

the Seasiders

THE OFFICIAL 2022/2023 MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

Respect 



Seasiders v Witham Town



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LEAGUE

SATURDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2022, 3PM
PITCHING IN ISTHMIAN NORTH LEAGUE



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JOINT CHAIRMAN: **MATT HOPE**

Good afternoon, a very welcome to the AGL Arena to all players, management, officials and supporters of Witham Town, as well as the match officials and our own superb set of fans.

This afternoon's match is the first of two consecutive leagues fixtures here at the AGL Arena in the Isthmian League North, we will no doubt look to extend our 100% home record in the league this season. We return on the back of two tough away fixtures against Hullbridge and Heybridge Swifts respectively, with a win and defeat which leaves us just outside the play-offs but with only five points separating second to sixth in the league, it is very tight in the play-off spots, with four of the top six all Suffolk sides, it really goes to show how well Suffolk Non-League football is performing at the moment.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome back Andre Hasanally, I think it is fair to say Andre got better and better in his loan spell last season, and we are all excited to see his talent on display once again.



"... it is very tight in the play-off spots, with four of the top six all Suffolk sides, it really goes to show how well Suffolk Non-League football is performing at the moment."

As a club we recently had the very sad news that Felixstowe & Walton Utd FC, legend "Big" Ray Stanbridge had passed away. Ray has been synonymous with this football club for over 60 years and was a very close friend to many, there will be a minute's silence followed by applause prior to today's game as a mark respect. The club will also be undertaking a fitting tribute to Ray when the time is right.

I hope you all enjoy this afternoon's game, and hopefully come this evening our 100% league home record will still be intact!!

A safe journey home to both sets of supporters, players, management, and today's match officials.

Kind Regards
Matt Hope



FROM THE DUGOUT: **ANDY CRUMP**

Good afternoon everyone and a warm welcome to today's game.

Before writing these notes, there was the uncertainty about when this fixture might be played but for once our National team have kept things simple in qualifying for the knockout stages of the World Cup and we can enjoy a Saturday afternoon with a 3pm Kick off. I recently had the pleasure of meeting Gareth Southgate at St Georges Park and he spoke with pride and humility about his exciting young squad of players. What impressed me most was his genuine invested interest in their development not only as players but as people too and like many of you, I am hopeful of the success they can deliver at this year's World Cup.



On the subject of people that I have had the pleasure of meeting, the staff and players were incredibly sad to hear of the passing of Ray Stanbridge. Stuart and myself would like to send our condolences to Ray's family as we show appreciation through a minute's silence today for his incredible contribution to the football club over the past 62 years. On the many occasions that I had the chance to talk football with Ray, his enthusiasm for the whole club struck me – he would spend as much of his time watching the juniors, U18's and reserves as he would the senior side. In my time as a coach and now Assistant Manager he gave me his frank assessments of players and performances and it was difficult to disagree with him. Our football club has always been blessed to have people like Ray at the heart of it and although we will all miss seeing him on the corner of the Dellwood Avenue end of the ground, or talking over a beer in the clubhouse, his legacy will be a huge part of the football club for many years to come, I'm sure.



Today sees us welcome Witham Town for another difficult home fixture. Whilst our form away from home continues to create a few bumps in the road, the players remain consistent with a home record that we are keen to protect today. Over the coming games you will see a few familiar faces return to the squad and I was delighted to see Armani

Schaar score a hat-trick on Monday night for the U23's on his return to fitness. After three games suspended, Callum Bennett was also able to gain some important minutes to support his return to first team action. Those who have watched will have been as impressed as Stuart and I with Harry Blackburn's performances in that same time. We signed Harry knowing full well that although he has the potential to play many games for Felixstowe and Walton, he would have to be patient early on but, like Charlie Warren, he has grabbed his opportunity and put in three good performances. Callum Harrison made his first return to training this week whilst Henry Barley made his full return and will be like a new signing for us both over the coming weeks. Talking of new signings, a big welcome back to Andre, someone we were really keen to bring back in the Summer but for a few reasons we have had to be patient. Those at Hullbridge and Heybridge will have quickly been reminded of what he will add to an already talented squad.

Looking forward to an exciting afternoon of football with you all!

Andy



Congratulations to **Chris Daynes** and **Kate Ayriss** on your wedding day yesterday – and wishing you both every happiness together.



SEASIDER PHIL GRIFFITHS



Not many people know this...

As we get older, we see our friends leave us in the worst possible way and we end up saying goodbye in a Crematorium or at a graveside, reflecting on our lives and how we have lived them.

We, the football club and myself personally lost a couple of good friends recently, within 24 hours of each other. I can't let them pass without noting their significance here!

On Saturday 12th November I drove up to Ipswich to see two mates - Ron Churchyard, who had been in St Elizabeth's Hospice a few days, battling against an incurable Brain Tumour and Ray Stanbridge, a new arrival at the Hospice having been transferred from Heath Road Hospital the previous day. I was told they were in adjoining beds, and I thought ... great ... two birds ... one stone ... excellent, we could discuss our woes together, they could have a moan at me I could have a moan back, talk about football, who we were playing that afternoon ... sadly, it was not to be. Ray wasn't there. He had passed away 15 minutes before I arrived.

On Sunday 13th November another club friend, Mike Packham passed away. The younger element at the club may not know or remember Mike, but for more than 30 years he was an integral part of the Seasiders, willing to put his hand to anything and help anywhere he was needed right up to 2010/11 when, not enjoying the best of health, stepped back from his volunteering role - he was an occasional visitor to the club post 2012 and always welcome.

Ron Churchyard, another who has been part of the club since the early 70's has 'escaped' the hospice and is now at home receiving constant treatment from Family and St Elizabeth's nurses, and hopefully it will continue for many months to come.

Ray's funeral is next Wednesday 7th December, 1030 at Seven Hills Crematorium and after at the Orwell Hotel, Felixstowe.

Mike is having a Pure Cremation so there will be no service, but there is a day of remembrances planned by his wife at the clubhouse early in the New Year, more on that when the date is fixed.



If you have a pint during or after the game, raise your glass to Ray... he would expect nothing less.

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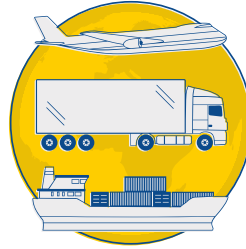
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MATCH REPORT

SATURDAY 19th NOVEMBER
ISTHMIAN NORTH

Hullbridge Sports 1
Felixstowe & Walton Utd 2

Brown, Ford

A vocal away following saw a dominant second half performance from Felixstowe secure a richly deserved win at Hullbridge Sports.

