

TODAY'S SQUADS

WEALDSTONE
ROYAL BLUE/WHITE/WHITE



HARTLEPOOL UNITED
SKY BLUE/SKY/SKY

Archie MATTHEWS 1	1 Joel DIXON
Jack COOK 2	2 Dan DODDS
Anthony GEORGIU 3	3 David FERGUSON
Deon WOODMAN* 4	4 Tom PARKES
Alex DYER 5	5 Luke WATERFALL ©
Mason BARRETT 6	6 Kieran WALLACE
Enzio BOLDEWIJN 7	7 Jack HUNTER
Craig EASTMOND 8	8 Anthony MANCINI
Sean ADARKWA 9	9 Gary MADINE
Max KRETZSCHMAR 10	10 Adam CAMPBELL
Todd MILLER 11	11 Luke CHARMAN
Jacob ADAMS 13	12 Joe GREY
Micah OBIERO 14	14 Nathan SHERON
Dominic HUTCHINSON* 17	15 Greg SLOGGETT
Christian SCOTT 18	16 Nicky FEATHERSTONE
Adrian MARIAPPA © 19	17 Billy SASS-DAVIES
Sam ASHFORD 20	20 Mani DIESERUVWE
Kallum CESAY 21	21 Louis STEPHENSON*
Jaydn MUNDLE-SMITH 23	22 Campbell DARCY*
Joshua GRANT 27	23 Manny ONARIASE*
Declan PHILLIPS 28	24 Max STOREY*
Callum McFARLANE 29	29 Alfie STEEL*
James HILLSON 30	30 Joe AUNGIERS
Toby STEWARD 31	31 Brad YOUNG
Brandon MASON 32	32 Kazenga LUALUA
	33 Matthew BONDSWELL
	40 Adam SMITH

* denoted players currently out on loan

Match officials Referee: Alan Dale Assistants: Stephen Brown and Robert Evans
Fourth Official: Paul Evans Observer: Brian Mullis Coach: Andy D'Urso

TODAY'S RESULT: WEALDSTONE **HARTLEPOOL**

NEXT AT THE VALE v BRIGHTON & HOVE U-21s, NATIONAL LGE CUP, TUES JAN 21, 7PM
v SOLIHULL MOORS **SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1, KICK-OFF 3PM**

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HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL!

stones

2024-25 MATCHDAY PROGRAMME £3

v Hartlepool Utd

Vanarama National League, Saturday January 18, 2025, kick-off 3pm

Getting in the Christmas spirit! Super Sam Ashford celebrates his header to open the scoring against Dagenham and Redbridge in our last home game

PICTURE: JON TAFFEL





HARTLEPOOL UNITED - SATURDAY 18TH JANUARY 2025

**WELCOME TO
OUR HER GAME
TOO TAKEOVER**

**Written
in Stone**
BY NICOLA BROWN



Welcome to today's matchday programme for Wealdstone FC vs Hartlepool United!

We're thrilled to be hosting our second Her Game Too dedicated fixture, marking an important step in our continued commitment to making football a more inclusive and welcoming space for everyone, regardless of gender.

Today's match isn't just about the action on the pitch—it's about celebrating the progress being made towards equality and empowering more women and girls to feel at home in the game.

Through our partnership with Her Game Too, we stand together in challenging stereotypes, raising awareness of the barriers women face in football, and promoting a culture of respect and inclusivity. This is a cause that goes beyond the 90 minutes and extends to the fans, the clubs, and everyone who believes in football as a space for all.

Remember that your support makes a real difference in fostering a more diverse and equal football community. Let's unite behind the game we love and continue to push for change, on and off the pitch.

Thanks for your support and enjoy the match!

NICOLA

JILL SIMMONDS

I am Jill, the HerGameToo ambassador for Hartlepool United. My first game was way back in 1986 when my Dad took me along to the Vic so I have been on the rollercoaster of lower league football ever since.

My favourite moments include Pools playing Spurs and Crystal Palace back in the early 1990's, reaching the dizzy heights of the League One play off final in 2005, the promotion season of 1990-91 the year I first had a season ticket, and the most recent NL playoff victory.

Football is a huge part of my life. The best memories I have with my late Dad all involve football. I have met many people and made many friends through the game. Being HerGameToo ambassador has amplified that greatly. How great is to work with your club and have many friends all across the country, meeting up when our clubs play each other? Although when the first whistle is blown, we are absolutely rivals!!



**#HER
GAME
TOO**

I love working in the campaign and linking in with many clubs and organisations to showcase opportunities and support females within football. Showing the next generation that playing or working within football is absolutely a career worth pursuing and they will be welcomed and encouraged to do so.

Hartlepool United have been very supportive from the start and we will have our 3rd dedicated match this season. I am on the HUFC Youth Alliance committee, working with the towns grassroots teams and also a member of the HUFC Supporters Panel. Some of the sponsors have also become partners and help build awareness. I couldn't do the work without everyone's support including our advocate team.

I would totally encourage females to go to matches or start playing. I have attended games on my own or with my 12 year old and have always felt safe doing so. I know this isn't always the case at different clubs but they can contact their HGT ambassador (if there is one) or the Supporter Liaison Officer at the club and get the best advice to get the most out of their matchday experience. Local County FA's can help locate clubs with girls/ladies teams. Some have Wild Cats/Just Play sessions which are a great introduction for girls/women or have teams who play at the recreational level. If you want to play there are so many ways to get involved, just do it!

JILL

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WEALDSTONE FOOTBALL CLUB SEASON 2024/2025

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1951 / 1952 Athenian League
1973 / 1974 Southern League Division One South
1981 / 1982 Southern League Southern Division
1981 / 1982 Southern League Championship
1984 / 1985 National League Premier (Gola League)
1996 / 1997 Isthmian League Division Three
2013 / 2014 Isthmian League Premier Division
2019 / 2020 National League South

NATIONAL CUPS

1965 / 1966 FA Amateur Cup
1984 / 1985 FA Trophy

LEAGUE CUPS

1981 / 1982 Southern League Cup

MIDDLESEX COUNTY CUPS

1958 / 1959 Senior Cup
1962 / 1963 Senior Cup
1964 / 1965 Senior Cup
1967 / 1968 Senior Cup
1984 / 1985 Senior Cup
2003 / 2004 Charity Cup
2010 / 2011 Charity Cup

NON TITLE-WINNING PROMOTIONS

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

The legal name of Wealdstone Football Club is Wealdstone Football Club (2000) Ltd (Registered Number 03953962). Shares in excess of 10% are held by Peter Marsden Property Finance Ltd & Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

GROUND REGULATIONS

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

- 1) The club reserves the right to eject from the ground any person who is considered to have committed any of the following acts:
 - Entering the ground through any means other than through the turnstiles or entrances
 - Entering the field of play before, during or after a game without prior authorisation
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 - Carrying items which may be considered a danger to others, including cans, bottles, or glasses containing alcoholic beverages
 - Throwing any article onto the field of play • Climbing floodlight pylons, fences, stands or any structure or building
 - Using obscene or bad language likely to cause offence to others • Hitting the side or back panels of the Bulla stand
- 2) No spectator ball games.
- 3) The consumption of alcoholic drinks is permitted INSIDE the social club bar, garden and boardroom areas.
- 4) Vehicles parked on the Grosvenor Vale site are at the owners' risk.
- 5) Wealdstone Football Club supports the FA's campaign on pyrotechnics (e.g. flares and smoke bombs). Any misuse of such items in and around the Ground will result in those responsible being asked to leave the ground and, in line with football authority guidance, may result in a report to the Police, potential prosecution and a ban from the Club of up to three years.
- 6) No Smoking or Vaping inside the ground.

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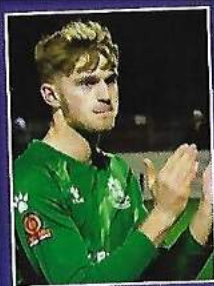
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IN THE WORDS OF THE GAFFER: MATT TAYLOR'S VIEW



Happy New Year! We will be working hard & running hard to make 2025 memorable

HELLO everyone, I hope you all had a great Christmas and here's to a successful New Year - we certainly went into the disappointing Boxing Day game buoyed by that fully-deserved 3-0 win over Dagenham & Redbridge on our last home appearance.

We were brilliant that day without the ball, and fast and cohesive going forward. It really felt like it was all coming together. And I was particularly pleased for Toby Steward (above) to get his clean sheet: he looked rock solid, made a couple of good saves, kicked well and was under a lot of pressure from set plays. He's only 19 and confidence is a big part of it for goalkeepers. My thanks go to Portsmouth for extending the loan - they believe he'll become a Championship player and we'll be part of his journey towards that.

As a team, any success is underpinned by the fact that if you don't run, you don't win. We now have two facets to our game, keeping the ball, opening teams up and also running hard, working hard out of possession.

I admit that I'm still a novice, really, at this level and I rely a lot on Paul (Hughes) and the rest of my staff who are more experienced than me. I'm still swotting up on the National League and we work hard to prepare on the upcoming games: Dagenham, for example, needed a different

approach to Maidenhead, and also Hartlepool today. Our dead-balls have been improving too over the past few months - again, credit to the coaches - and we are a real threat now. You saw that against Dagenham and we even scored direct from a Jack Wells-Morrison corner... you ask me whether it took a deflection or was Jack's goal, to be honest I don't care!

Of course, though, it's been a busy two weeks of departures with Alex Reid, J W-M, Henry Sandat and Elliot Thorpe all saying their farewells and we thank them for their efforts. Alex was transformational for us, 11 goals in a couple of months, and we now have to find a way of keeping the same shape, intensity and threat in front of goal. J W-M will also be a big miss.

We want to bring good people into the building and I think we did that with those players. We must now add quality as soon as possible although January is a notoriously difficult transfer window. We cannot go over and above what we're financially capable of so it's quite simple: others will have to step up. We don't want all the hard work for the past few months to go to waste. However, there was some good news with Kallum Cesay and Anthony Georgiou both signing new deals, and they will both be key players for us. It seems an age since we last played in the league and we're raring to go. Your support will again be pivotal.

UTS and here's to a great 2025! - Matt

'Was the second goal against Dagenham an own goal, or Jack's? I don't care!





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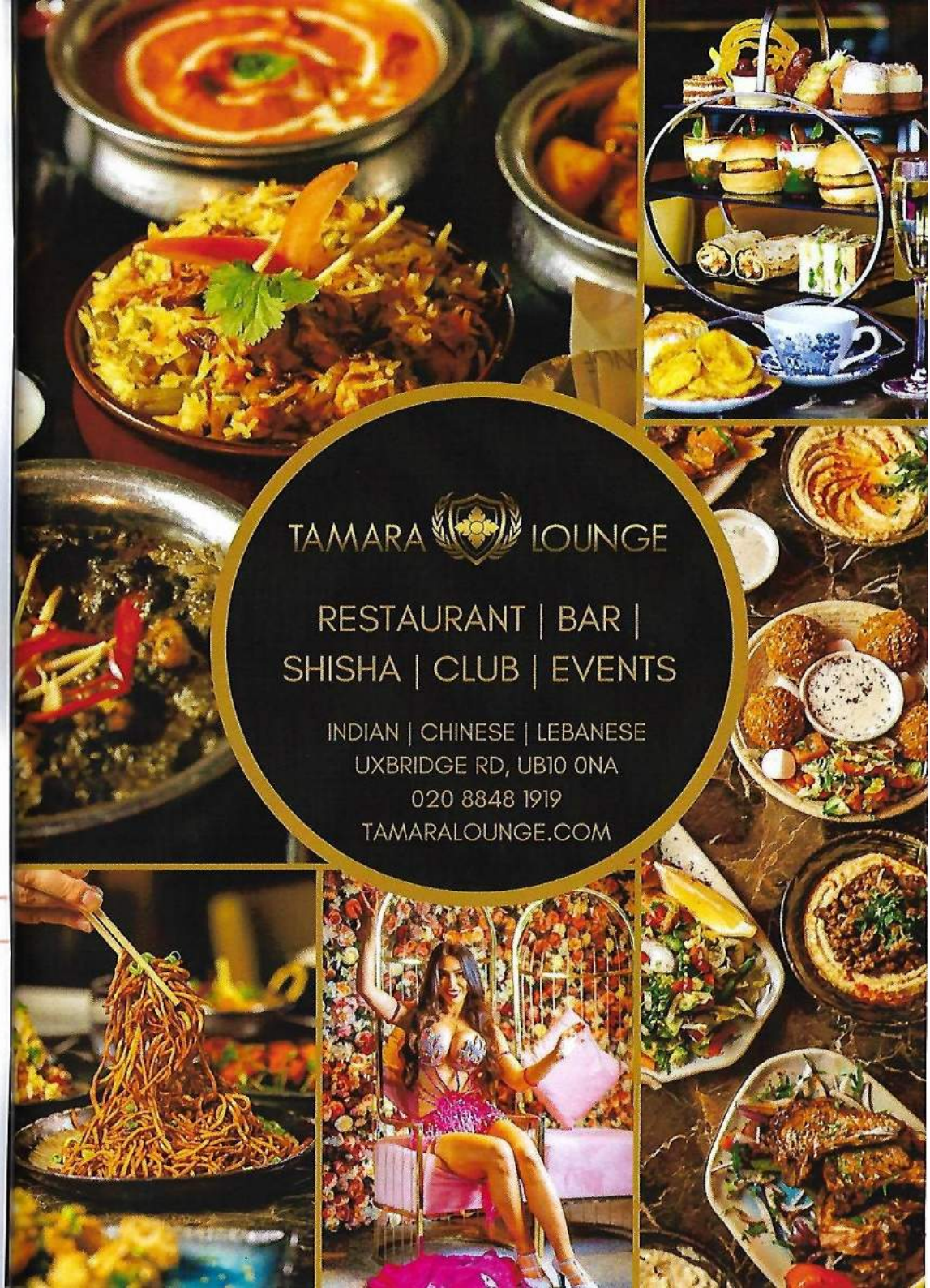


