy in 2012 along with his younger brother Jack, now at Ipswich. Impressing hugely in the centre of defence across the campaign, Taylor went on to be voted Players' Player of the Season.

17. CAV MILEY - Midfield

Cav Miley joined the club in the summer of 2022, signing from fellow Vanarama National League side Eastleigh. Miley signed for the Spitfires at the age of 22 from Jersey-based club St Pauls, going on to make 178 league appearances and scoring seven goals from the centre of midfield. Following his move to Essex, Miley immediately established himself in the Blues starting XI upon joining and was named Player of the Year after a magnificent season which saw him appear in every single National League fixture. The midfielder was also awarded with the Goal of the Season following a fine injury time solo strike against Torquay United.

19. ARIBIM PEPPE - Forward

At the end of August, we announced the loan signing of 21-year-old striker Aribim Pepple. 6ft 1 frontman Pepple joins on a season-long loan from Luton Town and has experience abroad in both Canada and Spain. Born in Kettering before moving to Canada at the age of five, he played his first senior football for Canadian Premier League outfit Cavalry FC, where Pepple scored six goals in seven games in the 2022 season. That earned him a deal



GUS SCOTT MORRIS

with Luton Town, and while at Kenilworth Road, the forward has had loans at Grimsby Town, Bromley and Inverness Caledonian Thistle.

20. GEORGE MONCUR - Midfield

In August we announced the signing of George Moncur on a season-long loan from Leyton Orient. The 31-year-old also has a significant amount of experience in the Championship, where he's represented Barnsley, Luton and Hull City.

23. JAMES MORTON - Midfield

James spent 10 years with Bristol City, from 2013 to 2023. Morton had three separate loan spells with Bath City in that time, playing 84 league games for the Romans. Morton has also played for three different clubs in the EFL, Forest Green Rovers, Grimsby Town and Gillingham.

25. JAMES HILLSON - Goalkeeper

On 10 August 2024, we announced the signing of former Arsenal goalkeeper James Hillson on non-contract terms. The 23-year-old shot-stopper was on Arsenal's books for a number of years, appearing in both Premier League 2 and the EFL Trophy for the Gunners.

26. MIKEY FAULKNER - Midfield

Faulkner signed a professional contract with the Shrimpers in the summer of 2024 after impressing in the Club's academy.

27. BEAU MACDONALD - Midfield

The teenager signed a professional contract in the summer of 2024.

28. OLIVER COKER - Midfield

Oli Coker grew up watching Blues with his family, initially joining the youth team system in 2011. He made his first-team debut in October 2020

30. COLLIN ANDENG-NDI - Goalkeeper

The Italian-born shot-stopper's debut for the club came in the FA Trophy against Dorking Wanderers, with his first league appearance coming against Stockport County in April 2022. Hendon, Maidstone United, Billericay Town and Torquay United in the National League.

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FOOTBALL HISTORIAN LEIGH EDWARDS PROFILES TEN LEADING SOUTHEND UNITED MANAGERS

MANAGING TO SUCCEED BY LEIGH EDWARDS



various capacities. A former winger, he signed professional for Fulham in April 1938 and guested for Huddersfield, Brentford and Bradford City during the war. He helped Fulham, West Brom and Hull City win promotion in 1948-49, moving to QPR in August 1950.

After a spell with Hastings United, he became Southend's trainer in July 1959, then assisted Alvan Williams before succeeding him as manager from April 1967 until October 1969 and continued as general manager until May 1972. He was Orient's trainer, then coached in Dubai and died in March 2001

ARTHUR ROWLEY

Former England B international centre-forward Arthur Rowley managed Southend United to promotion in 1971-72. Initially with West Brom, he joined Fulham in December 1948, starring in their 1948-49 Second Division title triumph. He moved to Leicester City in July 1950 and twice helped win the Second Division title, becoming Shrewsbury's player-manager in June 1958. Starring as they won promotion in 1958-59 and were League Cup semi-finalists in 1960-61, he scored a record 434 League goals. After a spell as Sheffield United's boss, he managed Southend from March 1970 until May 1976. He died in December 2002.

DAVE SMITH

Dave Smith guided Southend United to the Fourth Division title in 1980-81. A former Burnley full-back, he joined Brighton in July 1961, then played for Bristol City and rejoined Burnley as trainer. He coached at Sheffield Wednesday, Newcastle and Arsenal, becoming Mansfield's manager in April 1974. Plotting their 1974-75 Fourth Division title triumph and 1975-76 League Cup run, he was appointed Southend's boss in May 1976, also winning promotion in 1977-78. He remained at Roots Hall until June 1983, then took Plymouth to promotion in 1985-86. Later managing Dundee and Torquay, he died in September 2022.

DAVID WEBB

Flamboyant manager

David Webb guided Southend United to promotion in two consecutive seasons. The defender played for Leyton Orient and Southampton before joining Chelsea in February 1968, starring as they won the FA Cup in 1970 and ECWC in 1971. He followed Dave Sexton to QPR in July 1974, then had spells with Leicester and Derby, becoming Bournemouth's player-boss in May 1980. Plotting promotion in 1981-82, he managed Torquay United, then Southend from June 1986 until July 1992. He rejoined Chelsea as manager in February 1993 and later had spells in charge of Brentford, Yeovil Town and Southend again.

COLIN MURPHY

Colin Murphy managed Southend United to the FA Cup fifth round in 1992-93. After a spell as Hastings United's player-boss, he coached Charlton Athletic, then assisted Dave Mackay at Nottingham Forest and Derby County where he became manager in November 1976. He was appointed Lincoln City's boss in November 1978 and was a promotion winner in 1980-81, then managed Stockport before returning to Lincoln, guiding them to the Conference title in 1987-88. Managing Southend from May 1992 until April 1993, he then managed Shelbourne, Notts County, Vietnam and Cork City. He died in September 2023.

BARRY FRY

Colourful manager Barry Fry had Southend United challenging for promotion to the Premier League during his spell in charge. Initially with Manchester United, the midfielder played for Bolton, Luton, Gravesend, Orient, Romford, Bedford and Stevenage before becoming Dunstable's boss, plotting promotion in 1974-75. After spells in charge of Hillingdon and Bedford, he joined Barnet as manager in November 1978, returning from Maidstone to lead Barnet to the Conference title in 1990-91. He managed Southend from April 1993 until December 1993, then Birmingham and Peterborough where he became director of football.



ERNIE SHEPHERD

TED BIRNIE

Long-serving manager Ted Birnie guided Southend United to the FA Cup fifth round in 1925-26. Initially with Sunderland Seaburn, the defender joined Newcastle United in June 1898 and helped their reserves win the Northern League title in three successive seasons. He moved via Crystal Palace to Chelsea in August 1906 and starred in their 1906-07 promotion campaign. Later with Spurs and Rochdale, he was Leyton's player-boss, then Rochdale's trainer and Southend's manager in January 1922. He led them to third place in the Third Division (South) in 1931-32. Remaining in charge until May 1934, he died in December 1935.

HARRY WARREN

Long-serving manager Harry Warren steered Southend United to the FA Cup fifth round in 1951-52. The son of former England international Ben Warren, the centre-half had spells with Gresley, Blackpool, Merthyr and Sheffield United before becoming Folkestone's player-boss in July 1931. He was briefly Chelmsford City's manager and took charge of Southend in August 1940. Guiding them to fourth place in the Third Division (South) in 1955-56, he remained Southend's manager until leaving for Coventry City in June 1956. He was sacked in September 1957 and resided in Leigh on Sea until his death in April 1968.

ERNIE SHEPHERD

Ernie Shepherd gave Southend United marvellous service in

STEVE TILSON

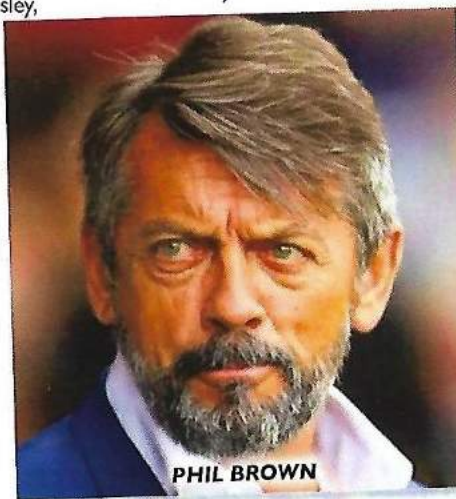
Steve Tilson managed Southend United to promotion in two consecutive seasons. The versatile midfielder played for Witham before moving to Southend in February 1989, featuring in their rise under David Webb. He netted 26 goals in 139 League games prior to joining Carvey Island in June 1997, starring in their 2001 FA Trophy final triumph, re-joining Southend in October 2002. Appointed manager in May 2004, he took them to their second consecutive LDV Vans Trophy final and League Two play-off final glory in 2004-05, then the League One title in 2005-06. He has since managed Lincoln City, Canvey and Heybridge Swifts.