Prior to the game injuries and absences left manager Stuart Boardley without several experienced players - captain Billy Holland, Callum Bennett, Noel Aitkens, Henry Barley and Callum Harrison were all missing. However Andre Hasanally, who re-signed for The Seaside's Friday afternoon, went straight into the starting line up, and there was a welcome return for Zak Brown who led the line with Sam Ford. Following his man of the match performance in the last game, Harry Blackburn retained his place at right back.

PHOTOS
BY THOMAS
BRADFORD



HOW WE LINED UP:

1. Callum Robinson
2. Harry Blackburn
3. Joe Whight
16. Harry Knock
5. Milo Grimes
6. Leon Ottley-Gooch
7. Andre Hasanally
8. Josh Hitter
9. Zak Brown
10. Sam Ford
11. Charlie Warren

SUBS

12. Tom Maycock
14. Curtis Haynes-Brown
15. Stuart Ainsley
4. Noel Aitkens
19. George Clarke

Match Report: Martin Brooks





First Half: The torrential rain that fell in the hours leading up to the game stopped just before kick off, but both sides seemed to struggle in the muddy conditions in what can only be described as a scrappy first half.

Chances were few and far between, though Alex Moss came close for the home side from the game's first corner in the 5th minute when his goal bound header was blocked on the line by another Hullbridge player! In the 13th minute a long range effort from the impressive Charlie Warren was tipped around the post by home 'keeper Lewis Greene, and the Hullbridge goal custodian was also on hand to tip a Sam Ford goal bound effort around the post in the 24th minute after Zak Brown had stolen the ball from a home defender.

Second Half: By contrast the second half was all about total Felixstowe dominance: In the 49th minute a Hasanally free kick was pushed around the post by Greene, but just a minute later he was left helpless by a cool finish from Zak Brown after an excellent cross by Harry Blackburn who had pushed forward from his right back position.

From there followed a series of opportunities for Felixstowe to put the game out of sight. In the 52nd minute the goalkeeper could only watch as the hugely impressive Hasanally saw a long range effort whistle past the post, and soon after a bullet header from Joe Whight following a corner was hooked off the line by a Hullbridge defender. A few minutes later Whight turned provider when his left wing cross was headed powerfully downward by Josh Hitter, but Greene got down well to scoop the ball away. On the 70th minute great work from Sam Ford on the left edge of the area resulted in his pinpoint cross being met by Zak Brown, his goal bound header being tipped over the crossbar.

Felixstowe's dominance finally paid off in the 77th minute when Sam Ford - continuing with his recent and very useful knack for being in the right place at the right time - controlled a free kick dropped into the penalty area from midfield, and beat a defender before coolly slotting a left foot finish inside the post. Sam was immediately substituted by Tom Maycock - seemingly harsh, but manager Stuart



Boardley confirmed after the game that this was a planned move, and at least Sam got his own and well-deserved personal ovation from the thankful Felixstowe supporters!

In the 84th minute man of the match Hasanally was substituted to more rapturous applause by the away contingent, replaced by club legend Stuart Ainsley in a central

midfield role; an effort to shore up and protect the result. So it seemed somewhat ironic that, as the game entered injury time a defensive error – I hasten to add, not by Stuart Ainsley! – resulted in Hullbridge substitute Sonny Dutton being left through on goal to score off the inside of the post.

With only a minute or so left on the clock Felixstowe suffered no late dramas, in fact Tom Maycock almost managed to add further gloss to the result but his effort from 8 yards slid agonisingly past the post with Greene well beaten.

After the game there really was only one question to ask Felixstowe manager Stuart Boardley: With no substitutions and no discernible change in formation, what exactly did he say to the team at half time that brought about such a huge transformation after a lacklustre first half? Stuart explained “I asked the players to be more positive and up the tempo. I also encouraged the full backs to be more confident in pushing forward” – evidently this proved sound advice given the fabric of the all-important opening goal!





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OUR SQUAD

Introducing the Felixstowe & Walton United playing squad and management team of 2022/2023.



STUART BOARDLEY MANAGER

Stuart started his footballing career at Ipswich Town leaving in 2004 after 10 years. He went on to play for Torquay United, Sudbury, Leiston and Felixstowe. In 2018 he was appointed as Manager of Leiston but left in 2019 to become Manager of Felixstowe & Walton United.

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ANDY CRUMP ASSISTANT MANAGER

Andy returned to Felixstowe & Walton United as Assistant Manager following the appointment of Stuart Boardley in 2019. Having enjoyed success in previous spells at the club as both player and First Team Coach.

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KOTRYNA STOKNAITE SPORTS THERAPIST

Kotryna Stoknaite is a BSC Sports Therapy graduate from the University of Essex. During her undergraduate degree she had the opportunity to work as a Sports Therapist for the Colchester Rugby First team, as well as treating patients weekly at the university clinic.

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STUART STEVENSON COACH

After hanging up his boots Stuart joined Felixstowe Utd as a fitness coach/physio, then on to Trimley to help coach his son's team from the U8s-U16s. Stuart rejoined the Seasideers to coach the U18s which lead him on to being part of the first team staff. Stuart is an FA level 2 coach and an FA level 1 mentor.

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GARY HAMMOND GOALKEEPER COACH

Gary is in his fifth season with the club. He was part of the double winning team with Walton Utd before the merger with Felixstowe. He has a wealth of experience having previously played for Stowmarket, Woodbridge and Ipswich Wanderers. Gary is also Club Treasurer.

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CALLUM ROBINSON **GOALKEEPER**

Callum joined the club in 2020 from Stowmarket Town. He started his career at Colchester United before playing for Wroxham, AFC Sudbury and spent time on loan at Brantham Athletic.

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STUART AINSLEY **LEFT BACK**

Stuart joined the club for his second spell in 2014 from Lowestoft Town. Previous clubs include Chelmsford City and AFC Sudbury. Stuart spent 10 years at Ipswich Town, winning the FA Youth Cup in 2005. Stuart has a sweet left foot and a great work ethic.

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JOE WHIGHT **DEFENDER**

Joe came through the ITFC Youth system before playing for the likes of Needham, Bury and most recently AFC Sudbury where he captained their side. A left sided defender, Joe offers composure, a wonderful left foot and a toughness and desire to defend to the back line.

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CALLUM BENNETT **RIGHT BACK**

Callum is in his second spell at the club having re-joined in late 2018. An attacking full back with one of the best ball deliveries in non-league football. Callum has plenty of experience from his time at Ipswich U18s, Stoke City U21s and Notts County.