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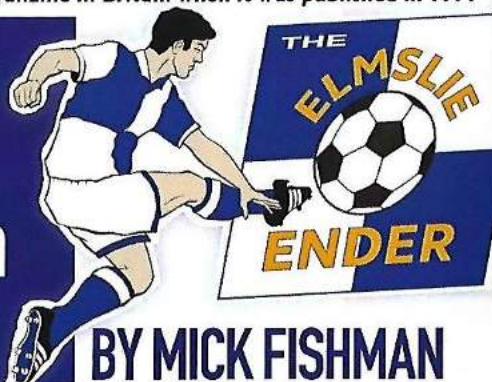
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©Elmslie Ender was among the first wave of football club magazines when it replaced 'Long Ball Down the Middle' as the Wealdstone fanzine in the mid-1980s. LBDTM's forerunner 'Wealdstone Whispers' was famously the THE very first football fanzine in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

Alex had an X factor rarely seen outside Jolly, Assombalonga and Ross Lafayette



TO AVOID confusion, let me say that the X in the headline relates to neither the long running TV 'talent' programme nor that increasingly poisonous social media platform.

I am talking about **ALEX REID**, the centre forward we had on loan for a glorious brief glimpse of what a talented and experienced forward could offer our club at this time.

When the Oldham Athletic striker arrived at The Vale in time for the FA Cup tie with Gosport we had played 13 league matches, winning just once, drawing four and losing eight. The team had amassed nine goals, three of which had been scored by young Fulham loanee, Callum McFarlane.

It was no surprise we were firmly rooted second from bottom in the league table.

The subsequent 13 games (not including the National League Cup matches) yielded six wins, three draws and four defeats in which 24 goals were scored, 11 by Alex Reid!

It was a remarkable turnaround - it was not just the goals scored that proved so important to the team; it was also Reid's hold up play, ability to run the channels to receive longer passes and his cleverness in linking up with Sam Ashford, who appeared to relish playing alongside the on loan striker.

We became a team with an attack, if not to be feared, but at least to be respected. It's a rare thing for one player to have such a major effect on a team's overall performance. But I've dug out a few.

When it comes to goalscorers, I can think of maybe half a dozen players...

The 2006/07 season had seen the club transferred across the pyramid to the Southern League and the team had struggled badly, recording just four wins from the first 21 league games. The prospect of relegation had become a distinct possibility. Manager



Gordon Bartlett then pulled off what proved to be a couple of master strokes, first by persuading ex-QPR youngster Scott Donnelly to pull back on his football boots, and securing two youngsters on loan from Watford: midfielder John-Joe O'Toole and forward **THEO ROBINSON**.

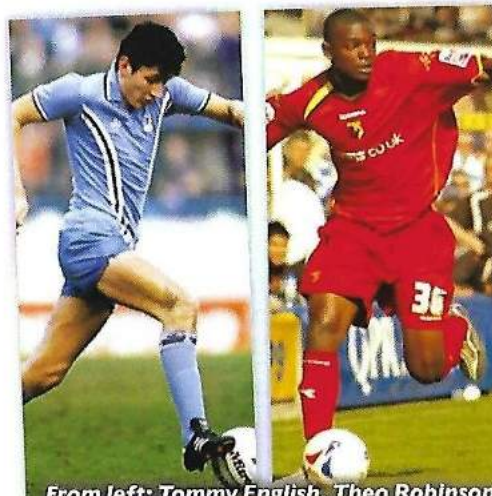
Donnelly and O'Toole shored up the midfield while Robinson joined Dean Papali up front to form a highly effective partnership... the 18 league games they played together saw them bag 24 of the 28 scored, with young Robinson contributing 13. We stayed up - just.

Moving on a few years years, the midway point of the 2010/11 season the team hit a barren patch and needed a collective shot in the arm. Manager Bartlett pulled off a minor coup by obtaining the agreement of Sutton United's manager, Paul Doswell, to the short-term loan of ex-Stone goalscorer supreme, **RICHARD JOLLY** (who had joined us originally in 2003 and was sold to Heybridge Swifts four years later). What followed was remarkable. In just seven league games Jolly banged in 10 goals, including four in one match away at Concord Rangers. That revived the team's fortunes for a time, but the Jolly stardust eventually wore off following his quick return to Gander Green Lane and the team's form faded to a disappointing mid-table finish.

But.... the next season saw the permanent re-signing of Jolly to help form part of an excellent squad of players capable of mounting a promotion challenge. Frustratingly, form was patchy in the extreme and by the end of November the team found itself firmly in the bottom half of the league and dumped out of the FA Cup by Beaconsfield Sycob. Manager Bartlett



Mr Goals: Richard Jolly



From left: Tommy English, Theo Robinson, Britt Assombalonga and Ross Lafayette



took action and took on two young Watford Academy graduates, midfielder Connor Smith and forward **BRITT ASSOMBALONGA**. Connor's energy pepped up the midfield, but it was Britt's pace, power and eye for goal that really made an enormous impact. In his 13 games for the club, he scored 11 goals (an identical record to Alex Reid's). With Jolly chipping in with nine goals, the team raced up the league and made strides in the FA Trophy that would end in dramatic fashion with defeat to Newport County over two legs in the semi-finals.

Despite losing to Lowestoft Town in the promotion play-offs, the foundations had been placed for another promotion push the following season and then the title and promotion the campaign after that. Britt Assombalonga's contribution to what followed his brief time at the club could not be under-estimated.

Going a bit further back in time, one oddity of the excruciatingly awful relegation season of 1987/88 was the fielding of two excellent goalscorers. Ex-Coventry City forward **TOMMY ENGLISH** bagged 13 goals in 26 games despite playing in a truly dysfunctional team that managed to win just five league games.

And for one month of that season between late October and late November the club also secured the services of **FRANK BATE**, who was on a visit to the UK from his native Australia. He provided a brief frisson of excitement scoring four goals in five games before he left to return to Oz. His very brief contribution resulted in his finishing 2nd highest goalscorer behind Tommy English, which tells you all you need to know about that season!

There is no doubt that genuine goalscorers are a special and rare breed. Their contributions, however brief, can be momentous. It is possible, how-

ever, for other players to write their names into our memory banks with significant contributions. The clearest example of this is, for me, **GLEN LITTLE**.

The Stones team that won the Tyrman League title by 11 clear points in 2014 was a terrific outfit, but I wondered then, and continue to wonder, if it would have ended up as champions without Glen Little's contribution. His ability to wander around the pitch, retaining possession with positive short passes and seemingly controlling the pace and progress of play was simply astonishing. Those around him seemed to step up a notch. Tom Pett even gave Glen credit for helping him improve to the point of assisting him in securing a move into full time football.

Glen was with us for just the one season, but his contribution was off the scale.

The team that won the National League South title in 2019 was chock full of skill and wonderful exuberance but the player who linked it all up into a formidable unit was the vastly experienced centre forward **ROSS LAFAYETTE**. Despite creaky knees that limited his appearances towards the latter part of the season, his ability to hold up, protect the ball and clever link up play raised the team's performance to the very good, exceptional and sometimes the sublime.

So Alex Reid has gone, and it remains to be seen what effect his contribution will have been over the entire season. It is unrealistic to expect our being able to replace him with a forward of equal quality given our limited resources; but he did have a galvanising effect on the other players around him. We went from a team hoping to nick a goal to one expecting to score.

Whoever comes in as his replacement, and whatever personnel changes are made over the coming weeks, if the Reid effect remains, he will have been worth his weight in gold.



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THE No.10 VIEW: MAX KRETZSCHMAR TAKES IT TO THE **M₃ A₁ X₈**

HELLO and welcome back to *The Vale*. I know it seems a long way away now but I hope you had a nice Christmas with friends and family and here's to a happy New Year!

With frustrating postponements both here and away from home due to the rain and cold snap, it's great to be back in league action in front of our faithful. Our last league match was on Boxing Day and in that time we've seen a couple of players in Jack Wells-Morrison and Alex Reid leave. Two influential players who will be tricky to replace but if there's one thing this club has nailed in the time I've been here - it has been our recruitment.

There was that infamous motto and quote surrounding team culture by the New Zealand 'All Blacks' rugby union team which stated 'no d**k**s' were tolerated in the changing room. I can say that this has been mirrored in the Wealdstone changing room the past two and a half years. We have a squad full of hardworking, honest players who have been through a lot of experiences together, both positive and negative. Our upturn in form since October has been based on just that - honesty and hard-work. So it will be very easy for new faces, young or old, to acclimatise to those values and the way we want to play.

As I mentioned earlier, our trip to Maidenhead United on



Big hug for Max from the gaffer after the crucial win over Braintree

We'd not played for three weeks so it's a great opportunity to really train well & nail down a place in the team

Boxing Day was our last game up to the trip to Sutton last Wednesday. A disappointing result which involved a slow and poor first half which lacked any real quality in the final third, something which hadn't happened since Aldershot away in the FA Trophy where we fielded a rotated side.

The reaction after the break was fantastic and after I put Reidy through for the equaliser I felt the momentum shift in our favour and believed we were going to go on and win the game. But individual errors cost us in the end and frustratingly Maidenhead didn't have to come up with a great

bit of skill or a moment of magic to take the three points with that 3-1 win.

The weeks without any competitive matches has allowed the squad to reset and take a breather. We've had players maybe nursing injuries able to recuperate and others on the fringes to work hard and put their name forward for the second half of the season.

The squad has looked a little bare at times and I can think of the reverse fixture against our opposition today Hartlepool United where we were severely stricken with injuries having lost a further two more players on the Friday morning as we made our way up to the north-east for the fixture.

The budget and means of this football club at National League level make it imperative that every single member of the squad is ready

to contribute at any given moment. These few weeks on the training field should be viewed as a great opportunity for any player to impress the manager and nail down a spot in his thoughts going forward. It's a really exciting second half of the season which awaits us and one we should all be relishing - both players and fans!