STEVE TILSON

PHIL BROWN

Phil Brown managed Southend United's 2015 League Two play-off final triumph. A former right-back with Hartlepool and Halifax, he joined Bolton Wanderers in June 1988, helping win promotion in 1992-93. Later with Blackpool, he coached Bolton, then managed Derby County before replacing Phil Parkinson as Hull's manager in December 2006. He led them to the top-flight for the first time via the Championship play-offs in 2007-08 and has since managed Preston, Southend from March 2013 until January 2018, Swindon, Hyderabad, Southend again from April 2021 until October 2021, Barrow and Kidderminster.



PHIL BROWN

THE AWAY FAN: SOUTHEND'S LIAM AGER ON WHY SLOW

Man Utd were my first love until they drew Southend in the League Cup and I wanted Shrimpers to win. It was a real lightbulb moment!

Your name and age? Liam Ager, 36
What was your first Southend game, who introduced you to the club and what do you recall of the occasion? My first game was a home match against Ipswich in the 90s. My memories are hazy as I was only a wee lad but I remember Southend winning and Jason Lee getting some stick for his haircut. My Dad was gutted as he probably wanted me to be a Tractor Boy!

Do you travel to away games as well? I tend to do half a dozen or so per season. There are fewer Big Days Out below the Football League but the promise of a new ground or seeing friends in a different part of the country usually gets me on the train.

Have you come down to Grosvenor Vale the last few seasons? What did you think of the visit and the stadium? A real ground - my abiding memory will be my mate Jai hanging off the roof in the away end just to get a decent view. The Hop & Vine (bar in Ruislip High Street) was a real treat.

Do you follow any other team, or been tempted? Is following Southend a family thing? With shame, I followed Man Utd as my

Shrimpers boss
 Phil Brown at
 the 2015
 final



Liam is pictured with the FA Cup, which was cruelly denied the Stones after Southend knocked us out 45 years ago :)

first team until we were drawn together in the League Cup in 2006. As soon as the fixture was set I knew I didn't want Man United to win... it was a lightbulb moment.

Do you live in Southend? I live in Brighton, but my home will always be Southend-on-Sea. My connection to the club has helped me maintain and strengthen relationships with friends & family. Now just have to convince my partner to move there!

What is your favourite United memory of a time? Joe Pigott scoring the equaliser in the 122nd minute of the play-off final will take some beating. At the end of the season, Southend and Wycombe were level on points, with only 6 goals separating them in the table. Wycombe's goal in the play-off final came as a freekick hit the bar and then the turf before hitting our goalkeeper's back and trickling over the line. Pigott's goal saw the game go to penalties and prevented the unluckiest denial of a promotion I can think of. I was in bits when it went in.

How many Shrimpers fans can we expect this evening, and how are they travelling? We've been hugely impressed with the

TRAINS, PLANES OR AUTOMOBILES WON'T KEEP HIM AWAY

turnout in past years. Southend fans have rightly earned a reputation for travelling well so you can expect several hundred to be there. Last year, when the situation was at its worst, the players fought to keep the club alive on the pitch and the pride from the terraces will be there for years. There is no bus journey too slow, nor train connection too tight that would stop us from getting to Wealdstone

It's been a few years since Southend fell out of the EFL... is the non-League novelty wearing off? We have been treated abysmally by the league and while I've enjoyed seeing some smaller grounds where you can get right up alongside the pitch, I'd be delighted to see us back in the Football League.

Can you mount a promotion charge this season? We've not been able to do our transfer business early this year as the take-over rumbled on but we've been able to add quality to the strongest defence in the league last season without losing too many players. There's no clear favourites from where I'm standing so, as long as we get a bit of luck, we could be up there. I really hope we can at least qualify for the playoffs

Are the fans confident that the ownership details have finally been ironed out? Ron Martin still owns the ground and was using the club as a human shield while he made his property play. I didn't believe it until the company info was update on the government's own website but the club is finally safe. Hopefully the rest will follow in the



'Kevin Maher, Darren Currie and Mark Bentley have turned the players into a real machine'

coming months.
Have Wealdstone surprised you? And had you heard of them before, or even where it is! (though we did play you in 1979 in the FA Cup) Wealdstone are a great team and far more than just a London Bus Stop. Brennan and Maynard were obviously massive parts of the clubs recent success so I'm hoping that the latter's departure has increased the chance of a win for us.

Is football a big part of your life and do you find it hard fitting it into working/family responsibilities? Football, sort of. Southend United, very much so. I find it really hard to connect with the wider football industry but as I've gotten older I've seen Southend United as a tether to the city that raised me. My love of the place has grown (probably partly through absence!) because of my love for the football club.

Has National League streaming been a temptation not to travel for any United fans? We see ourselves as a big fish in a small pond. Being able to stream the game is convenient but why wouldn't you duck out of work early and get to the match if you could?

Who will be the key figures on (and off) the pitch as Southend attempt to hit the play-offs? Off the pitch John Still has worked his magic in the transfer market and the management team of Kevin Maher, Darren

Currie & Mark Bentley have turned the players into a real machine. There's a fantastic work ethic and determination on the field, we used to be so weak after conceding goals but since they all arrived at the club they have instilled in the players a will to win. Jack Bridge is probably the most dangerous attacking player and Gus Scott-Morris has (at the time of writing) scored more goals than Wealdstone FC from right wing-back!

And finally... there has been much debate on fans forums of the future of club programmes... and fanzines for that matter. Can the downward trend be reversed? Fan media will never die, but it's certainly having to adapt. All At Sea has experimented with a podcast but we're up against at least four different Southend United focussed podcasts and youtube isn't an option for us because we both have faces for radio. Our fans are brilliant and our readers are loyal and supportive. We'll keep going, we sold out AAS 90 v York on the opening day of the season so we must be doing something right!

Liam Ager was talking to Tim Parks





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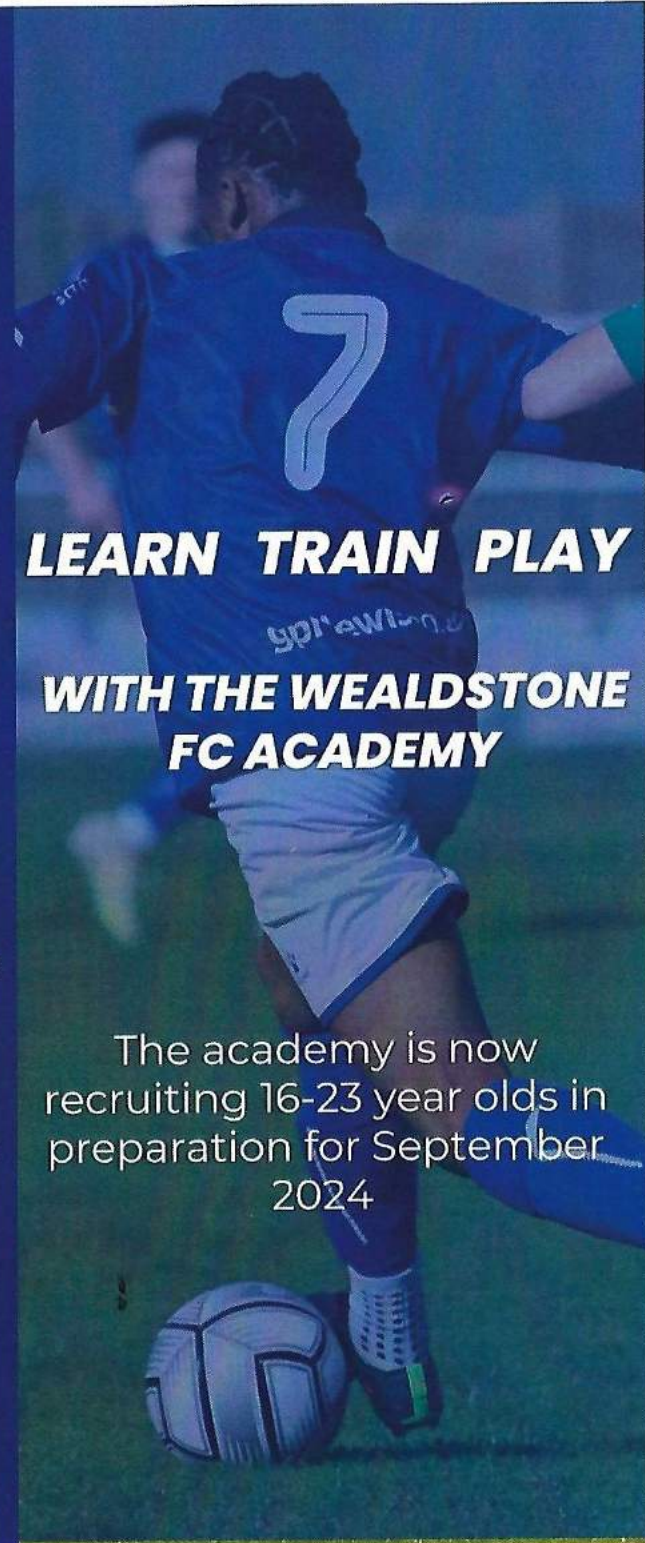
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FIRST TEAM RESULTS & FIXTURES 2024-2025