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CURTIS HAYNES-BROWN **DEFENDER**

Curtis joined in 2020 from Stanway Rovers and has a fine Isthmian league pedigree. Previous clubs include AFC Sudbury, Lowestoft Town, Yeovil Town, Cambridge Utd, AFC Wimbledon, Macclesfield Town and Maldon & Tiptree.

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MILO GRIMES **DEFENDER**

Milo joins the Seasiders from Coggeshall Town where he was ever present during the last campaign. A tough tackling centre half but with ability to play out from the back. A good leader and talker for a 22 year old, and sure to become a firm fan favourite.

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HARRY KNOCK **DEFENDER**

Harry joins the Seaside on a permanent deal following his hugely successful loan spell in 2021/22 season. Harry, a former Scholar at ITFC, quickly became a fan favourite and an integral part of the side finishing in the play offs.

SPONSORS: Chris Worrall



HARRY BLACKBURN **RIGHT BACK/MIDFIELDER**

Like Charlie Warren, Harry graduated through the Needham Market academy and joins the Seaside predominantly as an attacking fullback. Harry plays with confidence in possession and supporters will enjoy seeing him create chances for our forward players.

SPONSOR: Chris Walne



BILLY HOLLAND **MIDFIELDER**

Billy started life at Ipswich Wanderers and has had spells at Needham, Leiston and AFC Sudbury. He's established himself as a mainstay in the centre of midfield. Players player and Supporters player of the year last season has led to him being appointed captain for the forthcoming year.

SPONSOR: Andy Clarke



NOEL AITKENS **MIDFIELDER**

Noel's signing for the club in 2020 caused a stir amongst the non-league world, joining from step 3 Leiston and being described by manager Boardley as "the best midfield player in this area". Noel is quick, strong, can tackle, is athletic and can really play football!

SPONSORS: Becky Wybrow, Richard & Jenny Bugg, Darren Walne



LEON OTTLEY-GOOCH **MIDFIELDER**

Leon signed for the club in 2020 and is another vastly experienced player at step 3 and 4 level. Previous clubs include Leiston, Bury Town, Hadleigh Utd and Stowmarket Town. Leon is very versatile but is predominantly a dynamic midfield player.

SPONSORS: Phil & Jan Griffiths



JOSH HITTER **MIDFIELDER**

Josh signed for us in 2021 having played his football at Step 3 side Leiston for the previous three seasons and gained a vast amount of experience at that level. Josh is a dynamic attack minded player who likes to arrive in the box late and score goals.

SPONSOR: Les Soall



CALLUM HARRISON **MIDFIELDER**

Former Colchester United, Needham, Sudbury and more recently Chelmsford midfielder joins the Seasiders for the 22/23 campaign. A highly sought after creative and technically gifted midfielder player that loves to get forward and provide the team with both goals and assists.

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RORY PORTER **MIDFIELDER**

Rory is one of the brightest players in recent years to progress through the youth system at Felixstowe & Walton. Having worked hard in the U23's during the 2021/22 season, Rory progresses permanently into the first team squad for the up and coming season.

SPONSOR: Paul Secker



HENRY BARLEY **MIDFIELDER/FORWARD**

Henry signed for the club in 2019 following his contract expiring at Ipswich Town. Another popular young player who had also been on loan from the then EFL Championship club the previous season.

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TOM MAYCOCK **MIDFIELDER/FORWARD**

Former Sudbury youngster Tom joins us following a season at Step 3 with Needham Market. A technically gifted left footed forward who can play a number of positions across the front line.

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LAMELL HOWELL **MIDFIELDER/FORWARD**

Lamell signed from Brightlingsea Regent in 2020. He can play on both wings or in the number 10 position and brings pace and trickery to the side. He has previously played for Stowmarket Town, Debenham FC and Brantham Athletic.

SPONSORS: Steve & Kate Garnham



CHARLIE WARREN **MIDFIELDER/FORWARD**

Having initially joined on loan from Needham Market, Charlie made an instant impact on his debut in the FA Trophy win at Hastings. Following a number of impressive performances, manager Boardley moved quickly to secure the permanent services of one of Suffolk's brightest young players.

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ARMANI SCHAAR **MIDFIELDER/FORWARD**

Armani played for Felixstowe & Walton back in 2016 before moving on to Leiston and then Lowestoft Town where he helped them avoid relegation. Armani has also had spells at Needham Market and brings with him plenty of experience playing at step 3 level.

SPONSOR: Ray Wade



GEORGE CLARKE **FORWARD**

George joined the Seasiders from Stowmarket Town in 2020 and has previously played for Ipswich Town, AFC Sudbury, Needham Market, Brightlingsea Regent and Brantham Athletic. George is a powerful and dynamic centre forward that is looking to make his mark following a lengthy spell on the sidelines through injury.

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OLLIE CANFER **FORWARD**

Ollie made a dramatic impact when he joined the club in November 2019, signing from Mildenhall Town. "Canfs" burst onto the scene scoring 9 goals in 13 games. The fans love his non-stop running and desire to cause defensive headaches for the opposition.

SPONSORS: Steven Seeley, Andy & Kim Wilding



ZAK BROWN **FORWARD**

A sought after and highly rated young striker with blistering pace and a great goal scoring record. At just 17, Zak penned a two year pro contract with ITFC where he was a regular marksman in the U23's. Zak started life in the Seasiders Youth sections and has returned to lead the forward line as the clubs No. 9.

SPONSORS: Chris & Kate Daynes



SAM FORD **FORWARD**

Having spent a successful period with Arbroath last season that saw them just miss out on promotion to the Scottish Premiership, Sam spent the Summer with Hume City FC in Australia before returning to Felixstowe. Coming through ITFC and later West Ham's academy, Sam is a local talent who will provide real firepower in front of goal.

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MATCH REPORT

SATURDAY 26th NOVEMBER
ISTHMIAN NORTH

Heybridge Swifts 2
Felixstowe & Walton Utd 1

Whight

A siege on the Heybridge goal in the last 15 minutes couldn't prevent The Seaside's from sliding to a narrow defeat at one of their rivals in the early race for play-off places

First Half: Heybridge may carry the nickname "The Swifts", but it was Felixstowe who made the fast start at the Aspen Waite Arena when **Joe Whight** headed home after only 3 minutes following a free kick from the right.

As the game settled down it soon became clear that this was to be a hugely competitive and strongly fought game, with chances few and far between as both defences generally held the upper hand.