UTS, Max



Sharp shooters! Sam Ashford and Alex Reid had a big part to play in our resurgence at the end of 2024
Pic: Jon Taffel

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

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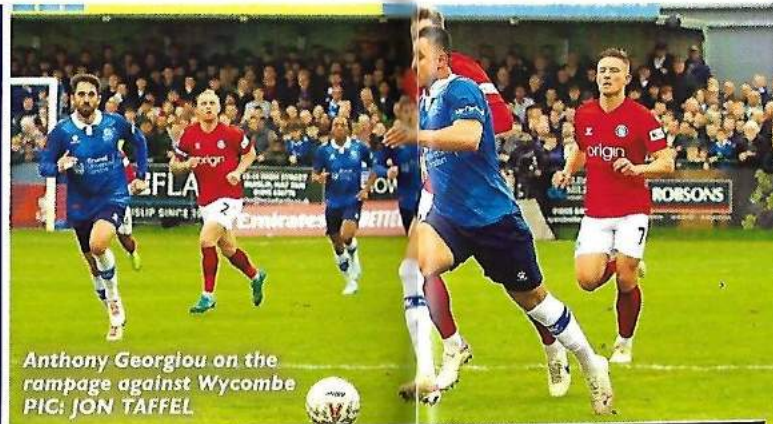
TIM PARKS MEETS THE NEW BOYS



ANTHONY GEORGIU

ON THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE, CYPRIOT LEAGUE.. AND NANDO'S

Anthony's played with some all-time greats.. but he's now back and enjoying his football again in a Stones shirt



Anthony Georgiou on the rampage against Wycombe
PIC: JON TAFFEL



Quite a show reel! From far left: Anthony lines up for Cyprus and Spurs, and then on the ball against Eden Hazard (Belgium), Marc Cucarella (Barcelona) before celebrating an assist with Tottenham

YOU WATCH Anthony Georgiou haring up the left wing for Wealdstone with power and purpose, feinting to sway to his right, going wide on the left and then delivering the perfect cross. The 27-year-old wing back is the epitome of balance.

And yet when you hear his story, you marvel at just how well balanced he is as a man, not just as a professional footballer.

"I made my debut for Tottenham against Roma in a pre-season tournament in New York: 60,000 people crammed into the stadium and when I came on at half time I was pinching myself" he says.

"And then you're just in the flow of the game, driving on, going past people, putting in crosses with the crowd going crazy. I couldn't sleep for days afterwards, the adrenaline was flowing".

The world was laid out at his feet. He'd been in the Spurs development system since the age of 12,

having spent a year at Chelsea and then three more at Watford, and was being nurtured for a left or right wing role that seemed to have come to fruition that summer of 2017.

"I was travelling with the squad for Premier League games for two years, and there was Danny Rose and Ben Davis in contention for that slot. But the benches were smaller in those days. It was still amazing to be involved in squads at places like the Bernabeu for a Champions League game against Real Madrid with players like Bale, Ronaldo and Modric doing their thing and Zidane in charge, down in front of you.

"The second year I was involved in pre-season against Barcelona, AC Milan, Girona and Brentford... but then Pochettino signed Ryan Sessignon and my chances were really limited".

Anthony had only made one competitive appearance for Spurs, ironically against his Cypriot home

country side Apoel Nicosia in the Champions League in September 2017. He came on, with 15 minutes to go, for Moussa Sissoko as Spurs galloped to a 3-0 group stage win in front of a sell-out crowd with Harry Kane netting all three.

"That was a great memory, and it ended with me being capped by Cyprus not long after. I'd not played at a youth level for England so it was a great honour to play eight games for my country... especially for my dad Michael, who had driven me all over the place to training when I was a kid, and still gets to most of my games today!"

Anthony's best memory with Cyprus was facing the all-star Belgian side, and mighty Russia, in the Nations League. He finished with four goal assists in those eight games.

"After I'd played in the Champions League, Cyprus were chasing me to play and it was a great experience to be playing international football"

In his third pre-season with Tottenham he also played high-profile friendlies in Singapore against Manchester United (facing Aaron Wan Bissaka and Mason Greenwood) and Juventus (featuring Cristiano Ronaldo) before Spurs lifted the Audi Cup - a four-team competition played at the Allianz Arena in Munich - with Anthony playing the second half of the final against Bayern Munich. Spurs won 6-5 on penalties after a 2-2 draw.

Anthony was now filling in at left back/left wing back for the North Londoners... but he was desperate for more minutes and agreed to move on loan to Spanish side Levante for a six-month loan.

He then quickly became an Ipswich fans' favourite with another loan to the League One Tractor Boys.

"I loved my time in Suffolk - I came on as sub for my debut at AFC Wimbledon with Ipswich 1-0 down, but we came back to win 2-1 and I played my part, running at

players and getting the ball in".

He played ten games for Ipswich, and then a further loan spell of two games at Bolton Wanderers before Spurs decided to sell Anthony - with seven months of his contract still to run - at the end of the Covid-hit 2020-21 season.

"A few clubs in the Cypriot League put in offers and I decided to sign for AEL Limassol. I had some family out there, particularly one uncle, but I have to say that football on the island is an interesting experience!

"The game is well-funded with a lot of decent Serie A and top Portuguese players attracted to clubs like Omonia, Aris Limassol, Apoel and Paphos... so the standard is surprisingly close to Championship level. But I'm not sure how clubs from over here would cope with it.. when you see our National league games with players smashing each other it's a completely different vibe".

After a year, Anthony - born in Lewisham with his family now living in Potters Bar - decided to return to London after playing 19 games (and scoring twice) for Limassol, and sign a year's deal with League Two Leyton Orient. It didn't go well.

He suffered a hamstring injury after a decent pre-season and, with the team flying, found opportunities limited. He went out on loan to Yeovil for a couple of games... and at the end of a dismal 2021-22 he returned to Cyprus for a year with Paralimni. Twenty-one games later, Anthony was desperate to rescue his English League career ... and will always be grateful to former Stones interim boss Sam Cox for putting in a good word with our Head of Recruitment Steve Boone during the summer.

"I didn't have many options, to be

honest, but I knew that I just needed the opportunity to impress and show how good I can be. Sam had worked with me at Tottenham and persuaded Boone to get me down to training... and I'd also been in the Under-23s while the Stones' gaffer Matt was in charge of the Under-18s there.

"I can truthfully say that I'm enjoying my football more now than ever before. In fact I had that conversation with my dad the other day: Since we turned the corner with that 3-2 win over Braintree, coming from behind, we've gone into games prepared to suffer and work really hard, put the yards in and we've come to recognise how important that is. Something clicked about ten games ago.

"And there is a really great group here at Wealdstone. I didn't go to the Christmas get-together in Manchester after the Oldham game because I hadn't been feeling too well all week and also had a sore achilles - in fact that's why I came off during the game - but I know they had a good laugh.

"I've made some good friends here and it's also good to be on the same wavelength on the pitch. Players like Max, clever players who find that pocket of space to get onto the end of my crosses - and Reidy made the most of my assists!"

I thought I'd trip Anthony up with the revealing 'favourite restaurant' question but, apart from admitting a passion for Nando's, Anthony lives the life of a nutritionist with a genuine love of all things

disgustingly healthy. "My friends make fun of me 'cos I don't eat bread, fast food, fizzy drinks or desserts. And I love going to the gym. I think it's all stemmed from my education at Spurs - I've been like that since I was 13 and I'm not going to change for a long time yet!"



Facing up to Cristiano Ronaldo of Juventus

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HARTLEPOOL UNITED

Today's opposition in focus



The Club rose from the remnants of a previously successful amateur side in 1908, survived the now infamous bombing by a German zeppelin in 1916 and join the Football League in 1921.

1881 West Hartlepool Amateur Football Club was formed. 1886 West Hartlepool Rugby Football Club buy land from the North-Eastern Railway Company, once part of a limestone quarry, now covered with allotments. The club cleared the land and the new ground was named the Victoria Ground in Queen Victoria's Jubilee Year. 1889 The Northern League is formed and West Hartlepool join soon afterwards, playing at various venues in the town. 1905 West Hartlepool Amateur Football Club win the FA Amateur Cup, beating Clapton 3-2 at Shepherd's Bush in London. 1908 The Rugby club folds due to financial difficulties leaving the Victoria Ground in need of repair. On May 2nd a newly-formed association club was announced which would go forward on professional terms and had applied to join the North Eastern League.

On June 1st 1908 a limited liability company was registered under the name "The Hartlepoons United Football Athletic Company Limited" with 2000 £1 shares offered to form a professional club. The shares are not fully subscribed, as there are doubts about professional sport, but Messrs R Martin and W Paterson, former vice-presidents of the rugby club and W J Coates, a former committee member formed the Board of directors of the new company. Although playing at the Victoria Ground, situated in West Hartlepool, the team is named Hartlepoons United against public opinion as the company believe it should represent the two Hartlepool boroughs (Hartlepool and West Hartlepool). 1908/09 The amateurs of West Hartlepool continue to play in the Northern League but ironically need to share the Victoria Ground with the professionals, having lost their Park Road ground. The ground share does not last long, as in June 1910 the amateur team folds and their assets are taken over by the professional club.

27th November 1916 A German Zeppelin on a bombing mission to the Teesside industrial area under attack from a Royal Flying Corps pilot jettisons its load onto the Victoria Ground, destroying the main stand. A "temporary" replacement is built, which lasts until the eighties! The

ground is also damaged by a German naval bombardment of the town. The club pressed the German government for compensation, but never received a penny.

1921 United put their case for election to the new northern Section of the Football League at a meeting in Manchester.

They need to finish in the top half of the North Eastern League to qualify, which they do and on 27th August 1921 United play their first ever League game away to Wrexham.

1943-1957 Fred Westgarth's term as manager is unlikely ever to be equalled in the modern game. He brought stability and success to

the club, almost got them into the second division and enjoyed cup success too.

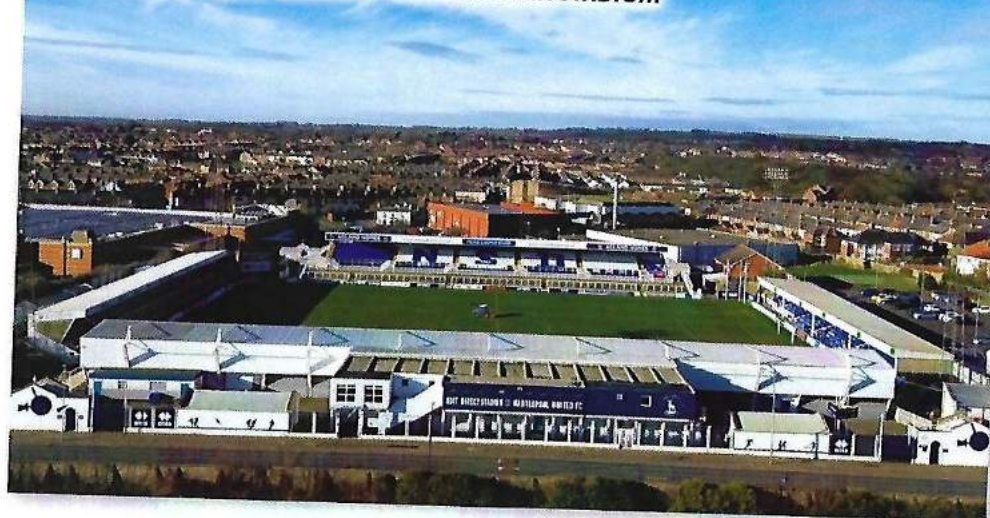
31st August 1946 Pools play their first post-war game wearing blue & white striped shirts and black shorts, drawing 1-1 with Barrow. June 1948 Club Chairman J M Stathers installs new terracing at Victoria Ground, with the aim of increasing average attendances for the first team to 10,000 and the reserves to 4,000! January 1952 Pools are drawn away to then First Division Burnley in the FA Cup Third Round. Hartlepool is little more than a ghost town as thousands travel to Turf Moor to swell the crowd to 38,608. Burnley are expected to win easily, but Pools push them all the way, and eventually lose 1-0 in a classic cup-tie. 5th January 1957 Possibly the most famous game in Pools' history - the FA Cup 3rd round tie against Manchester United's Busby Babes. In front of 17,426, Pools eventually lose 4-3 in what Matt Busby later described in his autobiography as "the most exciting match I've ever watched."

1958/59 Having finished in the bottom half of the previous season's Third division north, Pools find themselves in the newly formed Fourth Division. October 1965

Brian Clough appointed manager and brings in Peter Taylor from Burton Albion to help him. The legendary manager famously visits every pub and club in the town to raise funds for the club and builds one of the most successful teams in the club's history. In May 1967 Having built a successful team, Clough and Taylor move on to Derby County and are succeeded by Angus 'Gus' McLean.