AUGUST	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
10 Dagenham and Redbridge	VNL	1-2	1,523	215	16	Ashford
17 OLDHAM ATHLETIC	VNL	0-1	1,825	517	19	
20 SUTTON UNITED	VNL	0-1	1,566	310	21	
24 Hartlepool United	VNL	1-1	3,614	33	21	Obiero
26 AFC FYLDE	VNL	1-0	1,325	50	21	Sandat
31 Solihull Moors	VNL	1-1	948	180	20	(Own goal)

SEPTEMBER	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
7 YORK CITY	VNL	0-2	1,904	427	22	
10 Woking	VNL	0-1	2,125	127	21	
14 Forest Green Rovers	VNL	2-2	2,265	200	21	McFarlane (2)
21 BARNET	VNL	0-3	2,590	TBD	22	
24 SOUTHEND UNITED	VNL					
28 FC Halifax Town	VNL					

OCTOBER	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
5 Gateshead	VNL					
12 YET TO BE DRAWN	FAC4Q					
19 YEKVIL TOWN	VNL					
22 BRAINTREE TOWN	VNL					
26 Ebbsfleet United	VNL					

NOVEMBER	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
9 Aldershot Town	VNL					
16 ROCHE DALE	VNL					
23 Eastleigh	VNL					
26 TAMWORTH	VNL					
30 ALTRINCHAM	VNL					

DECEMBER	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
7 YET TO BE DRAWN	FATR3					
14 Oldham Athletic	VNL					
21 DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE	VNL					
26 Maidenhead United	VNL					

JANUARY	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
1 BOSTON UNITED	VNL					
11 Altrincham	VNL					
14 Sutton United	VNL					
18 HARTLEPOOL UNITED	VNL					
25 AFC Fylde	VNL					

FEBRUARY	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
1 SOLIHULL MOORS	VNL					
8 GATESHEAD	VNL					
15 Yeovil Town	VNL					
18 Braintree Town	VNL					
22 EBBSFLEET UNITED	VNL					

MARCH	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
1 ALDERSHOT TOWN	VNL					
4 Tamworth	VNL					
8 Rochdale	VNL					
15 EASTLEIGH	VNL					
22 WOKING	VNL					
29 York City	VNL					

APRIL	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
5 FOREST GREEN ROVERS	VNL					
12 Barnet	VNL					
18 Boston United	VNL					
21 MAIDENHEAD UNITED	VNL					
26 Southend United	VNL					

MAY	Comp	Score	Att.	(Away)	Lge	Goal scorers
5 FC HALIFAX TOWN	VNL					

Date in Red = MIDWEEK fixture

Picture from our frustrating defeat here on Saturday against Barnet, courtesy of @RonnieRaffle

Player	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Archie MATTHEWS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Jack COOK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Anthony GEORGIU	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Deon WOODMAN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Alex DYER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Mason BARRETT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Enzio BOLDEWIJN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Craig EASTMOND	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Sean ADARKWA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Max KRETZSCHMAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Iodd MILLER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Jacob ADAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Micah OBIERO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Elliott SIMMONS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Luke DREHER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Dominic HUTCHINSON	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Christian SCOTT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Adrian MARIAPPA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Sam ASHFORD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Kallum CESAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Yacou TRAORE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Henry SANDAT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Jack WELLS-MORRISON	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Declan PHILLIPS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Elliott THORPE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Jahmar CLARKE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Callum MCFARLANE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Sam HOWES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Brandon MASON	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

KEY

- P** Starter
- 1** 1st player off
- 2** 2nd player off
- 3** 3rd player off
- 4** 4th player off
- 5** 5th player off
- P** Substitute
- 1** 1st on
- 2** 2nd on
- 3** 3rd on
- 4** 4th on
-

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FACTS TO MAKE YOU THINK.. **STAT ATTACK**



AS I listened to **Stonescast** episode 60 a few weeks ago, recorded on the eve of the midweek visit of **Sutton United**, there was a clamour of excitement from the panel about watching the **Stones 'under the lights'**.

It got me thinking back to some truly epic nights at The Vale over the last few years, when night falls and the (ageing!) floodlights illuminate the Ruislip skies. The breathtaking comeback against Dorking last season immediately springs to mind and of course the backs-to-the-walls victory over Grimsby (pictured) back in 2022. Those mid-week encounters are often remembered fondly and are synonymous with a (perhaps more so than a weekend...) vociferous home support. But the question is, do the numbers actually add up and do Wealdstone fare better when playing under the cover of darkness?

Wealdstone have played 93 home games since returning to the National League (before the game v Barnet on Saturday) of which 33 have been played in the evening.

It's worth defining that 'Day' fixtures are considered anything that kicked-off prior to 3pm and 'Evening' as anything after 3pm. We've had a couple of 5.30pm kick-offs

Vale night fever... it's just not as potent as we'd like to believe



Season	KO Time	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	PPG
2020-21	Day	10	3	2	5	13	21	-8	11	1.10
	Evening	11	4	0	7	19	30	-11	12	1.09
2021-22	Day	16	6	3	7	20	22	-2	21	1.31
	Evening	6	2	3	1	4	2	2	9	1.50
2022-23	Day	17	8	5	4	27	18	9	29	1.71
	Evening	6	2	1	3	8	14	-6	7	1.17
2023-24	Day	14	7	4	3	24	21	3	25	1.79
	Evening	9	3	2	4	13	12	1	11	1.22
2024-25	Day	3	1	0	2	1	3	-2	3	1.00
	Evening	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0	0.00
Overall	Day	60	25	14	21	85	85	0	89	1.48
	Evening	33	11	6	16	44	59	-15	39	1.18

which have been included as 'Evening'. The very simple answer to that question is a resounding 'no'. Overall, Wealdstone have a much better average points-per-game (+0.30 to be exact) when playing in a 'day' fixture, perhaps dispelling the myth that a boisterous home crowd, packed under a dimly lit Bulla gives Wealdstone an extra advantage.

Of course, there is an argument to suggest that some of those epic last minute winners from last season (the Rochdale

and Barnet 3-2's immediately spring to mind) were scored under the autumnal-going-into-winter light despite those being classed as 'day' fixtures. But overall it seems for every Dorking or Grimsby, there is a 0-6 defeat at home to Maidenhead, a 1-6 humbling against a Notts County side or a 0-1 reversal against a ten-man Bromley.

Our form at home on a Saturday (in front of a crowd) has been very good at an average of 1.56 PPG since that farcical behind-closed-doors season.

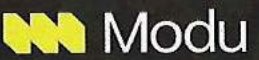
Stones v Shrimpers: Just 1.67 goals per game. But that may change!

WEALDSTONE v Southend has been an intriguing fixture in the National League since The Shrimpers fell out of the EFL at the end of the 2020-21 season. The fixture list has so far been consistent in asking Southend to travel west early in the season and then

asking The Stones to travel to Essex late in the season.... farcical postponements forced that somewhat last season but it's the same again for this (nine month) episode.