PHOTOS
BY THOMAS
BRADFORD

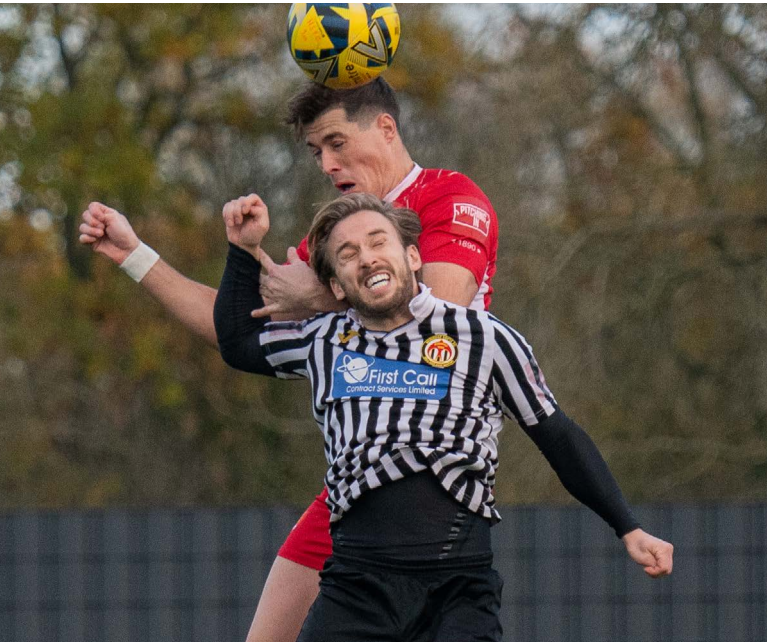
HOW WE LINED UP:

1. Callum Robinson
2. Harry Blackburn
3. Joe Whight
4. Billy Holland
5. Milo Grimes
6. Harry Knock
7. Joshua Hitter
8. Leon Ottley-Gooch
9. Zak Brown
10. Andre Hasanally
11. Charlie Warren

SUBS

12. Stuart Ainsley
14. Sam Ford
15. Curtis Haynes-Brown
16. Tom Maycock
17. Oliver Canfer

Match Report: Martin Brooks





On 17 minutes Charlie Warren did manage to find space down the left wing and cut inside the right back; his powerful right foot shot flying just past the far post as Callum Chafer in the Swifts' goal looked anxiously on.

Five minutes later the home side were level when Heybridge stole the ball on the left wing and the ensuing cross was met by striker Kieran Jones, who slotted home coolly from 12 yards.

Soon after The Seaside were nearly back in front when a Josh Hitter corner from the right was met by the returning skipper Billy Holland, his firm header flying just past the near post.

There then followed a long period of attrition as a series of niggly fouls, free kicks and injuries brought about a lot of stop and start to the action, however as the first half drew to a close there was a flurry of chances. First, a fantastic tackle by Harry Blackburn denied former Seaside Rhys Henry a tap in for the home side from 6 yards, whilst at the other end the very impressive Andre Hasanally beat three players before his shot was deflected wide for a corner. Then just before the whistle Heybridge centre back Darren Phillips saw a

powerful downward header from a corner end up straight into the arms of the grateful Callum Robinson in the Felixstowe goal.

Second Half: Heybridge took the lead soon after the restart when (yet another) free kick from the left wing was never fully cleared which allowed Quba Gordon to slam home.

On 55 minutes Felixstowe striker Zak Brown left the field injured after a clash with home defender Darren Phillips, who was also forced off in the same incident. Ollie Canfer came





on as an able replacement, but the game continued in scrappy fashion until that last fifteen minutes as Heybridge increasingly kept an eye on the final whistle whilst Felixstowe pushed hard for an equalizing goal.

Stuart Boardley had sacrificed Leon Ottley-Gooch from midfield to bring on Sam Ford as an extra striker, whilst at the same

time asking Josh Hitter to play more inside and pushing Andre Hasanally out to the right wing. On any other day you could easily have been reading about a tactical masterstroke as what followed could only be described as a siege!

The changes almost paid off immediately as Sam Ford saw a powerful right foot shot fly across goal after Hasanally jinked his way down the right. There then followed a series of Felixstowe corners and free kicks, the result of a great deal of defending by the home side which could be described as both desperate and tenacious in equal measure; to their credit they all laid bodies on the line for the Heybridge cause.

On 82 minutes a Josh Hitter free kick was tipped just wide of the post by Chafer, and from the resulting corner a melee ensued which saw three shots from close range by various Felixstowe players blocked by a combination of the 'keeper and home defenders in the vicinity of the six yard box - on one occasion the spinning ball being clawed back by Chafer as it was about to cross the line.





On 86 minutes fine work by Sam Ford on the left edge of the penalty area resulted in a pinpoint cross, but Canfer's fine header passed agonisingly wide of the far post as the majority of the Felixstowe support jumped up in what turned out to be premature celebration!

As the 90th minute ticked by, a long throw from the right saw Billy Holland's looping header land on top of the Heybridge net.

The final whistle was met by a huge cheer of relief by home supporters, as many players from both sides sank to their knees in exhaustion, relief, or disappointment.

This was Felixstowe's fourth away defeat of the season - all by the odd goal against other serious play off rivals (Grays, Sudbury, Lowestoft and now Heybridge) - which is hugely frustrating especially as Felixstowe have seldom looked second best on any occasion. On the other hand The Seasiders enjoy a perfect home record (seven wins from seven games) so back to back home league games against Witham (3rd December) and Bury Town (10th December) will be welcome and hopefully soon get the team back on track.



THE OTHER SIDE WITHAM TOWN FC



Origins & Early History

Witham has a history of football teams going back to the 1830's when the first recorded match involving a side representing the town was played at Lanham Green near Cressing. This was before the 'modern' game was codified in England in 1863 following the formation of The Football Association, whose 'Laws of the Game' created the foundations for the way the football is played today. The first formation of a Witham side, post-FA creation, was in 1876 when Mr.H.Green, Mr.W.Rust, Mr.F.Bridge and Mr.E.Turner sought permission from a farmer to play football in a field next to the River Brain in the town, close to Saul's Bridge. This site was Witham FC's home for a few seasons with play later being transferred to The Park, a pitch nearby, which was shared with the town's Cricket Club. The 1885-86 season saw the very first Witham player appear for the County side with that honour going to R.H.Stevens. After some years, however, the cricket side objected to the damage being done to the surface of the pitch, so another move was made, in 1894, to 'The Grove'. The Grove itself was a large private house that was built in the late 1600's, which was eventually demolished in 1932. The pitch, noted as one of the best in the county, was located to the rear of the property not far from the old Witham to Maldon Railway line, which roughly corresponds with today's Mayland Road and Abercorn Way. Mr.P.E.Laurence, a local sports enthusiast and President of the club at that time, owned this field. The entrance to the ground was via Chess Lane, which is now a short cut to an industrial estate. The occupants of the cottages there on 'Finals' days reaped a bonanza from the two pennies charged for bicycles left in their care. Witham's first recorded appearance in a final, that of the very first Essex Junior Cup, came in 1893-94 when they lost 4-1 to Matlock Swifts (who went on to become Leyton FC). During this time the team enjoyed the reputation of being



one of the strongest junior sides in the country and built up a large following. They were known in those days as the 'Red Herrings' because of their all red kit. Two days after the Great War broke out in 1914 (28th July) the entire team under the guidance of Reginald Brown went to Warley Barracks near Brentwood to enlist in the 5th Battalion of the Essex Regiment.