6th May 1968 Pools win 2-0 at Swansea and gain promotion for the first time in the club's history. A crowd of 11,011 see them celebrate promotion in their final home game - also against Swansea, but it is "Hartlepool AFC" who play in the Third Division after the amalgamation of the two boroughs of Hartlepool and West Hartlepool. Pool fall 2 points short of survival and are relegated in 22nd place after

HARTLEPOOL'S 7,858 CAPACITY VICTORIA PARK STADIUM



just one season out of the bottom flight.

1974/75 An excellent League Cup run sees Pools beat Workington, Bournemouth (in a third replay), Blackburn (again in a replay) before going out in yet another replay at Aston Villa. Villa go on to win the cup, playing fewer games than Pools' nine cup-ties.

1977 Pools kick off the new season as Hartlepool United, having dropped the "Hartlepool AFC" appellation.

1985 The temporary wooden stand on the Clarence Road side, erected as a "temporary" measure after the Zeppelin bombing, is demolished following new safety concerns after the Bradford City fire tragedy.

9th February 1988 On a windswept night at Roker Park, a Brian Honour goal direct from a corner seals victory over Sunderland in the Sherpa Van Trophy and a Northern Area Semi-final against Preston. Black Cats' manager Dennis Smith describes the defeat as a "stigma".

1989 Cyril Knowles is appointed manager and builds a promotion-winning side, but sadly a terminal illness means he doesn't see his side gain the reward. May 1991 A 3-1 home victory over Northampton Town wins automatic promotion in third place.

1994 Local businessman Harold Hornsey rescues the club from the hands of previous Chairman Garry Gibson, who had taken the club on a roller-coaster ride which included the heights of the second division but almost into oblivion. 25th July 1995 Harold Hornsey fulfils his promise to build new East Stand. Cyril Knowles' widow Betty officially opens the stand named in his memory. 1995 A new covered terrace at the town end of the ground is built in partnership with local company Expamet. Hornsey renames the stadium "Victoria Park" to reflect the transformation of the facilities.

2001 The Club invest £100,000 in a new pitch including, for the first time, a full drainage system. Second phase of

OUR RECORD V HARTLEPOOL P5 W0 D2 L3 F9 A17 GD -8

Taylor Report improvements work begins at Victoria Park, featuring improvements to spectator facilities including turnstiles, catering outlets and toilets.

2006 Pools are relegated from League One after three seasons following a home draw with Port Vale. April 2007

A diving header from Richard Barker secured all three points at Wycombe and finalised Pools' automatic promotion back to League One.

April 2013 Pools are relegated to League Two, finishing the 2012/13 season in 23rd position in League One.

6th May 2017 Needing victory over tide-chasing Doncaster Rovers in their final game to have a chance of securing their EFL status, a packed house turned up at The Vic to get behind Pools on an emotionally-charged afternoon. Pools knew that even a victory wouldn't be enough if relegation rivals Newport County overcame Notts County in their game. However, after falling behind in the first half, Pools turned it around when 18-year-old Devante Rodney came off the bench to score twice to put the Club on the brink of safety. Celebrations were about to get underway when news filtered through of a late winner for Newport - a goal which condemned Pools to life outside the Football League for the first time in 96 years.

Hartlepool achieved promotion back to the Football League in 2020-21, beating Torquay United in the 2021 National League play-off final. However, Hartlepool returned to the National League after two seasons following relegation in 2022-23.



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HARTLEPOOL UNITED THE POOLS TO LOOK OUT FOR 2024-25

3. DAVID FERGUSON - DEFENCE

Having joined Hartlepool in August 2020, Ferguson has played over 200 times at the Prestige Group Stadium. The left-back played for Darlington and Sunderland early in his career before appearing in the Championship for Blackpool. He also earned three caps for the England C team in 2017 following a spell at Shildon and return to Darlington. Ferguson enjoyed three years with York City between 2017 and 2020, playing more than 100 games. He then switched to Hartlepool and played a vital role as Pools were promoted to League Two, earning a place in the 2021 National League Team of the Season.

4. TOM PARKES - DEFENCE

Centre-back Parkes became Pools' first signing of 2024 after joining from Scottish side Livingston. The former England youth international holds nearly 500 career appearances, having spent 11 seasons in the Football League. He came through Leicester City's youth set-up before enjoying a four-year spell with Bristol Rovers, gaining promotion from the Conference in 2015. Parkes then added to his Football League experience after spending time with Leyton Orient, Carlisle United and Exeter City.

8. ANTHONY MANCINI - MIDFIELD

French midfielder Mancini signed for Hartlepool in July 2023 after impressing during a pre-season trial. He spent his entire youth career in his homeland and gained his first senior experience with the Angers second team. Mancini also represented France at U19 level. The midfielder moved to England and enjoyed a two-year stay with Burnley. He then had a spell with Accrington Stanley in League One before joining Pools.

12. JOE GREY - FORWARD

After impressing for the Hartlepool United youth team, Grey signed a professional contract with Pools in 2020. The attacker has played over 100 times at the Suit Direct Stadium, including a memorable victory where he came off the bench to net the winner against Championship side Blackpool in the 2021/22 FA Cup.

16. NICKY FEATHERSTONE - MIDFIELD

Featherstone is currently sixth in the all-time appearance list for Hartlepool United with over 400 appearances for the Club. The central midfielder played for Hull City, Wallsall and Hereford before making his way to Hartlepool in

Who's who for the visitors



JOE GREY

October 2014. Featherstone's time at Hartlepool includes a great escape from League Two relegation in 2015 and a National League play-off final win in 2021. Ahead of his 11th

season with the Club, Featherstone signed a dual contract to become a player-coach under Darren Sarll in May 2024

18. ROSHAUN MATHURIN - MIDFIELD

Tricky winger Mathurin holds an impressive pedigree, having played in the youth systems at Chelsea and Spurs. He featured in the Spurs first team during the 2022/23 pre-season campaign, before moving to Crystal Palace in 2023.

20. MANI DIESERUVWE - FORWARD

The towering frontman, who has twice won promotion to the Football League, made an instant impact during his first season with Pools after notching 25 goals. After progressing through Sheffield Wednesday's academy, Dieseruvwe played for the likes of Chesterfield and Kidderminster Harriers. He joined Salford City in 2017 and won back-to-back promotions with the Ammies, scoring in the 2019 National League play-off final. He then helped Salford win the 2020 EFL Trophy. Dieseruvwe also won promotion to League Two with Grimsby Town in 2022, on loan from Tranmere Rovers. He spent 2022/23 with Halifax, winning the FA Trophy and finishing as their top goalscorer.

40. ADAM SMITH - GOALKEEPER

Smith joined Pools in August 2024 following a successful trial period in pre-season, which included a penalty save at South Shields. The 31-year-old, who holds nearly 250 career appearances, played under Pools manager Darren Sarll at Yeovil Town where he reached the National League play-offs. Smith won the play-offs in 2014 with Cambridge United during the early stages of his career, before playing every game for Northampton Town in 2016 as they gained promotion to League One. The shot-stopper then enjoyed spells at Bristol Rovers, Forest Green Rovers, Stevenage and Morecambe before putting pen to paper at Victoria Park.



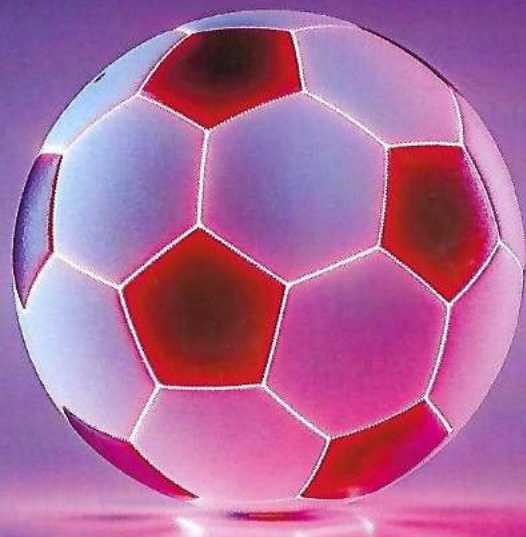
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STAT ATTACK ADAM HILLS TAKES A

Managers bearing the brunt for a poor start in the National League



Goals win matches... and keep Gaffers in jobs



FORENSIC LOOK AT STONES' STATS SO FAR IN 2024-25....

...While strikers are as important as ever



How Alex Reid transformed our season...

	Games	GS	CC	AGSPG	AGPCP
With Reid	9	17	14	1.89	1.56
Without Reid	14	11	21	0.79	1.50



AS another calendar year passes and the National League season reaches its midway points, it feels like an opportune time for a 'Stat Attack Half-Time Report'.

These notes were written on the eve of the game at Sutton United with the Stones still sat precariously just outside the relegation zone in 19th place. United's Ebbsfleet and Boston already look doomed and then those sides from Aldershot Town in 18th down to AFC Fylde in 22nd look

like the obvious candidates to fill the remaining two relegation places.

Working in 17th have, perhaps predictably – found new-manager-bounce-form since the recent appointment of Neal Ardley and they are one of five teams 17th and below that have already made (six!) managerial changes this season. Note that the figures below will include any interim/caretaker results in the totals for the incoming manager. It's obviously a very limited data set so far, but changing the manager does not always improve things long term.

Revolving doors syndrome in the National Lge: Six changes and they've not all worked, to put it kindly

Team	(Out)going	(In)coming	Date	Out Pld	Out Pts	Out PPG	In Pld	In Pts	In PPG
AFC Fylde	Chris Beech	Kevin Phillips	15-Sep	8	5	0.63	16	17	1.06
Boston United	Ian Culverhouse	Graham Coughlan	28-Oct	16	10	0.63	8	6	0.75
Braintree Town	Angelo Harrop	Steve Pitt	27-Nov	20	19	0.95	5	4	0.80
Ebbsfleet United	Danny Searle	Harry Watling	09-Sep	7	1	0.14	14	8	0.57
Ebbsfleet United	Harry Watling	Josh Wright	12-Dec	14	8	0.57	5	1	0.2
Woking	Michael Doyle	Neal Ardley	14-Dec	22	21	0.95	4	8	2.00

PERHAPS the better focus then is on the players on field, who of course can change, especially with a new man in charge.

But for the bottom eight, a quick glance across home/away form and goals scored/conceded starts to paint an interesting picture. Half those teams are

failing to average over a goal a game which is generally going to make winning football matches quite difficult. Braintree Town have the best defensive record of that octet but cannot seem to score at the other end with enough frequency. Perhaps ironic then that they should share five goals with the Stones when they visited Grosvenor Vale in October.

It is also clear that many of these sides are reliant on home form to push them towards the 50 point assumed (but far from guaranteed...) safety mark safety mark with Woking and AFC Fylde leading the way with an impressive 1.62 and 1.50 average points per home game respectively. That bottom eight have shared just 10 away wins between them this season (from a total of 96 games) and anyone who wants to stay in this division will need to pick up a few wins here and there on the road.

APPLYING macro stats across the season can be a little misleading though.

Wealdstone themselves paint the perfect example of this. Take that average goals scored per game of 1.22 and consider it in the context of the arrival of Alex Reid, on loan from Oldham in early October. Prior to that, Wealdstone had found themselves getting cast adrift in the relegation zone, playing well but failing to convert good chances and put points on the board. Reid's spell transformed Wealdstone's fortunes and pushed them out-

side of the drop zone but with Reid's loan ended and him back playing at Boundary Park, Wealdstone must act quickly to find a suitable replacement.

Whilst Reid generally took the plaudits during his three months at Grosvenor Vale, the form of his fellow forwards perhaps went under the radar. Sam Ashford's form soared with the arrival of Reid after a frustrating and injury-hit start to his life at Wealdstone earlier this season, while Max Kretzschmar has continued the excellent form he showed at the back end of last season that was

so crucial in our end of season 'Great Escape'. The trio have amassed a total of 27 National League goal contributions (goal or assist) this season, a figure that extends to 32 if you include the FA Cup competitions. There have been a total of 49 goal contributions by Wealdstone players in the National League this season, so that potent attacking trio represent 55.1% of all goal contributions. Of course, these stats are always going to favour attacking players but it is clear to see the importance these three have had on Wealdstone's fortunes.