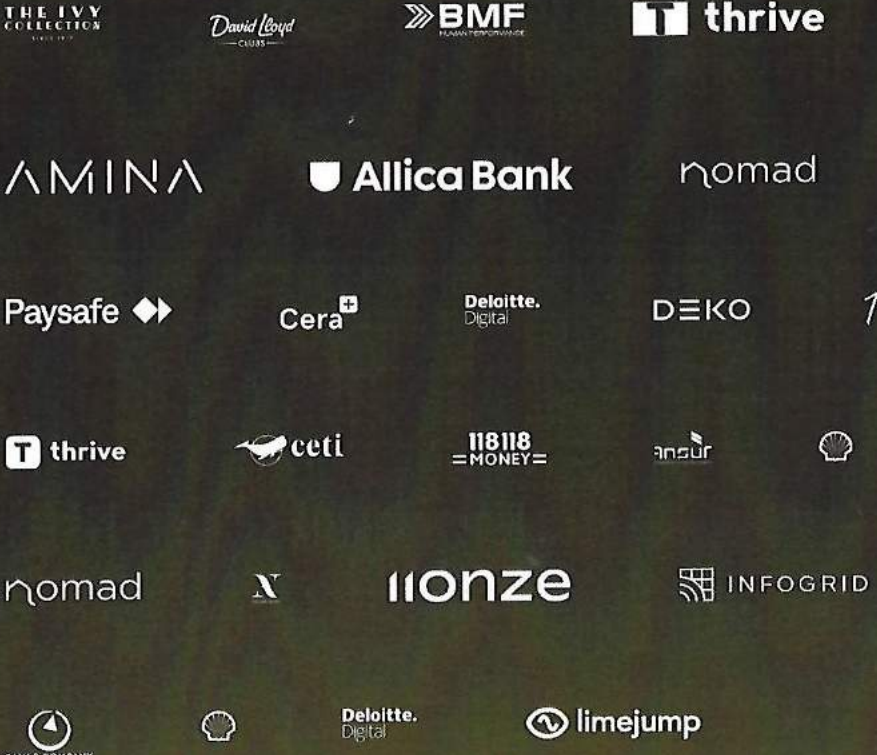
All six encounters have been cagey affairs with just an average of 1.67 goals across that sextet and that number generally falls way below the season averages of both clubs across the campaign; indeed all six games to date have ended in a draw or with either side winning by a single goal. It would perhaps be ironic, given Wealdstone's much lower average goals per game so far this season (1.89, down from 2.77 over the last three seasons), were tonight's fixture to be a goal-fest. Who knows? Enjoy the game!

Season	Games	Wealdstone		Southend	
		Goals	Av GPG	Goals	Av GPG
21-22	44	116	2.64	106	2.41
22-23	46	129	2.80	102	2.22
23-24	46	132	2.87	115	2.50
25-26	9	17	1.89	19	2.11



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TIM PARKS HOPS INTO HIS TIME MACHINE TO DELVE INTO WHAT

41 years ago, Graves triple fires Stones to top of the Conference against rivals.... but boss Hall puzzled at Lower Mead crowd of just 760

Graves' treble strike

Wealdstone 3 Altrincham 1

MARK Graves celebrated a hat-trick as Wealdstone became the only unbeaten team left in the Alliance Premier League on Saturday.

It was his second goal from the penalty spot two minutes into the second half that changed the course of the match, writes Paul Jacques.

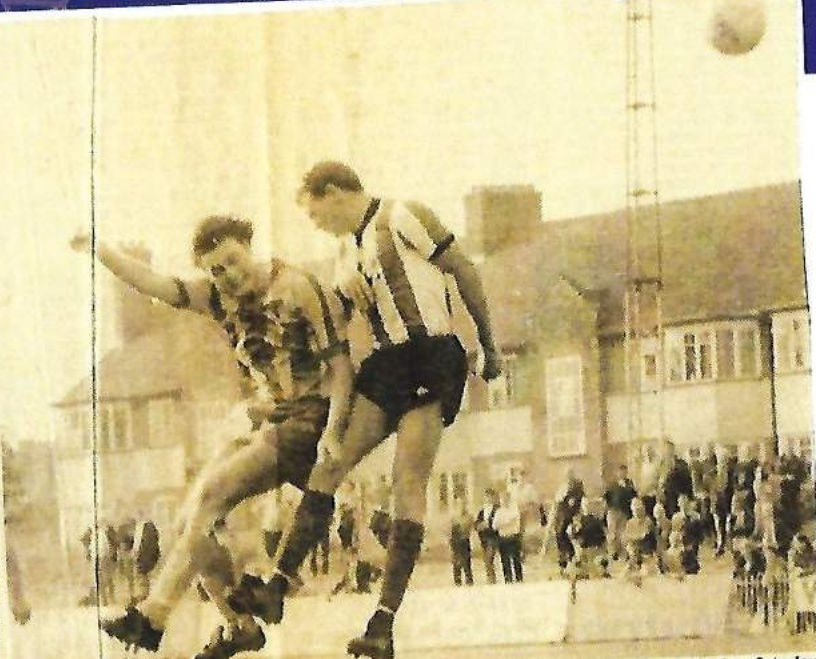
Altrincham had battled back to level the scores at 1-1 at half-time, but Graves' early strike after the break opened the door for a host of Stones' chances.

And really, Wealdstone should have run up a healthy total. Nigel Johnson was guilty of a catalogue of misses and Alan Cordice missed two golden opportunities that he should have buried.

But team manager Brian Hall was happy enough with the three from Graves, and was particularly satisfied with Stones' second half display — 45 minutes of probably the best football they have played all season.

Stones opened at a gallop, winning three corners in the opening five minutes. Their early pressure was rewarded when Graves found the mark in the 19th minute. Stuart Pearce cut inside from a short corner and his low, near post cross was forced home by Graves.

A rare error from keeper Bob Iles let Altrincham in for an equaliser after 28 minutes. He somehow let the ball bobble from his grasp and grateful Jeff Johnson stabbed home the gift.



NUMBER THREE... Mark Graves is on target with a header to complete his hat-trick at Lower Mead on Saturday. PICTURE: DOUG AVENT.

On the stroke of half-time Altrincham keeper Gareth Smith made a remarkable point blank save to deny Gary Donellan. The teams had barely drawn breath after the interval when Paul Johnson

tripped Cordice for a penalty. Graves' spot kick was blocked by the keeper but the Wealdstone striker fired home the rebound.

Graves completed his hat-trick in the 66th minute when he met Dennis

Byatt's cross with a powerful header that Smith could only palm into the roof of the net.

Wealdstone's Iles, Perkins, Pearce, Byatt, Bowgett, Price (Wainwright 45), Greenaway, Donellan, A. Cordice, Graves, Johnson.

Bring on the crowds

Wealdstone boss puzzled by 'poor' home attendance

Altrincham attracted just 760 fans. In contrast, Altrincham, despite their recent decline as a Non League force, managed to top 1,000 for the majority of their home matches. Indeed, most of the top Alliance clubs regularly pull 1,200 or more through the turnstiles.

Wealdstone's low gates puzzle team manager Brian Hall. "As a top of the table team we've got to be worth a crowd of 1,100.

"Wealdstone v Altrincham was an

attractive fixture and it was as big a gate as we've had so far, but it was still very poor.

"I can't see what more we can do. What do people want? Our facilities are good and the team is doing well.

"I certainly don't think the admission charge of £1.50 is a lot in 1983. It would cost more than that to buy you and I a pint.

"We are now relying on a good run in the FA Cup and FA Challenge

Trophy to get people in for our bread and butter.

"And when we play the likes of Enfield and Dagenham we should be getting 2,000 or more. They attract our biggest crowds at the moment, but two or three big gates a season isn't enough."

One simple solution that Hall sees is for every Stone's fan to bring a friend when they go to Lower Mead. "That would almost certainly double our gate," said Hall, who would love to see a big crowd for Wealdstone's next home match.

That is on Saturday October 8 against Boston United, another attractive side which finished fifth last season.

EXACTLY HAPPENED ON THIS DAY IN WEALDSTONE HISTORY

SATURDAY SEPT 24 1983, ALLIANCE PREMIER LEAGUE: WEALDSTONE 3 ALTRINCHAM 1 ON THIS day 41 ago Brian Hall's side beat powerful Manchester outfit Altrincham at Lower Mead to continue the Stones' fantastic unbeaten start to the Alliance Premier League (now Vanarama National League) season.