Between The Wars

Witham FC re-formed in July 1919 after a meeting held at the Spread Eagle Hotel in the town centre. Again, the side played in red shirts, and, in one season, Witham won 24 matches and only lost once. Postman Mr. Fred Perry used to pay Albert 'Summer' Bickmore one shilling for each goal he scored. Bickmore recalled with pleasure the day he scored five. The re-formed club, which changed its name to Witham Town FC in 1921, won the Braintree & District League Championship in 1920-21, appeared in the Divisional Final of the Essex Junior Cup, won the Braintree & District league again in 1924-25 and secured the Essex Division 2 Shield in 1925-26. During these years the popularity of football seemed to have grown in the town with a Crittall's Athletic team also forming. Crittalls Windows Works, which opened in 1919, was one of the largest employers in the town and the site of the old factory is now occupied by Morrison's supermarket. For a small town like Witham this was perhaps too much for both these clubs to thrive, and, with waning support largely due to the increasing prominence of the Crittall's team, after less than a decade the re-formed Witham Town disbanded. However, local opinion must have been in favour of a true 'town' team, as after a meeting with the Spread Eagle again forming the backdrop, Witham Town FC re-formed again in July 1933. At this meeting, held by Mr.C.Ingram (who was elected club Chairman), Mr.S.Slinger and Mr.S.Howell (who was chosen to be Hon. Secretary) the decision was made to join two competitions, The North Essex League and the Kelvedon & District Junior League with club colours being red shirts and white shorts. In 1934-35 Witham reached the final of the Tolleshunt D'arcy Cup, losing to Tiptree United 4-2, and the following season they became Division 3 Champions of the North Essex League. That same year the club gained the use of the football pitch at Rickstones Road Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, as the clouds of war



slowly gathered, and with falling support once more, in 1938 Witham Town folded.

A New Beginning

In 1948 the Witham Town FC of today re-formed thanks to the efforts of a small band of stalwarts who met in an old British Legion hut under the Chairmanship of Mr. Sid Rice who was the driving force behind the club re-forming. Although the pitch was only a cow pasture with a barn as changing rooms, these basic conditions did not seem to affect the team though as in their first season back playing they became champions of the Chelmsford and Mid Essex League Division 2, winners of the Tiptree Charity Cup and the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup courtesy of a 1-0 win over Feering. During the following season the club moved to the Crittall Windows works ground at The Park in the centre of the town and they also became founder members of the Mid-Essex League Premier Division. Their first game at The Park was a friendly v Ipswich Town which the Suffolk side won 7-0. That year the Premier Division Cup was won. After two more seasons in the CMEL, a dispute with the League over a cup match played in blizzard like conditions, saw Witham Town switch to the South Essex League where they spent seven seasons winning the Championship in 1955-56. A supporters club was then formed and in 1958 the decision was made to join the Essex and Suffolk Border League and thus step up to an intermediate level of football.

Gaining Senior Status

During the 1964-65 season Witham won the Essex & Suffolk Border League Championship and they decided to seek new playing facilities suitable for senior football. The following season, 65-66, they won the E&SB League Cup after beating Whitton United 3-0 and were runners up in the E&SBL in 66-67. 1967-68 saw Witham just miss out on their second League Cup honour when they lost 3-2 to close rivals Tiptree United in the final. In 1970, the club was finally offered its present ground at Spa Road, although the move did not happen until after the end of the 1974-75 season due to the allocated plot being under cultivation. The last game at The Park ground was a 1-0 win against Basildon United on the 19th April 1975. In the meantime, Witham Town again won the Essex & Suffolk Border League (in 1970-71), and were invited to become founder members of the



Essex Senior League and were the inaugural Champions in 1971-72, pipping Billericay Town to the title by just one point.

Witham went on to spend more than 15 seasons in this league, usually finishing in the top half of the table. In 1981 Witham won the Essex Senior League Cup by defeating Sawbridgeworth Town 4-2 at Chelmsford City's New Writtle Street ground. The mid 1980's provided several top 3 finishes including runners-up in 1984-85 and 1986-87, with the Championship being won for the second time in 1985-86. March 1985 saw the Spa Road grounds' new floodlights 'officially' switched on in a friendly versus Colchester United. 1986 saw more success as Witham won the Essex Senior Trophy, defeating local rivals Heybridge Swifts 3-2, after extra time. During the following 1986-87 season Town enjoyed their best run in the FA Vase when they reached the last 16 (the 5th round), before losing 2-1 at home to Falmouth, and they also secured the Harry Fisher Memorial Trophy (the predecessor to the Gordon Brasted) after beating Sawbridgeworth Town in the final. This good run of form in league and cup competitions again led the club to seek a higher level of football to play at. They applied to join the Isthmian League and this was accepted in 1987.

The Isthmian Years

Their first match in the Isthmian League (Division 2 North) in 1987-88 saw Witham win 6-0 at Ware which ended with the club finishing in 7th place. During this time, former Southend United manager Steve Tilson started his career with the club before moving on to the Shrimpers as a player. The end of the 1990-91 season would see the two Isthmian Division 2's (North and South) 'de-regionalise', therefore making a top half finish imperative if Witham were to retain their Division 2 status and avoid the drop into what would be the next seasons new Division 3. A good finish saw Witham end up in 6th place, thereby ensuring their position in the restructured division and the club also made a semi-final appearance in the Loctite Associate Members Trophy. In 1993-94 Witham had their highest ever league finish, 5th in the Isthmian League Division 2. Back in the mid-90's there was no 2nd tier to the Conference so this was their best finish at what was then Step 4. Unfortunately, this could not be built upon and Town were relegated at the end of the 1999-2000 season to Division 3 after 13 years in Div 2.