Our main goalscorers in the National League: Alex Reid, Max Kretzschmar and Sam Ashford

Player	Mins	Starts	Sub On	Sub Off	Goals	Assist	Goal Concs	Pen Won	Pen Conc	Yellow Card	Red Card	Points Gained	Mins per Point	Mins Per GC	Avg. Mins Per Gam
Alex Reid	810	9	0	2	7	1	8	1	0	0	0	15	54.00	101.25	90.0
Max Kretzschmar	1171	15	2	11	2	7	9	1	0	4	0	25	48.84	130.11	68.8
Sam Ashford	1187	14	3	9	7	3	10	0	0	1	0	23	51.61	118.70	69.8

WHAT must remain a concern for Matt Taylor is the fragility of his side, who let another lead slip at Oldham Athletic a few weeks ago, taking the 'total points dropped from winning positions' this season to 13.

It was also another game where the Stones conceded a goal in the final 15 minutes of the game, taking that tally to 10. In comparison, Wealdstone have amassed just 7 points from losing positions and scored just three goals in the final 15 minutes of league fixtures. Clearly that first goal is crucial in a Stones game, as the defeat at Oldham was the first time (in 10 games) that Wealdstone had scored first and lost a game this season.

In summary, at the half-way point of the season,

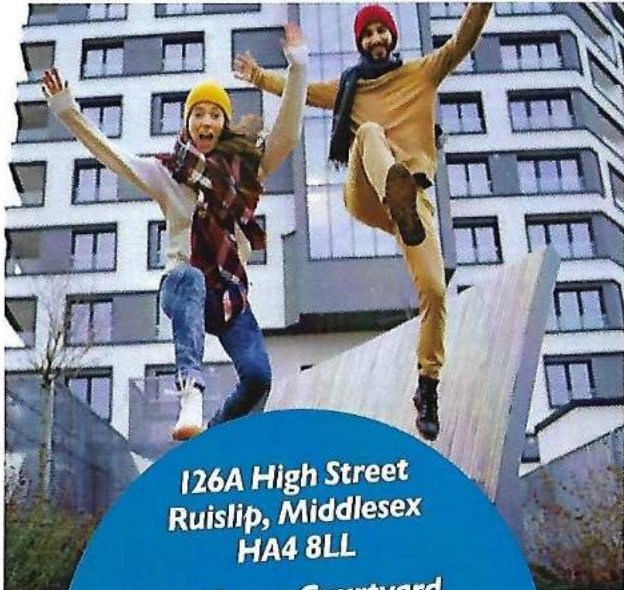
Wealdstone are still very much in a relegation battle and the loss of both Alex Reid and Jack Wells-Morris will no doubt leave a big hole to fill. The squad that had picked up 15 points since mid-October was one that looked more than capable of continuing to climb away from safety. The squad currently looks severely depleted and in urgent need of bolstering. No doubt the manager and the board will be busy trying to address that situation and the stats give a clear indication of where the squad needs to be improved. If the squad can quickly evolve, then Wealdstone should have more than enough to reach safety and maybe even have a tilt at the National League Cup, seeing as the FA competitions are now done for. **Up the Vanadrama!**

Stats show that away wins will be vital to stay in the NL

	HPPG	APPG	AGSPG	AGPCPG
17 Woking	1.62	0.62	1.04	1.42
18 Aldershot Town	1.45	0.82	1.40	1.72
19 Wealdstone	1.27	0.75	1.22	1.52
20 Braintree Town	1.36	0.45	0.86	1.41
21 Maidenhead United	1.08	0.77	1.24	1.96
22 AFC Fylde	1.50	0.33	1.21	2.08
23 Boston United	0.54	0.82	0.88	1.67
24 Ebbsfleet United	0.54	0.23	0.73	2.38

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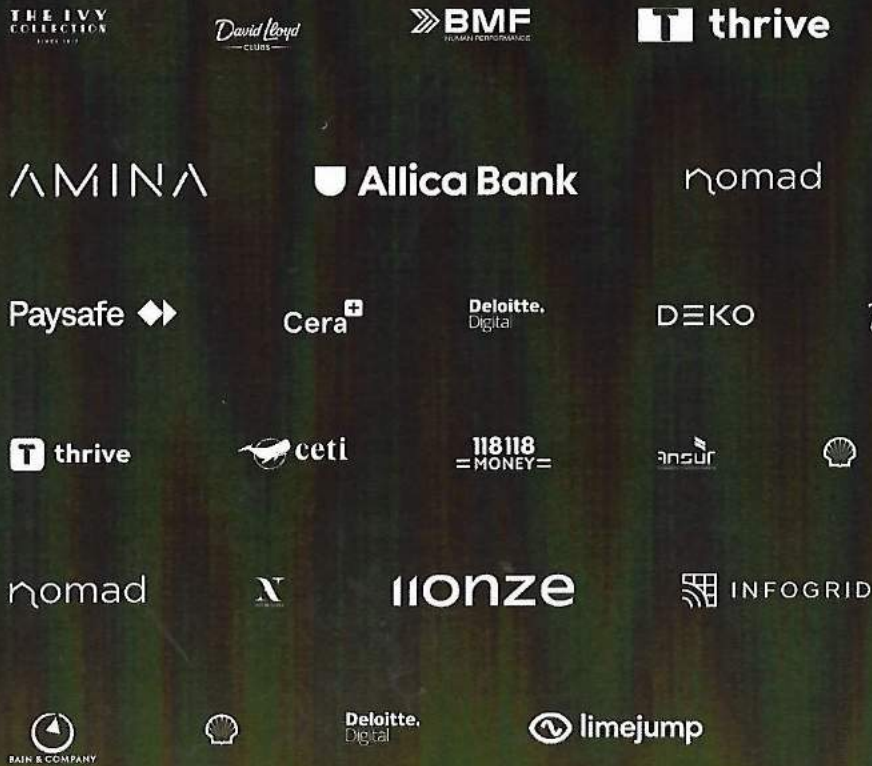
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TODAY WE WELCOME FANS OF HARTLEPOOL UNITED TO GROSVENOR VALE

Welcome to today's match against Hartlepool and I wish all fans an enjoyable day and a safe journey home.

I'm writing these notes whilst watching Tamworth doing the National League, and more importantly themselves, proud. On another day, they could have made the 4th round and I don't think that many Spurs fans would have disagreed.

It's the dream of most players and supporters to face one of the top tier teams and with all the additional revenue from the broadcaster, prize funds, sponsorship etc., clubs will certainly feel the benefit.

I didn't mention gate revenue in that list as that is something that Tamworth have faced criticism from the football community for. At £42 for an adult in the stands or £38 on the terraces it marks a substantial increase on the normal admission prices at our level. With a similar capacity to us, of course the ground was going to sell out and probably would have at £50+ a ticket. But just because you can, does it mean you should? What difference would it make to have taken £10 off each ticket?

There were 3,720 people in attendance for this cup tie and accordingly to this year's FA Cup rules, each side is entitled to 50 complimentary tickets. This takes us down to 3,620 paid tickets so that's £36,200 less income for the tie as an overall.

Each side get 45% of this with 10% going to the FA. So, this takes us down to £16,290 for each club

WFCSC update

BY MARK RANDALL



however this is gross so once you take this off the VAT then you get a shade over £13,500.

According to the football finance expert Kieran Maguire, Tamworth has a wage bill of £1.1m and, if that is true, the difference as a percentage of this is minimal.

What isn't minimal though after a well-earned draw, Tamworth the chance to make a significant sum of money in the replay. This one game would have generated them more revenue than all their other games combined. It is sad that the oldest cup competition in the world has been downgraded and some of the magic lost.

I don't want to seem too critical of Tamworth, this in my opinion, isn't profiteering but it is a symptom of what is going on further up the league. With some Premier League clubs removing concession tickets and others trying to move away from season tickets many fans are being squeezed out.

Football is the people's game and the lower you go down the pyramid, the more you need the fans and volunteers to keep the lights on. My message to any club, ours included, is don't treat fans as a transaction as otherwise when you need support in times of need, it won't be there.

Don't forget to purchase your 50:50 ticket from one of the sellers around the ground for your chance to win 50% of the take. £1 is all it takes to enter, and recent prizes have been around the £300 mark.

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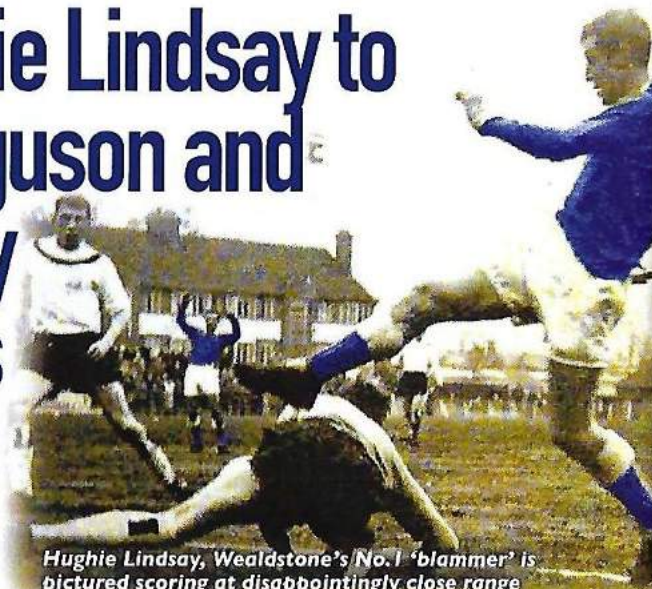
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'Blammers' MICK FISHMAN AND TIM PARKS LOOK

From Hughie Lindsay to Nathan Ferguson and Aaron Henry ...the Stones with fire in their feet!



Hughie Lindsay, Wealdstone's No.1 'blammer' is pictured scoring at disappointingly close range



I REMEMBER going to watch Watford with some Hornet-supporting mates in the late 1960s - fresh out of Primary School - and being underwhelmed by the occasion WRITES TIM PARKS.

The crowd at Vicarage Road in those days was pretty remote from the action: low-lying terracing and a dog track weren't conducive to atmosphere and it was all pretty torpid until... Ray Lugg and Stewart Scullion combined down the left and the ball was played square across the edge of the box. There was an audible gasp of anticipation as Watford's welsh-born midfielder Tom Walley hove into view.

And then: Boom! The ball seemed to travel at supersonic speed; the keeper flailed at the cannonball headed his way; the crowd leaped in delirium as it billowed the net.

And wow! That sense of awe and anticipation has never left me in the intervening 55 years.

Now, Tom Walley was nothing special as a footballer, as even Watford's *Hall of Fame* agrees. He was workmanlike, winning his tackles and moving the ball on to his more talented team mates like Scullion, skipper Keith Eddy and Dixie Hale.

But he had a shot like a thunderbolt and the crowd knew it, endlessly willing the Horns to work a position that would end with the Walley Wocket (as I liked to call it).

Looking back through the online records I reckon

my introduction to the awesome shooting power of Tom Walley was in early 1969 when he scored in successive home games against Tranmere and Rotherham in the old Division Three (League One these days).

Early the next season saw me first visit the Stones, whereupon I instantly fell in love with Lower Mead and its intimate, heady atmosphere. But nobody could replicate the awesome shooting power of Walley. Where was the man with dynamite in his feet?

Within two years Wealdstone had turned semi-professional and landed the effervescent ex-Hornet Dixie Hale to bolster our flagging midfield. Would he turn out to be the net-busting Tom Walley of my dreams? Sadly, no. He could shoot, certainly, but the sense of crowd anticipation just wasn't there. Which set me and fellow oldie fan Mick Fishman thinking of the Wealdstone players of memory (and even currently) who could rightly be called

Blammers: those men who made (or make) goalkeepers go weak at the knees whenever the ball is worked within shooting range.....

Tom Walley (far right) lets fly for Watford, circa 1969



AT PAST AND PRESENT STONES WITH A ROCKET OF A SHOT

SAD to say, for us Wealdstone fans it is almost a forgotten art: I struggle to recall any goals, either scored by us or our opponents, from thunderous long-distance shots for quite some time WRITES MICK FISHMAN

There will have been a few that have escaped my failing memory, but my take is that fewer goals of that type are scored in modern football than was once the case. Us oldies can bring to mind Bobby Charlton unleashing long range missiles for Manchester United and England and, a little later, Peter Lorimer doing the same for Leeds United and Scotland. Narrowing it down to us at Wealdstone, have we had in living memory free kick specialists and/or players capable of hammering in shots from distance that resulted in goals?