What a shame then that all the talk in the next week's Harrow Observer was about the size of the crowd and the competing attraction of our neighbours up the road at Watford.

I'll confess to having watched the Stones through five decades — and in every one of them the thorny question of attendances has been a source of pride... and also frustration.

In the sixties you couldn't keep the crowds away. Coupled with the feelgood factor of the World Cup 66 and our own victory in the FA Amateur Cup, 2,500 and more regularly trooped into Lower Mead. The seventies saw a big decline nationally (largely allied to hooliganism) with top-flight games often watched by just 10,000 while our own crowd stayed in four figures.

But into the eighties and, well, decrepit stadiums, continued violence and a hopeless national team saw crowds generally decline. And that was even before the events of Hysel stadium turned football fans into pariahs.

More locally, the rise of the Hornets from bottom-rung also-rans in the late 70s (when they only drew a few thousand more than the Stones for home games, and indeed

were only one step higher in the nominal 'pyramid') to the top flight under Graham Taylor had a big impact on the numbers at Lower Mead.

Especially in this '83-84 season when every home Saturday game seemed to clash with Watford, and the Vicarage Road side were flying high after a second-placed finish behind Liverpool the previous season, their first in Div One.

As pointed out in the cutting on the previous page, after this sparkling win over Altrincham and a plea to 'bring along a friend' (no money-off deals in those days!) over 900 attended the next home game against high-flying Boston United, helped by Watford playing away. But... disaster! The Boston team coach broke down at Welwyn Garden City and only arrived at 5pm, by which time a third of the crowd had drifted away with the offer of a refund of

their gate money. Not anybody's fault, but really bad luck especially when Boston equalised in injury time (about 7pm) to force a 1-1 draw. Our crowds only topped the 1,000 mark that season during our FA Cup run, around 1,700 seeing the First Round 1-1 draw with Enfield and 2,000 the second replay.

But the club never seemed to take the initiative when it came to 'growing' the home crowd in the stagnant 80s. The board of directors would no doubt be amazed by the fact that the Stones — at the same level four decades later — now sell over 1,000 season tickets and are averaging 1,500 for home games, pretty much twice the figure achieved in those 1980s glory days when our club was at its most successful.

Line-up v Altrincham: Bob Iles, Steve Perkins, Stuart Pearce, Dennis Byatt, Paul Bowgett, David Price, Brian Greenaway, Gary Donellan, Alan Cordice, Mark Graves, Nigel Johnson. Sub: Robin Wainwright.

More revealing views from Wealdstone fans

bring a friend and extra people did come through the turnstiles. "Unfortunately, the Boston team coach broke down and quite a few people asked for their money back — some of these being Watford supporters as they did not have a home match.

"This was just unfortunate and Wealdstone were not to blame."

The Watford problem was backed up by Sudhir Rawal of Graange Road, Kenton. He feels that Wealdstone's attendances are bigger than all the local clubs put together, but admits that their decline is down to the clash with Watford's home matches.

"The recent match against Altrincham only gained an official crowd of 760 — actually higher than last year's match which had an attendance of 737. On this day Watford were at home to Tottenham Hotspur and this must have taken a few hundred supporters away from Wealdstone's match as it was a very attractive fixture.

"The loyalty of Wealdstone supporters can never be denied as they have probably the largest away support in Non League football."

Mr K. Dixon has been a Wealdstone supporter for 35 years, and still travels down from his home in Bletchley to Lower Mead — a journey of 40 miles.

In answer to Brian Hall's question he explained: "I'm glad someone has asked at last. It's a pity they weren't asked years ago before the loss of so many supporters."

He has followed Stones from the days of Tommy McGee, Phil White and Charlie Barker and remembers the days when Stones would get 1,000 for a reserve match, mainly to hear at half-time and full-time how the first team were doing.

A point that now annoys him is the shortage of programmes at matches. They sell out too quickly, a point that frustrated many supporters at Saturday's FA Cup tie with Bishops Cleeve when the last programme had been sold well before the kick-off.

"Last season when we played Enfield, which was our most important match and certainly our biggest gate of the season in the league, I got to the ground at 7pm and just managed to get one of the last programmes available.

"Thinking there must be a big crowd already in I was appalled to find only a couple of hundred there and to continually hear from 7.15 over the tannoy that we had sold all the programmes. This was a bad, no disgusting, interest in the needs of the public. Mr Hall should realise that if you think about the public, they will think about you."

FOOTBALL'S dwindling gates, one of the game's biggest worries at all levels, is now haunting Wealdstone.

Stones are riding high among Non League soccer's elite, yet they are fighting a losing battle against the big 'stay away', WRITES PAUL JACQUES.

The crowds at Lower Mead are several hundred short of the 1,000 mark, by no means an unreasonable figure for a club in Wealdstone's position.

Stones finished third last season in their return to the Alliance Premier League, and this season are still unbeaten in what is effectively the country's Fifth Division.

Yet Saturday's attractive visit of



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CAMERON MAWER WITH AN UPDATE ON THE STONES' ACADEMY SIDES

NOTHING demonstrates the growth of Wealdstone FC in recent years more than the growth of the Wealdstone FC Academy.

From just 13 players when the academy opened at Harefield a few years ago, we now boast 170 students across our three wonderful sites: Brunel University, Harefield School and Harrow College.

The addition of the under-23 Elite Development Squad last season was also a major development for the club so we can now provide a clear pathway from the under-18s to the 1st XI. The academy offers 16- to 23-year-olds the opportunity to train and study full time while the addition of the under-23s means the club can offer talented players the opportunity to train within the academy for a small fee.

The 2023-24 season was enormously successful for the academy no matter how you measure the outputs. On the football side two teams won their respective divisions and three academy players received professional football contracts: Declan Phillips, who is currently getting rave reviews on loan at Kings Langley; Jaiden Bartolo who became the academy's top scorer for the u-19s and u-23s while representing Gibraltar at international level, signed for Wycombe Wanderers (pictured above); and in addition, Jaiden Celestine-Charles (JC) signed for Millwall.

Many of you will have seen him score a stunner against the Stones in the pre-season friendly against Millwall u-23s back in July!

Outside of football, most achieved academically and those boys that haven't yet made the professional football grade have gone onto either University, degree apprenticeships, America on scholarship programmes or into

Last season was an enormous success and we now have 170 students eager to make the grade

the world of work.

The last couple of weeks have seen the start of the academic programmes at the academy sites including the opening of the Campus at Harrow College.

This fantastic location, just a minute's walk from Harrow on the Hill station will give access to the Wealdstone academy for many more students as well as expanding the education options available. The sports programmes on offer there filled up rapidly and are now full for this September's intake.

Competitive academy matches are played on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays - and for those interested in following the academy the Elite team is the u-23s who play in the National Youth League. Underneath them is the u-19 National League team who play on Wednesdays, and then the Tactic League against other local academies on both Wednesdays and Fridays.

Then of course there is the U18s FA Youth Cup in which we'll know our first opponents very shortly.

Current academy players Kai Bartolo and Kallum Smith both represented their countries at youth level last week for Malta and

Gibraltar respectively. A fantastic achievement for both players.

We encourage all those players in the academy with ambitions to become full time footballers to play for local adult teams with plenty now playing for the likes of Bedfont FC, Spartan Youth, Amersham and others.

The season itself has started well with the u-23s beating Tresham Academy 6-0 while all the other academy teams remain unbeaten.

We welcome spectators at the academy games so keep an eye out on the socials for all results and future fixtures, especially the main Instagram account [wealdstonefcacademy](#). We will also soon be announcing our trial dates for the September 2025 intake, including (for the first time) dedicated trials for girls.

With such rapid success and growth in such a short period of time we are always looking for people to help get involved and support the academy. If you are interested then do reach out to the Club, either myself, Dale Welch or Richard Hopwood our COO. Running an academy is not just about having the skills to coach football, there are significant administrative duties, logistical challenges in getting all the players to the right games and the need to find drivers for the academy minibuses.

Thank you for your support.