However, during the previous season, 1998–99, Witham saw their best run in the FA Cup, to the 3rd Qualifying Round, before losing out to Havant & Waterlooville in a replay. The next few years saw further restructuring of the Isthmian League culminating in a runners-up spot in Division 2 (formerly Div 3) at the end of 2005–06 as Witham took their place the newly formed step 4 Division 1 North. A goal difference of just +1 separated Witham from Brook House and 3rd place. In 2007–08 they achieved their best run in the FA Trophy, making it to the 3rd Qualifying Round. After beating Chatham Town away 3–0 Spa Road saw a giant killing over Horsham who at that time were leaders of the Isthmian Premier Division. Town crashed out in the next round though after losing at Hayes & Yeading. During 2008, one of Town's rising stars, top scorer Cody McDonald, moved on to Maldon Town and then Dartford, before being bought by the then Championship side Norwich City. This move to the Canaries makes Cody our highest profile ex-player.

A short(ish) visit to the Essex Senior League

At the end of the 2008–09 season Witham Town finished 21st out of 22 teams consigning them to relegation to the Essex Senior League. Despite the obvious disappointment at being relegated the club had the chance to start afresh in the same league where their senior aspirations were initiated

back in 1971. Off the field, former player Olly Murs became the TV show X Factor's runner up in December 2009. As the 2009–10 season drew to a close, and on the back of eight straight wins, Witham earned the necessary point on the last game of the season at Barkingside in a tense 2–2 draw that guaranteed runners-up position just ahead of Burnham Ramblers. Unfortunately, this was not enough for Town to regain their spot in the Isthmian League. During the 2010–11 season, for the last 4 games, current manager Garry Kimble took over the reins as the club finished third. In the following campaign, Kimble's first full term in charge, Witham Town enjoyed what could arguably be claimed to be their most successful season ever as they broke many long standing club records on the way to the Essex Senior League title, last won in 1986, and therefore securing a return to Isthmian football. As well as the league, Witham won the League Cup, Gordon Brasted Memorial Trophy and the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup and remained unbeaten away in the league. Striker Billy Hunt also secured the Don Douglas Trophy by becoming the league's top scorer, with Rob Whitnell and John Watson coming second and third highest league scorers as well.

The Isthmian Years (Part 2)

The return to Isthmian level began in spectacular style as the club finished 4th in the Isthmian League

Division 1 North and qualified for the Play Offs only going down 3-2 to eventual winners Thamesmead Town. The club also retained the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup beating Heybridge Swifts 4-0.

They went one better in 2013-14, finishing in their highest ever league position, runners up in the Isthmian League Division 1 North. In the play-offs Needham Market were beaten 1-0 in the Semi Final and Harlow Town 3-0 in the Final as Witham secured a place in the Isthmian Premier Division for the first time.

A gallant attempt was made to compete at Isthmian Senior Level, but this proved too much for a club with limited resources and the club were relegated in 2014-15. The next season was a difficult one as a number of key players moved on following relegation and it was difficult to find a settled squad. With another relegation looking likely, it was time for a management change.

Garry Kimble left the club and a new management team was appointed, consisting of Adam Flint and James Robinson, both of whom had spent time with the club previously. Relegation was averted and the club finished in 19th place.

We finished in 13th place in 2016-17, followed by an 11th place in 2017-18. At the end of the season, Adam and James moved on to manage Bishops' Stortford. Mark Ashford became the new Witham manager before the start of the 2018-19 season. John Sussex and Kevin Wren joined later as joint assistant managers. Mark Ashford resigned at the end of the season in which safety from relegation was only assured on the last day of the season at Basildon.

Marc Benterman was appointed before the start of 2019-20 and needed to assemble almost a complete squad in a few weeks to start the season. This was done and the club were in 15th place with 28 games played when Covid-19 caused the season to be abandoned. Season 2019-20 only lasted until late October 2020. Marc began the 2021-22 season with a young squad but he resigned from his role as manager in November 2021.

Former Witham Town player and assistant manager Chris Taylor was appointed manager in January 2022. We narrowly avoided relegation, beating Saffron Walden Town in the Inter-Step play-off match after finishing 18th. We look forward to 2022/23 with Chris in charge, supported by Scott Canham, Wale Olejabi and Robert Lewis as his assistants.





WELCOME BACK ANDRE HASANALLY!

Felixstowe & Walton United have agreed a deal to sign former Colchester United attacker Andre Hasanally.

21 year old Andre made his professional EFL debut for the U's in 2019 and was the 900th player to make a first team debut for the league two side and made a huge impact during his loan spell at the Seaside last season, appearing in sixteen games and scoring three goals, playing a significant role in the club's successful run into the playoffs. Andre has started the season at Northern Premier League side St Neots but signs on at the AGL Arena in what is a major coup for Stuart Boardley's side.

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UNDER 23'S FIXTURES

SEPTEMBER

12 BURY TOWN H L 4-0

OCTOBER

3 HARINGEY BOROUGH H W 2-0

Clarke (P), Curtis

12 BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT A W 7-2

17 BRENTWOOD TOWN H W 3-1

Ford(3)

31 BURY TOWN L 6-2

NOVEMBER

16 HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS A D 2-2

21 HARINGEY BOROUGH A P-P

28 BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT H W 4-2

DECEMBER

7 BRENTWOOD TOWN A 7.45PM

12 HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS H 7.45PM

JANUARY

18 HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS A 7.45PM

23 BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT H 7.45PM

FEBRUARY

6 BURY TOWN H 7.45PM

15 BRENTWOOD TOWN A 7.45PM

20 HARINGEY BOROUGH H 7.45PM

LEAGUE TABLE

TEAM	P	W	D	L	PTS
Heybridge Swifts	4	4	2	1	14
F&W Utd	4	4	1	2	13
Bury Town	4	4	0	2	12
Brentwood Town	3	3	0	3	9
Haringey Borough	3	3	0	4	9
Brightlingsea Regent	0	0	1	6	1