Well, yes. One player instantly comes to mind who blammed in direct free kicks and unleashed long range heat-seeking missiles was **Hughie Lindsay**. Between 1962 and 1969, Hughie played 321 games for the club during which he found the net on 174 occasions. He was a small, slightly built inside forward - in modern parlance an attacking midfielder player or No.10. And a significant proportion of his goals came from hammering in direct free-kicks.

It was the same routine for 90% of the time. his great buddy and team mate **Charlie Townsend** would approach the ball but run over it, allowing Hughie to follow and send in unstoppable bombs past terrified defenders and startled goalkeepers. 10% of the time Charlie (pictured above), who also had a ferocious shot, would fool the defending team by taking the shot himself and sometimes score. But Hughie was lethal from a shooting position anywhere near to the opposition goal.

I can't think of any Wealdstone player subsequently who could score directly from free-kicks



with anything like the frequency, ferocity or accuracy of Hughie Lindsay. Yes, recently we've seen people like Danny Green, Billy Clifford and Aaron Henry score occasional spectacular free-kicks - but none blammed in free kicks that hit the back of the net either frequently or regularly.

The exception is having a pop from a direct free kick which has been going on for donkeys' years and popularised by dead ball geniuses like David Beckham and Cristiano Ronaldo. But by and large the practice promises little and delivers less. Match of The Day shows one or maybe two if fortunate from all the games' highlights shown. Watching the EFL highlights, the 36 or so matches covered all show teams having a blam (or blams) at goal from direct free kicks awarded 25 yards out or so. Most weeks none are scored. Some weeks one or two.



This came to my mind during the recent home match against Braintree Town when we had three or four free kicks within sniffing distance of the Braintree goal. Each one was blasted into the defensive wall, over the bar or straight at the keeper.

Maybe we should get Matty Taylor to trot on as a goal-kicker, as in American Football. Now he could shoot!

Taking shots from a distance in open play is something rather different. You will see them in the Prem but with decreasing frequency as you move down the leagues.

Back in Hughie and Charlie's day we briefly had a burly 18 year old midfielder player called **Colin Franks** who had a howitzer of a shot on him. Unfortunately, it was too often wayward and he only scored one goal in 30 appearances for us before he was poached into the professional ranks by Watford. Later, he famously struck an astonishing match-winning bolt from the blue past the legendary Gordon Banks when Watford took on Stoke City in the FA Cup. He must have heard the criticism!

Eddie Presland was an ex-top level full back who could employ a technically textbook style of shooting that could unleash unstoppable shots. From 70 appearances for the club he scored 6 goals... including one famous 25-yarder that knocked Wimbledon out of the FA Trophy in 1974. In the same era, midfielder player **Paul Fairclough** was a decent if unspectacular midfielder player who started 130 games for the club and scored 13 goals. He had a thumping

Continued overpage >>>

'Blammers' CONTINUED AS WE LOOK BACK AT

from previous page shot on him, but it too often lacked accuracy. Moving forward to 1978, we fielded an ex-Kent circuit full back called **Jimmy McVeigh**. I can't recall how effective he was as a defender, but he certainly had a huge shot on him via which he scored six goals from 61 appearances.

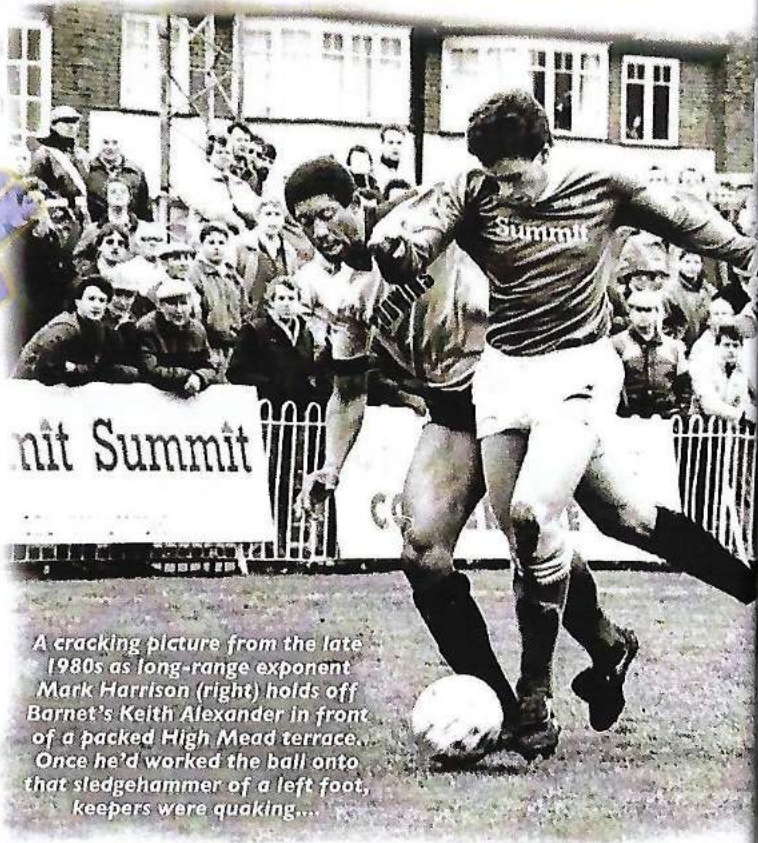
The only player who has turned out for the club whom one could reasonably suggest had the ability to strike a ball anywhere near as hard as Hughie Lindsay was, of course, **Neil Cordice**.

In his pomp Neil was a fabulous player of pace and power who could hammer a ball with astonishing ferocity. The only problem was, he was wildly inconsistent. His greatest goals were memorable, as were his greatest misses.

But Neil hit the ball so sweetly, with very little backlift, that you could forgive any other flaw in his game. The number of times goalkeepers were simply left rooted to the spot as he buried the ball from 25 yards were legion... and he scored 102 goals over both his spells with the Stones. And made 463 appearances in total, only in second place behind Charlie Townsend in the all-time Wealdstone charts.

Very much in the Eddie Presland mode was defender **Mark Harrison**. "Stroller", as he was affectionately known, was a very stylish left sided defender who, on occasion, could unleash a wonderful shot that over three or more seasons produced 20 goals in 170 appearances.

And talking of goalscoring left-backs, how can we discount **Stuart Pearce** from the discussion? He was only in his late teens/early 20s when he was our regular No3 but he was entrusted with every corner and every freekick from 1979-1983. From memory, Stu (circled on opposite page) landed crucial freekick goals at title contenders Kettering in Spring 1981 (the winner which so nearly kept us up) and a year later, the only goal at Gloucester City in



A cracking picture from the late 1980s as long-range exponent Mark Harrison (right) holds off Barnet's Keith Alexander in front of a packed High Mead terrace. Once he'd worked the ball onto that sledgehammer of a left foot, keepers were quaking....

the Southern League Cup Final first leg. Neither goalkeeper got anywhere near the ball.

A few years later in the late 1980s we had mercurial forward **Tony Lynch**, who, when on his game, could hammer in unstoppable shots. But much like Neil Cordice, he could launch the ball into orbit around the moon when off his game.

Unsurprisingly, the two dreadful years bumping along in football's nether regions when ground sharing at Yeading produced no player from memory who had a shot on him!

The second season there had us field some excellent forwards for the standard in **Tim Buzaglo, Roddy Brathwaite, Simon Quail** and **Mark Biggins**, all of whom could score goals but none of whom could claim a thunderous shot.

Our move to Edgware in 1995, and Gordon Bartlett's first squad, unearthed an interesting character called **Steve Fraser**, a locally-based copper. He didn't have an awful lot to his game other than a piledriver of a left foot. Present him

MORE STONES WHO SIMPLY TERRIFIED GOALKEEPERS....

with the ball in or around the opposition penalty area on his left foot and he could unleash bombs. In 30 starts and 13 on the bench, he blammed in 17 goals.

A few years later we signed a man-mountain central defender from Kingsbury Town, **Dave Ryan**. For a big man Dave had a delightful touch and a fine passing range, as well as a huge shot which often prompted manager Bartlett to play him in central midfield. What stopped him from playing at a higher level was lack of pace, unsurprisingly for a big fella like the likeable Dave who scored 28 goals for the club.

I can't bring to mind any player with a mega-shot during the grim years of our ground sharing at Northwood (although Scott Donnelly, who we had on loan as a teenager from QPR, had a few wicked, bending long-rangers to his name).



Our move to Grosvenor Vale has been a story of relative success and gradual improvement and one would expect a player or two would have emerged who could relatively frequently unleash a thunderous shot on goal. I can't think of one - apart from young **Matt McClure** whom we took on loan from Wycombe Wanderers and promptly spanked in four goals in two memorable games against Horsham and Tonbridge Angels - all at the Vale - as we chased a play-off spot in the spring of 2010. His 35-yard volley against Horsham was as astonishing as Neil Cordice's famous strike v Yeovil 30 years earlier.

Skipper **Lee Chappell** also scored rare thunderbolts from distance, but you couldn't say that he had that ability as an important part of his armoury. But there are three players who have turned out recently for the club that merit mention. **Nathan Ferguson**, now at Maidenhead, can hit a ball with power and precision, but like

so much of his game his performance in doing so was fitful. Young **Sam Bowen** showed on several occasions that he could strike an excellent and reliably accurate long-range shot and for a brief period an air of expectation stirred in the Stones faithful when the ball appeared at Sam's feet on the edge of the box. Since his move to Solihull Moors however I have seen no evidence of his name appearing on their score sheet.

The one player who you could make an argument for being in the club of players noted for their ferocious shooting is **Jacob Mendy Mendy**. During his last season with us before his move to Boreham Wood, Jacob (below) was given a free role to get into positions to attack the opposition's goal. It was then he displayed the ability to unleash powerful and accurate shots. Since leaving us he has reverted to his natural left wing back position from where he has scored just 8 goals in over 100 appearances for Wood and now Wrexham. It makes one wonder what type of player he might have become had he stuck with us. A left footed midfield player with a thunderous shot would have been an asset anywhere.

As the late Terry Wogan used to say when discussing things going on he didn't quite understand, "is it just me?" Are there now fewer goals scored from outside the penalty area?

Are there fewer players around now who are renowned for their ferocious shooting? If the answer to either or both is yes, then the question becomes why? Is the modern ball lighter than its predecessors that makes its direction and trajectory more difficult to control? Are players now coached and encouraged to work themselves into goalscoring positions via close, slick passing and movement?

I have no statistics to prove the point one way or the other. It's only in recent times that statistics have become so prevalent (to the point of tediousness some might argue). For example, there would be no record of how many times Bobby Charlton took pot shots from distance, how many resulted in goals and how many ended up in the Stretford End. They kept quiet about that!