**Cameron Mawer,
Head of Academy**

Upcoming under-23s fixtures

Monday September 23 v Prociusion Oxford (Brunel Univ, 1.30pm)

Monday September 30 v FCV International (away, 1.30pm)

Monday October 14 v Bracknell Town (away, 1.30pm)

Monday October 21 v Enfield Town (Brunel Univ, 1.30pm)

Monday November 4 v AFC Rushden & Diamonds (away, 1.30pm)

TODAY WE WELCOME FANS OF SOUTHEND UNITED TO GROSVENOR VALE

WFCSC update

BY JACKY DUGARD

Welcome to Southend fans this evening for a game under the lights, always a great atmosphere at The Vale and a match I am really looking forward to as I have a rare opportunity away from work commitments! I am sure that United fans will be here in numbers tonight and we look forward to a hard fought match and a valuable win for the Stones.

I joined the Supporters Club committee a year ago and it's certainly been an interesting experience so far - to say the least! I joined originally to help with preparation of the admin side of things which involves setting a timely agenda for our meetings (now often via Zoom) and then typing up the minutes so that we have proper action points for the group. Believe you me this has been no easy task at times trying to keep track of wide ranging discussions and some robust debate! Fans might be surprised at what goes on behind the scenes but we try to focus on doing things as professionally as possible within our resources but it is amazing what we sometimes take on!

It's not all about fundraising and I have recently been talking to the committee about social event ideas, putting forward a female spin on things particularly as we plan for our 125 year anniversary event which will involve much planning and making it as inclusive as possible. Thanks for your very useful feedback following our appeal on social media for suggestions. More on this event soon but it's never easy even to find suitable dates at our very busy social club to try to get the timing right and ensure a good attendance - that's just for starters.

I have enjoyed helping with our now famous fan zone BBQ's during the summer and experiencing the delights of our kitchen and using my past experience ensuring nice crispy chips! I also 'chip in' with helping 50/50 sales which I will no doubt be doing tonight - please ensure you purchase your tickets. It's also nice to be able to chat and catch up with friends at the club whilst selling tickets around

the club. Thanks always for your support. The 50/50 winning ticket number is posted out on social media during the match and on the electronic scoreboard in front of the Media Suite.

Do look out for our very successful Gig nights that are put on throughout the season at the RSC.

Our next fundraising gig back after nearly a two year absence are the amazing Electromantics - do not miss this amazing band, so hurry! Tickets are £17 in advance available at the club now or can be booked directly by calling James Klarfeld. The date of this gig is Saturday October 26th. James is organising several other gigs during the season and we do plan to put a Comedy Night on in the winter months when we are confident of good ticket sales.

You will have seen Adam's notes in the recent York City programme and what a great range of new stock lines we have. I have recently purchased the latest Stones T shirt to add to my extensive Wealdstone wardrobe!. There are lots of ladies clothing to check out in the shop and online. So please visit the Megastore(s) tonight which is located next to Dd's catering kiosk. Megastore is now complete with fairy lights as the nights close in!

Many on the SC committee have main club match day duties and commitments so we really do need more match day helpers both male and female. You won't miss the match! Why not join in and get involved? See us for more info tonight in the club shop or at any home match.

Come on you Stones!

Jacky



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Rio Rosenberg

BA (Hons) Football Business and Media student and Women's Content Creator at Chelsea FC



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A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY ROGER SLATER ON THE UNHERALDED

Over a century ago, Valentine Gregory was the very first former Stone to play in an FA Cup Final



EX-STONE WHO SKIPPED WOLVES IN THE 1921 FA CUP FINAL



April 1921 was the days of silent movie coverage and a crowd (almost) entirely made up of men in hats. Wolves skipper Valentine Gregory (on the right) tosses up before kick-off with Spurs skipper Arthur Grimmsdell in the white shirt, and the blazered referee

wing-half was also selected to play for the Southern League XI which brought him to the attention of the bigger professional clubs - but his career, like so many others, was disrupted by the First World War.

He enlisted in the 'Die-Hards', the Middlesex Regiment as did so may Wealdstone players past and present, initially continuing his career in wartime football with Watford. In 1917, however he joined Arsenal, for whom he played for as a 'guest player' over two seasons between 1917 and 1919. He made 18 appearances in the Gunners side that was to finish as Runners-up in the wartime London Combination League.

For the 1919-20 season, he returned to Watford, who were once again taking their place in the Southern League. Once again they earned runners-up honours (the club missed out to Portsmouth on goal average) but before the end of the season he was transferred to Second Division Wolverhampton Wanderers, four levels higher, for a substantial fee of £1,500.

The British record transfer fee at the time was £4,500 and Gregory's fee was a record received by the Watford club... though equalled immediately as George Edmonds was also transferred to Wolves for the same fee on the same day!

Valentine had made a total of 204 appearances for Watford (including 43 in the Great War 1914-18) scoring 17 goals. At Wolves, he was to make 106 appearances while scoring twice. He ended up taking on a coaching role at the club in 1922 as a back injury at the age of 34 curtailed his career.

But the highlight of Valentine's career undoubtedly came a year earlier on April 23rd 1921.

Despite being a Second Division side, Wolves (captained



by the ex-Wealdstone wing-half) became giant-killers as they overcame top-flight Stoke City, Derby County, Fulham, Everton and Cardiff City en route to reaching the FA Cup Final and facing Tottenham.

A proud Gregory skipped the side, shaking the hand of King George V before the game at Stamford Bridge, where the dignitaries were soaked by an unseasonal storm that left the

continued overpage >>

WE'VE all heard of Stuart Pearce and Vinny Jones, football celebrities who began their careers at Wealdstone and ended up captaining their countries - Stuart for England and Vinny for Wales.

Both men also played in FA Cup Finals for their respective clubs... and in fact there are **ELEVEN** players who have worn the blue of Wealdstone and who also played in football's showpiece event! All are listed on the next pages but today we want to talk about the very first ex-Stones to appear in that Final.

Step forward **Valentine Francis Gregory** (born on Valentine's Day 1888) a strong, hard-tackling right half who is rarely if ever mentioned in that illustrious list of 'former Wealdstone players' that went on to have successful professional football careers. But

he preceded them all. Although detailed information of his early career is sketchy (limited by the level at which he played and reporting at the time), it is apparent that his career in 'adult' football started at Wealdstone at the end of 1904. The first of 20 known appearances came in a Middlesex Junior Cup tie against a side called Grove House on 1st October

when he was just 16 and a half! He also appeared in the London Junior Cup and Willesden and District League Division 1 matches before his final appearance for the club in October 1905. It was a short 'Stones career - and perhaps one that would have been no more than a footnote in the club (and Valentine's) history had the team not won their first ever League Championship in the 1904-05



Wolves defend against white-shirted Spurs in the Final

season. But that was not the end of Valentine's career as we know that he then played for Harefield United, Breakspear Institute, Northwood Wednesday and Shepherds Bush... and he also appeared for Reading as an amateur while playing for Pinner for five seasons.

Older brother Fred and two younger Gregory brothers, Owen and Alan also appeared for Pinner, with Alan also playing for Wealdstone later on.

It was from Pinner that Valentine joined Watford FC in 1911 at the age of 23, making his first appearance on Christmas Day in a Southern League Division One draw away to Luton Town alongside older brother, Fred, and later Fred Theobald, also a former Wealdstone player.

Valentine was to win a second Championship medal at Watford, as the side won the Southern League in 1914-15. The stocky

Cup Final 1921 Greatest Event in Football History



Valentine introduces his team to the King... in driving rain!

WEALDSTONE

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY VALENTINE GREGORY CONTINUED...

Right: How the teams lined up for the Cup Final with skipper Val Gregory wearing the No.4 shirt. They lost to the favourites by a solitary goal.