ISTHMIAN NORTH DIVISION TABLE 2022/23

POS		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	AFC Sudbury	15	12	2	1	44	16	+28	38
2	Hashtag United	15	11	1	3	32	18	+14	34
3	Heybridge Swifts	14	10	3	1	30	13	+17	33
4	Lowestoft Town	15	10	1	4	32	13	+19	31
5	Stowmarket Town	13	9	3	1	27	10	+17	30
6	Felixstowe & Walton United	15	9	2	4	33	18	+15	29
7	New Salamis	15	8	3	4	31	29	+2	27
8	East Thurrock United	15	8	2	5	24	23	+1	26
9	Bury Town	14	7	4	3	18	10	+8	25
10	Grays Athletic	14	7	2	5	24	18	+6	23
11	Brentwood Town	15	7	1	7	21	20	+1	22
12	Witham Town	15	5	1	9	24	28	-4	16
13	Basildon United	16	4	4	8	15	25	-10	16
14	Tilbury	14	4	2	8	16	27	-11	14
15	Great Wakering Rovers	16	3	3	10	22	35	-13	12
16	Hullbridge Sports	16	3	3	10	17	31	-14	12
17	Wroxham	14	2	5	7	17	30	-13	11
18	Maldon & Tiptree	15	3	1	11	19	32	-13	10
19	Gorleston	15	2	1	12	16	41	-25	7
20	Coggeshall Town	15	0	4	11	7	32	-25	4

LAST UPDATED: SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2022 AT 17:06:32

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH DIVISION

SATURDAY 3RD DECEMBER - 3PM KO

Basildon United	v	East Thurrock Utd
Brentwood Town	v	AFC Sudbury
Coggeshall Town	v	Hullbridge Sports
Grays Athletic	v	Bury Town
Great Wakering Rovers	v	Hashtag Utd
Lowestoft Town	v	Heybridge Swifts
Maldon & Tiptree	v	Gorleston
Stowmarket Town	v	New Salamis
Tilbury	v	Wroxham



FIXTURES 2022/23

AUGUST

13	BRENTWOOD TOWN <i>Hitter</i>	A	D 1-1
16	GORLESTON <i>Warren, Harrison, Canfer</i>	H	W 3-2
20	DEREHAM TOWN*	A	L 2-0
27	BASILDON UNITED <i>Howell, Holland</i>	H	W 2-0
29	COGGESHALL TOWN <i>Aitkens, Harrison, Hitter</i>	A	W 3-1

SEPTEMBER

13	BURGESS HILL TOWN** <i>Whight, Harrison</i> <i>Burgess Hill Town win 3-2 on pens</i>	H	D 2-2
17	NEW SALAMIS <i>Harrison 2, Canfer 3</i>	H	W 5-0
27	WITHAM TOWN*** <i>Holland 2, Maycock</i>	H	W 3-1

OCTOBER

1	WROXHAM <i>Brown, Harrison</i>	A	D 2-2
8	MALDON & TIPTREE <i>Hitter, Holland, Whight</i>	W	3-1
11	CHERTSEY TOWN**** <i>Brown, Holland</i>	W	2-0
15	GRAYS ATHLETIC <i>Hitter, Holland</i>	L	3-2
22	HASHTAG UNITED <i>Brown, Warren, Clarke, Hitter</i>	W	4-0
25	AFC SUDBURY	L	1-0
29	GREAT WAKERING ROVERS <i>Hitter, Clarke</i>	W	2-1

NOVEMBER

5	LOWESTOFT TOWN <i>Clarke</i>	L	2-1
8	ENFIELD TOWN***** <i>Ford</i>	L	2-1
12	TILBURY <i>Ford, Warren</i>	W	2-1

19	HULLBRIDGE SPORTS <i>Brown, Ford</i>	W	2-1
26	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS <i>Whight</i>	L	2-1

DECEMBER

3	WITHAM TOWN	H	3PM
10	BURY TOWN	H	3PM
17	EAST THURROCK UNITED	A	3PM
27	COGGESHALL TOWN	H	1PM

JANUARY

2	STOWMARKET TOWN	A	3PM
7	BRENTWOOD TOWN	H	3PM
14	GORLESTON	A	3PM
21	LOWESTOFT TOWN	H	3PM
28	TILBURY	A	3PM

FEBRUARY

4	HULLBRIDGE SPORTS	H	3PM
11	GREAT WAKERING ROVERS	A	3PM
14	AFC SUDBURY	H	7.45PM
18	MALDON & TIPTREE	A	3PM
25	WROXHAM	H	3PM

MARCH

4	NEW SALAMIS	A	3PM
11	GRAYS ATHLETIC	H	3PM
18	HASHTAG UNITED	A	3PM
25	BASILDON UNITED	A	3PM

APRIL

1	EAST THURROCK UNITED	H	3PM
8	BURY TOWN	A	3PM
10	STOWMARKET TOWN	H	3PM
15	WITHAM TOWN	A	3PM
22	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS	H	3PM

*Emirates FA Cup Preliminary Round

**Isuzu FA Trophy First Qualifying Round

***Velocity Trophy First Round

****Velocity Trophy Second Round

*****Velocity Trophy Third Round

GOALSCORER STATISTICS

Callum Harrison	🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆
Billy Holland	🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆
Josh Hitter	🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆
Ollie Canfer	🏆🏆🏆🏆
Zak Brown	🏆🏆🏆🏆
George Clarke	🏆🏆🏆
Joe Whight	🏆🏆🏆
Charlie Warren	🏆🏆🏆
Sam Ford	🏆🏆🏆
Lamell Howell	🏆
Tom Maycock	🏆
Noel Aitkens	🏆



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THE NON-LEAGUE PAPER



ESSENTIAL READING FOR FOLLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL GAME

LAST week, NLP editor Matt Badcock spoke in his column about the alarming trend of fan misbehaviour which is sadly creeping into our game. Believe me, it's not something we take any enjoyment from, but it came to a head one Saturday night as we were preparing to put the paper to bed.

The original plan was to celebrate a National League record crowd at Notts County when a massive 16,511 supporters clicked through the turnstiles to see the Magpies take on Yeovil Town.

On the same day, there were over 10,000 watching Wrexham play Aldershot Town and another 7,000+ crowd at Chesterfield for the crunch clash with Solihull Moors.

So, you can imagine our angst when instead of 16,511 fans making the front page headlines it the actions of just one idiot who stole the limelight.

About an hour before we went to press, a video was brought to our attention of a so-called Guiseley 'fan' jumping over the barrier of Warrington Town's Cantilever Park ground and switching the water bottle of Wire keeper Tony Thompson which was nestled into the net.

It then emerged that the bottle in question had apparently been contaminated with urine. Thompson drank it and then approached the alleged perpetrator, prompting him to be sent off.

The front page headline 'Disgusting' said it all. While, thankfully, this is a one-off incident it has once again raised concerns of bad fans' behaviour, which is dragging the pure reputation Non-League football through the mud.

With the Premier League and Championship on hold for the World Cup, Non-League clubs up and down the country have worked extremely hard putting on special deals, trying to pack their bars and clubhouses for people to watch the action in Qatar and to generally propel this level of the game into the wider spotlight. A celebration of Non-League football if you like.