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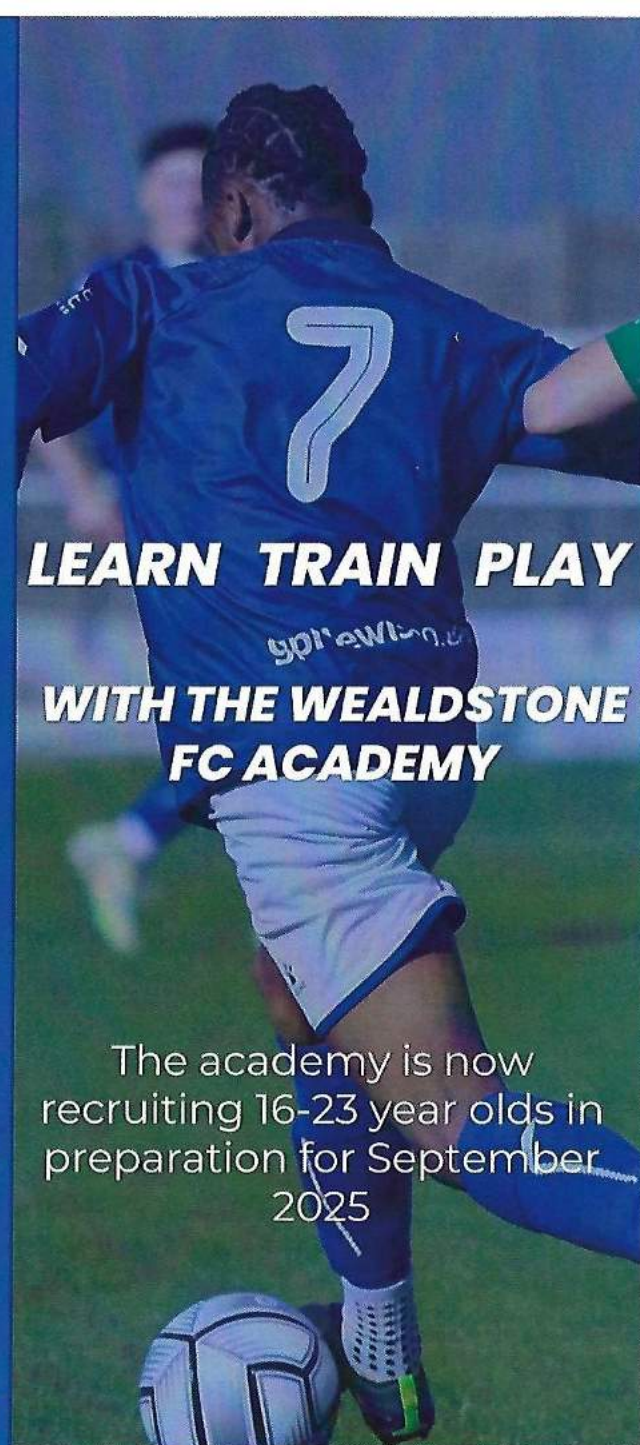
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We've met before **TIM PARKS**  **ON TWO PAST**

Even Sean Adarkwa's finest hour was not enough to register a first win over Pools in five attempts

SAT DEC 23, 2023, NATIONAL LEAGUE: WEALDSTONE 4 HARTLEPOOL UTD 4

NICOLE Ch-Yee got it spot on in her match report for the *Non-League paper* (on the opposite page)... a Xmas cracker and definitely five-star entertainment.

But she didn't mention the presents that popped out of the crackers that ultimately cost the Stones maximum points at the Vale two days before Christmas. Full credit to Hartlepool for rescuing a 0-3 scoreline after half an hour, and then 2-4 with ten minutes remaining, but it was bitterly disappointing for Stu Maynard and his team - especially Sean Adarkwa who smashed in a hat-trick on a

The best

day when he was simply unplayable. How we wish he could escape his injury problems now! The fans were singing out their version of *Last Christmas* by Wham when the tall striker lit up the game in

the first half, kicking up the slope. Max Kretschmar had put Stones ahead after just three minutes with a snap volley, and Adarkwa's best goal of his trio made it 2-0 just ten minutes later. He won the ball ten yards inside his own half, strode purposely forward

Adarkwa (centre) is mobbed after his 3rd goal of the game

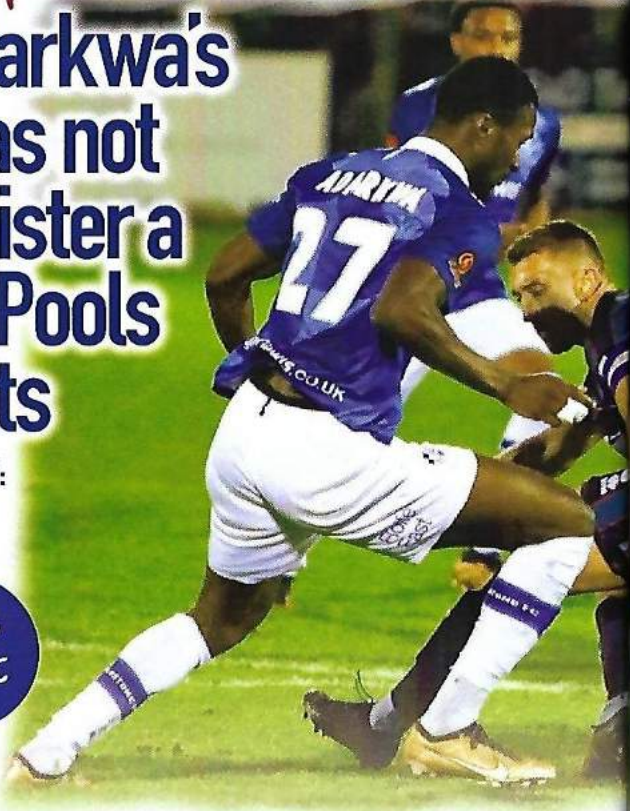
A 7-2 defeat in

SAT APR 17 2021, NATIONAL LEAGUE: WEALDSTONE 2 HARTLEPOOL UTD 7

STONES' first season back in non-League's top flight turned into a miserable succession of heavy defeats in the behind-closed-doors campaign... and we had the misfortune to run into table-toppers Hartlepool just as

GAMES WITH EIGHT AND NINE GOALS!

It was a day to remember for Sean Adarkwa with the big ex-QPR striker scoring a hat-trick against the visitors from the North East
Pic: Jon TAFFEL



were when Sean made it 3-0 with another devastating finish on 28 minutes.

A convincing home win looked rubber-stamped, until the wrapping started unravelling from those unopened presents. First Callum Cook's header dribbled past the slow-moving Jack Cook and keeper Marcus Dewhurst to find the corner, and another slow-motion response from the keeper saw Joe Grey's left-footer nestle in the net.

So just 3-2 at half time, but wave after wave of pressure (notice the match stats, right, that show a remarkable 19 shots on goal from the Stones and 13 from Pools) finally saw Adarkwa pounce for his hat-trick after Allarakhia's effort was half saved.

The points looked to be ours... until Pools brought on our former powerhouse Josh Umerah up front. He somehow foraged a goal out of nothing in a packed box, and then the visitors' remarkable comeback was complete when Stones were slow to clear and Mitch Hancox hammered a low 30-yarder past Dewhurst and just inside the far post.

What a game!
● That draw, and the 1-1 earlier this season, are the only times we've avoided defeat v Hartlepool in five games.

and then, as the defence backed off, sidefooted a 25-yard effort that bent beautifully inside the right hand post. If I was jubilant on match commentary alongside injured defender Charlie Barker on co-comms (who was punching the air) imagine how delighted we

dog days of the Covid season

The worst

depression was setting in. It was proving impossible to field a competitive side, with furloughing, injuries, and an unsurprising lack of fight in those surreal circumstances. Wealdstone were actually 7-0 down at one stage before Sonny Blue Lo-Everton danced through the defence on his debut

to pull one back. And Ryan Gondoh added the second-best goal of the game to make it 7-2. But Pools were obviously home and dry with Richie Bennett (on loan from Stockport) scoring a hat-trick, with Rhys Oates (2), Nicky Featherston and Mark Shelton the others. Two of the goals were penalties. It was that sort of day for the humiliated Stones.

WEALDSTONE 4
Kretschmar 3, Adarkwa 13, 28, 76

HARTLEPOOL U 4
Cooke 44, Grey 45+1, Umerah 60, Hancox 90

A FESTIVE TREAT SEES TOP POOLS HIT BACK

By Nicole Cho-Yee

WEALDSTONE and Hartlepool United served up a Christmas cracker in the shape of an eight-goal draw, in a thriller at the Vale.

Sean Adarkwa fired a sensational hat-trick to put the Stones on course for victory, but late goals from Josh Umerah and Mitch Hancox earned Pools a share of the spoils.

Stuart Maynard's men were 3-0 up by the 28th minute but John Askey's side fought back deservedly to end a run of back-to-back defeats.

Wealdstone were quick out of the traps, scoring within four minutes as Kretschmar clinically finished past Joel Dixon.

And on 13 minutes, the lead was doubled with a brilliant solo goal from Adarkwa - the striker surging from the half way line and comfortably dispatching past Dixon from the edge of the box.

Adarkwa then added a second on 28 minutes, latching onto Michal Obiero's curling through-ball and powerfully firing home. Just before the stroke of half-time, the Pools were handed a lifeline when Callum Cooke headed Nicky Featherstone's cross into the bottom corner past Marcus Dewhurst.

And moments later it was 3-2 when Joe Grey squeezed his effort past Dewhurst at the near post to set up a pulsating second half.

Cooke then hit the cross-bar as Pools returned from the interval on the front foot, while sub Umerah almost made an instant impact, slipping through Cooke to beat Dewhurst,

but Brooklyn Ilunga preserved the scoreline with a crucial goal-line clearance. Wealdstone too, though, continued to push for another goal and Obiero had the ball in the back of the net in the 74th minute, but the assistant referee flagged for offside.

However, two minutes later, the home side duly made one count - Adarkwa completing his hat-trick, following up a rebound to fire home into the bottom corner for his seventh goal of the season.

Umerah's positive influence continued as he pulled another goal back against his former club with 10 minutes remaining, shrugging off his marker to coolly slot home into the bottom corner.

Back came Pools with Cooke hooking an effort narrowly wide before they were finally rewarded for their persistence in the 90th minute as Hancox drove

a superb low shot into the bottom corner from 25 yards.

Wealdstone assistant boss Matt Saunders was disappointed not to claim all three points, saying: "It was a frustrating afternoon. To be in the position we were and not win is heart-breaking."

"But it shows how far we've come though that drawing to Hartlepool in this manner feels like a defeat."

"We've had bit of luck at home recently so we've got to put this one to bed and move on to the next one."

MATCH STATS

WEALDSTONE V HARTLEPOOL		
11 SHOTS ON TARGET	10	
8 SHOTS OFF TARGET	3	
7 CORNERS	1	
2 OFFSIDE	2	
4 FOULS CONCEDED	6	
0 YELLOW CARDS	2	
0 RED CARDS	0	

WEALDSTONE: 0-4: 30 Dewhurst 17, Cook 7, Barrett 6, Mundle-Smith 6, Bunga 7, Obiero 6, Charles 7, Bowen 7, Allarakhia 6, Kretschmar 7, Ferguson 10, 74, Adarkwa 9 (Andrews 89, Subs not used: Andrews, Abdul-Razzak, Campbell, Mason, Preece, Cook 74, 76, Dixon 7, Brennan 6, O'neill 6 (Umerah 57, 81, Johnson 6 (Johnson 23, 61, Masie 7, Featherstone 6, Welbeck 6 (Hancox 75, 82, Cooke 8, Ferguson 7, Grey 7, Djansezovic 6, Subs not used: Jameson, Burton)

STAR MAN: Sean Adarkwa (Wealdstone) FT: 1: 457
ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★
REFEREE: Gareth Rhodes

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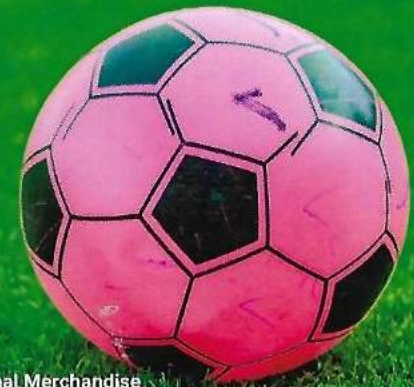
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MATCH SPONSORS: NBM technology
BALL DONOR: Raj Darbar

BRAINTREE TOWN (October 22, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Rolfe East
BALL DONOR: Darrell Parsons

FULHAM U21S (November 5, National League Cup)

BALL DONOR: Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

SOUTHAMPTON U21S (November 12, National League Cup)

BALL DONOR: Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

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MATCH SPONSORS: Rolfe East | Harrow Windows
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WYCOMBE WANDERERS (November 30, FA Cup 2nd Rnd)

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BALL DONORS: Terry Hissey

DERBY COUNTY U21S (December 3, National League Cup)

BALL DONOR: Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

ALTRINCHAM (December 10, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Bedford Friends of Wealdstone in memory of John O'Connor
BALL DONOR: Toby Jackson, Lapels Badges

DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE (December 21, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Harrow Windows
BALL DONOR: Joe Mannion and Family

... OR DONATE A BALL 2024-2025



...or be a part of matchday by donating the match ball!