TEN EX-STONES* WHO HAVE APPEARED IN THE FA CUP FINAL

- 1921: **VALENTINE GREGORY** (Wolves) Lost 0-1 v Spurs.
 - 1961: **CLIFF JONES** (Spurs) Won 2-0 v Leicester; 1962: Won 3-1 v Burnley; 1967: v Chelsea Won 2-1.
 - 1961: **TERRY DYSON** (Spurs) Won 2-0 v Leicester.
 - 1967: **TOMMY BALDWIN** (Chelsea) Lost 1-2 v Spurs; 1970: Won 2-1 v Leeds in replay after 2-2 draw.
 - 1978: **DAVID PRICE** (Arsenal) Won 1-0 v Ipswich; 1979: Won 3-2 v Man Utd; 1980: Lost 0-1 v West Ham.
 - 1979: **STEVE WALFORD** (Arsenal) Won 3-2 v Man Utd
 - 1984: **NEIL PRICE** (Watford) Lost 0-2 v Everton
 - 1980: **GRAHAM ROBERTS** (Spurs) Won 3-2 v Manchester City after 1-1 draw; 1982: v QPR Won 1-0 in replay after 1-1 draw.
 - 1988: **VINNY JONES** (Wimbledon) Won 1-0 v Liverpool
 - 1991: **STUART PEARCE** (Nottm Forest) Lost 1-2 v Spurs
 - 2019: **ADRIAN MARIAPPA** (Watford) Lost 0-6 v Man City
- *Plus an eleventh current Stone: Adrian Mariappa

Tottenham Hotspur 1-0 Wolverhampton Wanderers

Dimmock ⚽ 53'



Stamford Bridge, London
Attendance: 72,805
Referee: J. Davies (Fainhill)



Tottenham Hotspur		Wolverhampton Wand	
GK	✘ Alex Hunter	GK	✘ Noel George
DF	✘ Tommy Clay	DF	✘ Maurice Woodward
DF	✘ Bob McDonald	DF	✘ George Marshall
MF	✘ Bert Smith	MF	✘ Val Gregory (c)
MF	✘ Charlie Walters	MF	✘ Joe Hodnett
MF	✘ Arthur Grimsdell (c)	MF	✘ Alf Riley
FW	✘ Jimmy Banks	FW	✘ Yancy Lea
FW	✘ Jimmy Sead	FW	✘ Frank Burrill
FW	✘ Jimmy Cantrell	FW	✘ George Edmonds
FW	✘ Bert Bliss	FW	✘ Arthur Potts
FW	✘ Jimmy Dimmock	FW	✘ Sammy Brooks
Manager:	✘ Peter McWilliam	Manager:	✘ Jack Addenbrooke

>>> from previous page already-muddy pitch almost unplayable. Unfortunately it was Valentine's fate to finish up as a 'runner-up' again after they were defeated 1-0 by Spurs - the North Londoners that day captained by Gregory's former Watford team-mate Arthur Grimsdell.

One interesting point as a comparison to today, is that the newspapers reported that Valentine Gregory was the tallest player in the Wolves side, standing 5' 10½" (1m 78cm) and weighing 12st 7lb (79.3Kg).

From the silent movie newsreel

footage, Spurs certainly seemed to have an advantage as they rained crosses into the heart of the rain-soaked Wolves penalty area to test diminutive goalkeeper Noel George.

Wolves defended valiantly, Gregory in particular throwing his body in the way of Spurs efforts on goal, but a single cross-shot from striker Jimmy Dimmock in the 53rd minute won the cup.

A nice touch came the day after the game when, after staying in London overnight, the defeated Wolves team and directors (numbering 40 in total), were led in

two coaches to Pinner and more accurately the Queens Arms (now the Queens Head) where they stopped for tea (is that all?) as their captain wanted to show off the area where he was born. They stayed until 6pm before continuing their journey north.

Gregory spent the remainder of his professional career at Wolves, making his final appearances for the team in the 1922-23 'relegation' season. As mentioned, he became a player-coach in 1925 but continued his playing days after receiving permission to return to amateur status and appear for the Wolverhampton-based Butler Sports & Football Club.

He finally ended his Wolves career as a coach at Molineux in 1938 due to ill health, and he died in March 1940 in Wolverhampton aged just 52.

An unsung Stones and Wolves hero.... until now.



Two of the best-known ex-Stones to play in the Final: Stuart Pearce (left) hammers in a freekick to put Nottingham Forest ahead in 1991 against Spurs and celebrates while (right) Vinny Jones gets stuck in v Liverpool in 1988. Forest were beaten 2-1 by Tottenham but Vinny helped Dons to a shock victory

AND STONES' SORRY RECORD AGAINST SOUTHEND UNITED



One win in seven for the Stones...but only a goal between us

Walker wrecks the 'Stones' cup dream

Wolves were disappointed as they don't get a goal by defender John Walker after 32 minutes wrecked Alliance Premier League Wealdstone's FA Cup dream. Scorer was the late Steve Dackers.



OH, how the frustration has been building up between the Stones and the Shrimpers!

One of Wealdstone's greatest away days since rejoining the National League was the joyous 1-0 win at Roots Hall in Southend's first season in non-League. In front of close to 6,000 people, Rhys Browne's spectacular goal gave an early taste of what the Stones have since replicated at such historic venues as Boundary Park, Oldham and York's Community Stadium.

We felt some measure of revenge for the 1-0 FA Cup First Round defeat in the first-ever clash between the clubs in November 1979 (see match report above right) when centre-back Alan Walker scored the winner with a speculative overhead kick. But since then the subsequent meet-

ings have been a case of fine margins as the Stones have snatched a 1-1 draw and been beaten three times by the odd goal.

On this day two years ago in fact, September 24 2022, Southend began the sequence of Stones disappointments when our high-flying early season form was ended by a solitary penalty goal from Marcus Dackers (pictured celebrating above in the yellow shirts). The Shrimpers even took the points with ten players on the field for the final 20-odd minutes after Gus Scott-Morris had been shown a second yellow card.

And Southend made it a league double when, on the final day of the season in front of an 8,434 crowd, a late winning goal from Harry Cardwell kept the Essex side's play-off dreams alive. The Stones were incensed by a harsh

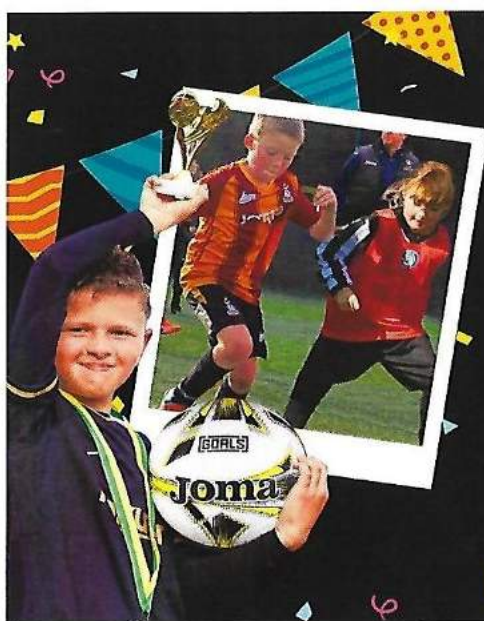
sending-off for our ex-Southend midfielder Nathan Ferguson that day that altered the shape of the game after Charles Clayden had given Wealdstone the lead.

Last season saw two more keenly-contested games as Southend - despite their ten points deduction - chased a place in the play-offs only to come up agonisingly short. It was only a late equaliser from Hull City loanee Henry Sandat (who is now of course at The Vale and hoping to wear the blue shirt this evening) that prevented Sean Adarkwa's goal taking home all three points, and there was further Stones misery in the return at The Vale as our descent into the lower reaches was helped on its way by Cav Miley's second half winner: Manny Duku had shot the Stones ahead and Shrimpers keeper Collin Andeng-Ndi proved the United hero with a string of fine saves.

Rhys Browne (right) cracks in the match-winning goal at Roots Hall on Good Friday 2022... still the Stones' only success over the Shrimpers



Tue 9 Apr 2024	Vanarama National League	L 1 - 2	Duku
	Home	Att: 2025	
Tue 5 Mar 2024	Vanarama National League	D 1 - 1	Adarkwa
	Away	Att: 6399	
Sat 29 Apr 2023	National League	L 1 - 2	Claydon
	Away	Att: 8434	
Sat 24 Sep 2022	National League	L 0 - 1	
	Home	Att: 2391	
Fri 15 Apr 2022	National League	W 1 - 0	Browne
	Away	Att: 6849	
Mon 30 Aug 2021	National League	D 0 - 0	
	Home	Att: 2161	
Sat 24 Nov 1979	FA Cup	L 0 - 1	
	Home	Att: 3100	



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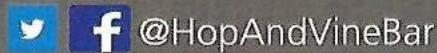
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- 12 x match-day programmes

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BALL DONORS: Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

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EBBSFLEET UNITED (February 22, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Brunel University
BALL DONORS: Help Stones put the ball in the net -- donate this one!

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WOKING (March 22, National League)

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FOREST GREEN ROVERS (April 5, National League)

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BALL DONORS: Help Stones put the ball in the net -- donate this one! donating one. donating one.