A package for businesses (from £225 + vat) or fans (£180) for four people that will give you the satisfaction of knowing you have paid for the ball that Wealdstone are banging into the net (or out of the ground!). As ball donor you will enjoy:
4 x Match tickets
4 x Captains' Lounge hospitality + refreshments and snacks
Publicity over the PA system and via the official club website and social media
4 x match-day programmes
1 x Signed Ball

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

HARTLEPOOL UTD (January 18, National League)

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

BRIGHTON & HOVE U21S (January 21, Nat. League Cup)

BALL DONOR: Wealdstone FC Supporters Club

SOLIHULL MOORS (February 1, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Contact abbeychandler@wealdstonefc.com
BALL DONORS: Graham Clark and Mike Pullin

TAMWORTH (February 4, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Brunel University | Rolfe East
BALL DONOR: In memory of our worst ever player

GATESHEAD (February 8, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Ruislip Windows and Doors
BALL DONORS: Keith Davies

EBBSFLEET UNITED (February 22, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Brunel University • Paul Lazenby
BALL DONORS: In memory of Brian 'Kat' Kelly

BOSTON UNITED (February 25, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: MODU Digital
BALL DONORS: Mark Snell

ALDERSHOT TOWN (March 1, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Rolfe East
BALL DONORS: Peter and Steve Drew in memory of Tony Drew

EASTLEIGH (March 15, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Ruislip Windows and Doors
BALL DONORS: Help Stones put the ball in the net – donate this one!

WOKING (March 22, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Contact abbeychandler@wealdstonefc.com
BALL DONORS: Darrell Parsons

FOREST GREEN ROVERS (April 5, National League)

MATCH SPONSORS: Graham Clark and Mike Pullin
BALL DONORS: Help Stones put the ball in the net – donate this 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!

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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- **Kenneth Spektor**



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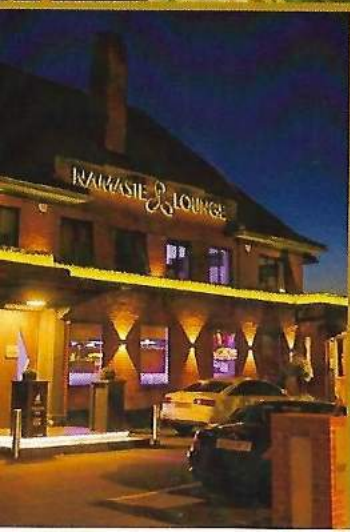
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It costs **£165** to sponsor a player's home or away kit, or **£250** to get a shirt signed by your chosen player at the end of the season. You'll also get a mention below, a mention on the club website – and a mention on any player interviews we publish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

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

Kit donors

Michael Owen

In memory of our dad Bernie Ingram, Wealdstone home and bred



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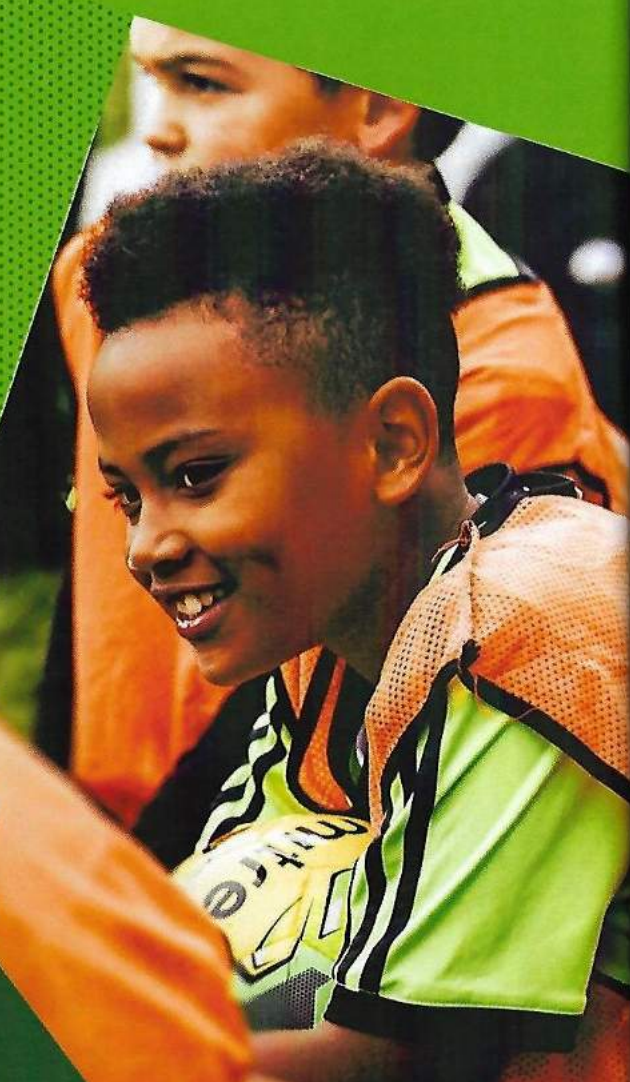
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SUPPORT THE STONES HERE AT HOME AND ACROSS ENGLAND


Coming up here at The Vale >



BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION
National League Cup
Tuesday
21st January
7:00pm




SOLIHULL MOORS
Vanarama National League
Saturday
1st February
3:00pm




TAMWORTH
Vanarama National League
Tuesday
4th February
7:45pm

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE - TABLE, AS AT 15TH JANUARY	ALL					HOME					AWAY					GD	Pts	STONES RESULTS			
	P	W	D	L	F	P	W	D	L	F	P	W	D	L	F			A	H	A	
1 York City	24	15	6	3	48	20	13	11	1	1	34	9	11	4	5	2	14	11	28	51	0-2
2 Forest Green Rovers	25	14	9	2	44	21	12	8	4	0	21	9	13	6	5	2	23	12	23	51	2-2
3 Barnet	25	15	5	5	51	30	13	10	3	0	32	10	12	5	2	5	19	20	21	50	0-3
4 Gateshead	25	14	5	6	49	32	12	9	1	2	26	11	13	5	4	4	23	21	17	47	0-1
5 Oldham Athletic	23	12	8	3	41	23	11	7	3	1	22	8	12	5	5	2	19	15	18	44	0-1
6 Solihull Moors	25	12	5	8	45	36	13	6	3	4	26	24	12	6	2	4	19	12	9	41	1-1
7 Rochdale	22	12	3	7	34	20	10	6	2	2	16	7	12	6	1	5	18	13	14	39	2-0
8 Halifax Town	24	9	9	6	26	23	12	4	4	4	14	14	12	5	5	2	12	9	3	36	2-2
9 Yeovil Town	26	10	6	10	32	30	13	4	4	5	15	14	13	6	2	5	17	16	2	36	0-3
10 Hartlepool United	25	9	9	7	31	30	13	5	6	2	13	10	12	4	3	5	18	20	1	36	1-1
11 Altrincham	24	9	8	7	37	30	12	6	5	1	19	8	12	3	3	6	18	22	7	35	3-3
12 Eastleigh	25	8	11	6	35	33	13	5	6	2	22	18	12	3	5	4	13	15	2	35	1-1
13 Sutton United	25	9	7	9	34	33	13	5	3	5	18	16	12	4	4	4	16	17	+1	34	0-1
14 Southend United	25	8	9	8	29	27	12	4	4	4	17	14	13	4	5	4	12	13	+2	33	1-1
15 Dagenham & Redbridge	25	8	8	9	40	34	12	6	3	3	29	18	13	2	5	6	11	16	+6	32	3-0
16 Tamworth	24	8	6	10	26	41	12	5	5	2	18	14	12	3	1	8	8	27	-15	30	
17 Woking	26	7	8	11	27	37	13	6	3	4	15	15	13	1	5	7	12	22	-10	29	0-1
18 Aldershot Town	25	5	10	10	35	43	12	4	4	4	20	20	13	1	6	6	15	23	-8	25	2-0
19 Wealdstone	23	5	8	10	28	35	11	4	2	5	13	16	12	1	6	5	15	19	-7	23	--
20 Braintree Town	25	6	5	14	23	36	13	4	3	6	9	12	12	2	2	8	14	24	-13	23	3-2
21 Maidenhead United	25	6	5	14	31	49	12	3	4	5	14	21	13	3	1	9	17	28	-18	23	1-3
22 AFC Fylde	24	6	4	14	29	50	12	5	3	4	23	22	12	1	1	10	6	28	-21	22	1-0
23 Boston United	24	3	7	14	21	40	13	1	4	8	12	24	11	2	3	6	9	16	-19	16	
24 Ebbsfleet United	26	1	7	18	19	62	13	1	4	8	8	25	13	0	3	10	11	37	-43	10	2-2


Follow the Stones on the road >



AFC FYLDE
Vanarama National League
Tuesday
25th January
7:45pm



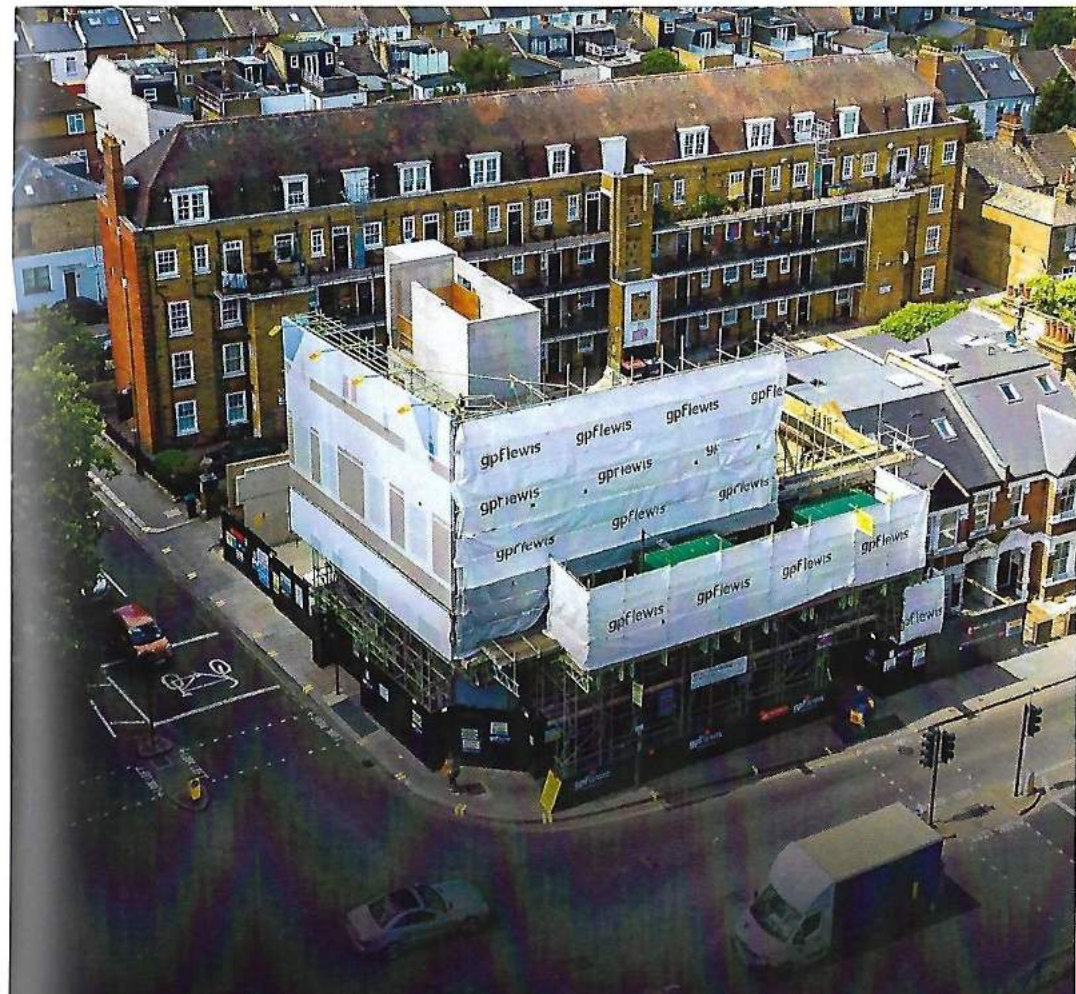
YEOVIL TOWN
Vanarama National League
Saturday
15th February
3:00pm



BRAINTREE TOWN
Vanarama National League
Tuesday
19th February
7:45pm



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