MAIDENHEAD UNITED (April 21, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Contact abbeychandler@wealdstonefc.com
BALL DONORS: Help Stones put the ball in the net -- donate this one! donating one. donating one.

FC HALIFAX TOWN (May 5, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Contact abbeychandler@wealdstonefc.com
BALL DONORS: Peter and Steve Drew, Ron Moore and David Edwards, in memory of fans no longer with us.





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Harrow College
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Namaste Lounge
Pinner Pavings
PUKKA
Rolfe East
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LIST OF FIRST TEAM APPEARANCES SEASON 2024-2025

A = APPEARANCES AS STARTER
 S = APPEARANCES AS SUBSTITUTE
 G = GOALS SCORED
 * = HAS SINCE LEFT CLUB

CORRECT AS AT 14TH SEPTEMBER 2024	VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE			FA CUP			FA TROPHY			MIDDLESEX SENIOR CUP			MIDDLESEX CHARITY CUP			TOTALS			STONES CAREER			
	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	A	S	G	
Adams, Jacob			1														1			1		
Adarkwa, Sean																	20	15	10			
Ashford, Sam		2	1	1												2	1	1				
Barrett, Mason		3														3	42	16	2			
Boldewijn, Enzo		9														9						
Cesay, Kallum		8														8	15	2				
Clarke, Jahmari *			2													2						
Cook, Jack		9														9	138	5	13			
Dreher, Luke		2	1													2	1					
Dyer, Alex		6	1													6	1	223	45	35		
Georgio, Anthony		5	3													5	3	5	3			
Hutchinson, Dominic		5	4													5	4	25	12	1		
Kretschmar, Max		5	2													5	2	56	22	16		
Mariappa, Adrian		9														9						
Mason, Brandon		3	2													3	2	20	9			
Matthews, Archie		9														9						
McFarlane, Callum		2	2	2												2	2	2	2	2		
Miller, Todd			3													3			3			
Mundle-Smith, Jaydn																	86	14	5			
Obiero, Micah		7	2	1												7	2	1	65	15	11	
Sandat Henry		6	3	1												6	3	1	6	3	1	
Scott, Christian		2	3													2	3	2	3			
Thorpe, Elliot			1													1			1			
Traore, Yacou *		3	4													3	4	3	4			
Wells-Morrison, Jack		3	1													3	1	3	1			
Woodman, Deon		1	2													1	2	1	4			



WHO'S SPONSORED WHO (ON AND OFF THE PITCH) THIS SEASON

SUPPORT your favourite player by donating their kit for every game of the new season!

It costs **£165** to sponsor a player's home or away kit, or **£250** to get a shirt signed by your chosen player at the end of the season. You'll also get a mention below, a mention on the club website – and a mention on any player interviews we publish on X and YouTube.

Call Peter Worby on **07967 698370** or John Young on **07874 846785** for more details.

Kit donors

Matt Taylor Ronnie Moore	Paul Hughes Pete Worby	Wayne Andrews Jon Taffel	Elliot Thorpe The Taffia
Jason Scannell Tom & Amy Marshall	Archie Matthews Gary Smith	Archie Matthews A Gary Smith	Brett Aherne TTC
Jack Cook Raj	Anthony Georgiou Forum Charlie	Deon Woodman Sponsorship available	Jack Cook David & Carolyn Edwards
Alex Dyer Hillcrest Group	Mason Barrett Robert Barrett, Rofe East	Enzo Boldewijn Sponsorship available	Alex Dyer IC Property
Craig Eastmond Jamie McGarrity & family	Sean Adarkwa Luca	Max Kretschmar Adam Rowlands	Craig Eastmond @Stonescast85
Jacob Adams LTB Coaching	Micah Obiero Nicky Clark	Elliot Simmons Mick Fishman	Todd Miller • In Memory of our dad Bernie Ingram, Wealdstone born & bred • Hampshire Rose & Norwich Singing Man
Dominic Hutchinson APA Events & Security	Christian Scott The 3 Amigos (John, James & Victor)	Adrian Mariappa Sudhir, Akhil, Nikhil, Sarin & Kamran Rawal	Luke Dreher Sarah Gowdy
Sam Ashford Jim Sorrell	Kallum Cesay Matthew Snell	Yacou Traore Sponsorship available	Adrian Mariappa Watford Stones (JP, Scott & Luca)
Henry Sandat Sponsorship available	Jack Wells-Morrison Sponsorship available	Callum McFarlane Sponsorship available	Jaydn Mundle-Smith Syl Allen
			Brandon Mason Mike & Val Weston

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SUPPORT THE STONES HERE AT HOME AND ACROSS ENGLAND


Coming up here at The Vale >



YEOVIL TOWN
Vanarama National League
Saturday 19th October 3:00pm




BRAINTREE TOWN
Vanarama National League
Tuesday 22nd October 7:45pm




ROCHDALE
Vanarama National League
Tuesday 16th November 3:00pm

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE - TABLE AS AT 22ND SEPTEMBER	ALL					HOME					AWAY					GD		PTS		STONES RESULTS	
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A			H
1 Barnet	10	7	0	3	22	11	5	5	0	0	15	3	5	2	0	3	7	8	11	21	0-3
2 Forest Green Rovers	10	6	3	1	19	8	3	2	1	0	7	3	7	4	2	1	12	5	11	21	2-2
3 York City	10	6	3	1	15	6	5	4	0	1	8	3	5	2	3	0	7	3	9	21	0-2
4 Eastleigh	10	6	1	3	17	13	5	4	1	0	12	6	5	2	0	3	5	7	4	19	
5 Rochdale	10	5	2	3	16	9	5	2	2	1	8	4	5	3	0	2	8	5	7	17	
6 Oldham Athletic	10	4	5	1	14	10	5	2	3	0	7	3	5	2	2	1	7	7	4	17	0-1
7 Gateshead	9	5	2	2	17	14	5	4	0	1	12	5	4	1	2	1	5	9	3	17	
8 Dagenham & Redbridge	10	4	4	2	18	10	5	3	1	1	13	5	5	1	3	1	5	5	8	16	1-2
9 Halifax Town	10	4	4	2	10	7	6	2	2	2	7	6	4	2	2	0	3	1	3	16	
10 Sutton United	10	4	3	3	17	15	5	2	1	2	11	9	5	2	2	1	6	6	2	15	0-1
11 Solihull Moors	10	4	2	4	13	14	5	1	2	2	6	8	5	3	0	2	7	6	-1	14	1-1
12 Woking	10	4	2	4	10	12	5	3	0	2	6	7	5	1	2	2	4	5	-2	14	0-1
13 Southend United	10	3	4	3	15	13	5	2	2	1	8	6	5	1	2	2	7	7	+2	13	
14 Aldershot Town	10	3	4	3	16	15	5	2	2	1	11	9	5	1	2	2	5	6	+1	13	
15 Hartlepool United	10	3	4	3	7	7	5	0	4	1	1	2	5	3	0	2	6	5	+0	13	1-1
16 Yeovil Town	10	4	1	5	12	13	5	1	1	3	3	5	5	3	0	2	9	8	-1	13	
17 Altrincham	10	3	3	4	11	13	5	2	2	1	8	4	5	1	1	3	3	9	-2	12	
18 Tamworth	9	3	2	4	9	16	4	2	1	1	7	5	5	1	1	3	2	11	-7	11	
19 Boston United	10	2	3	5	11	18	6	0	2	4	4	14	4	2	1	1	7	4	-7	9	
20 AFC Fylde	10	2	3	5	12	20	5	2	2	1	9	8	5	0	1	4	3	12	-8	9	1-0
21 Braintree Town	10	1	4	5	5	12	5	1	2	2	2	3	5	0	2	3	3	9	-7	7	
22 Wealdstone	10	1	3	6	6	14	5	1	0	4	1	7	5	0	3	2	5	7	-8	6	-- --
23 Maidenhead United	10	1	2	7	10	18	5	1	1	3	4	6	5	0	1	4	6	12	-8	5	
24 Ebbsfleet United	10	1	2	7	7	21	5	1	1	3	2	6	5	0	1	4	5	15	-14	5	


Follow the Stones on the road >



FC HALIFAX TOWN
Vanarama National League
Saturday 28th September 3:00pm



GATESHEAD
Vanarama National League
Saturday 5th October 3:00pm



EBBSFLEET UNITED
Vanarama National League
Saturday 26th October 3:00pm



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