As Matt rightly pointed out, the frustration is these incidents don't appear to be isolated. On a number of occasions this season we've had to

report unsavoury instances of poor behaviour inside football grounds. At the start of the season, the Football Association and leagues issued a document to clubs in an attempt to help eradicate some of the issues.

The problem is, what can clubs do to prevent it? Guiseley handled this particular incident expertly well. They immediately banned the young man involved and vowed to clamp down on any accomplices. They deserve credit for their own swift action on what would have been a difficult weekend for them.

Unfortunately, preventative methods are having consequences on the terraces – and it's a real sad state of affairs. Clubs such as Walsall Wood and Prescot Cables are refusing entry for under 16s without a supervised adult and at Coalville Town the ground staff are even wearing body cams in a bid to identify persistent offenders.

As necessary as measures like that are, they represents everything that Non-League football shouldn't. We should be encouraging the support of the younger generation and we certainly shouldn't have to follow them round the ground on camera. Sadly, it's needs must. It seems that the pure nature of a Non-League ground makes it an easy target. While elite stadiums are regimented so fans are confined to one seat and one entry/exit gate, a Non-League ground gives fans the freedom to wonder around and sit or stand where they want. That is being taken advantage of.

Don't get me wrong, 99 per cent of football fans, and Non-League fans in general, are decent folk. They just there to watch a game, support the club and enjoy the day. It's vital we don't tar everyone with the same brush.

Record numbers are turning to Non-League football for its integrity and its purity. Let's not let the proud reputation of our game be ruined by the few.

Matt Badcock

Editor-at-large, The Non-League Paper



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PITCHING IN ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH ROUND UP

BY IAN TOWNSEND, TAKEN FROM WWW.ISTHMIAN.CO.UK

Tilbury get back to form with five of their own, Maldon get four, Tags and Salamis get three, and we've wins for Swifts, Stow, Sports, Rocks and Wroxham

AFC Sudbury welcomed **Great Waking Rovers** knowing that they would be at the top of the table no matter the result - but that certainly didn't breed complacency, the Yellows hitting Rovers for five. Nnamdi Nwachuku continued to show why he's the hottest striker in the league right now, adding another hat trick - his third of the campaign- to take his total to twenty nine in just twenty three games across all competitions, a quite phenomenal scoring record. He's now scored in his last twelve matches - eleven in the league. Nwachuku's goals were the yellows first, third and fifth, and own goal and one from Sakariya Hassan coming in between. That's eight home wins from eight for Sudbury.

Perhaps our match of the day came from fortress Scraley Road, as **Heybridge Swifts**, in fourth, welcomed fifth place **Felixstowe & Walton United**. Swifts had won every single league match at home this season coming into this one, and that continued as they came from behind to defeat the Seasiders. Joe Whight ruffled home feathers with a goal after just four minutes, but Kieran Jones equalised



IMAGE FROM **CLIVE PEARSON**

midway through the first half and shortly after the restart Quba Gordon got what proved to be the winner, sending his side up to third - five points behind the leaders with a game in hand. The Seasiders slip to sixth.

Hashtag United are in second, within four points of the summit, and made it six wins from seven with a comfortable victory over local rivals **Basildon United**. The Bees had taken seven points from their previous nine, but were no match for their hosts, Matt Wooldridge, Alex Teniola and an own goal delivering a three-nil win - and a third win in a row for the Tags in meetings between the two sides, who sit three miles apart.

Lowestoft Town had gone from looking invincible to losing three of their last four – and now it's four of their last five, after **East Thurrock United** got the only goal of the game at Rookery Hill. Roman Michael Percil scored it, just after the hour, and any chance of a Trawler Boys comeback was hampered when Josh Harvey saw red soon afterwards. Lowestoft seem to have developed a habit of losing on the road, and it's one they'll need to correct if they are to right their slump.

Stowmarket Town have been pretty much unstoppable in the league, undefeated since August 16th and with four clean sheets from their last five as they travelled to **Bury Town**. Another clean sheet and another win was duly delivered, Ollie Sotoyinbo sending them up to fifth with the only goal of the game – eight points behind the leaders with two games in hand.

New Salamis have been a surprise package this season, with four wins from their previous five including a victory over our then-leaders Lowestoft Town – but it was perhaps less of a surprise that they defeated **Coggeshall Town**, without a win all season, to make it five wins from six. Taufee Skandari opened the scoring just before the break, and deadly Derek Asamoah added two more in the second half – taking his tally to fifteen for the season. Salamis go seventh, Coggeshall stay bottom of the pack.

Grays Athletic have fallen off the pace of late, and lost their third match from four by falling to defeat at a side who were previously on a four match losing streak, **Hullbridge Sports**. The hosts went ahead just before the half hour through Darius Guinea, and made sure of the points sixteen minutes from time when George Smith made it two.

Brentwood Town had lost their last two and slipped all the way down to eleventh as they travelled to **Wroxham** – and they remain eleventh but now have three consecutive defeats as Shaun Taylor got the only goal

of the game just before the half hour. The Yachtsmen are fourth from bottom, but will be delighted to add another digit to the W column.

Witham Town welcomed **Maldon & Tiptree**, the Jammers mourning the loss of supporter and volunteer Darren “Dazza” Gibbons, the life and soul of the club, who was tragically taken from them this week. They did him proud, winning four-two despite playing most of the match with ten men after the dismissal of Joe Turpin. Scott Kemp gave them an early lead and midway through the half Roman Campbell made it two, only for Turpin to depart early four minutes before the break. It made little difference, Kemp making it three soon after the restart, and Harvey Sayer adding a fourth on the hour. At that point Witham awoke, and Adam Vyse got two back, but it was too little, too late.

Finally **Gorleston**, second bottom, welcomed **Tilbury** to Lowestoft. The Dockers had gone a month without a win – or even a draw, losing their last six matches in League, Velocity Cup and Essex Cup – but they got back to form in style, firing home five goals. The first three came in the first half, Charlie Moore the meat in a Martin Tuohy sandwich, the number nine scoring the first and the third. Tom Salter added a fourth just after the hour, which finally roused Gorleston, who saw Ross Gilfedder and George Keys get two back. The Dockers had the last word, however, Darnell Kithambo adding a fifth from the spot

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'I WAS DEFENDING INDONESIA'

BY MARTYN GREEN, THE UNTOLD GAME

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As the world hurtled toward the most destructive war in its history, tensions grew across a number of the Confederations that had signed up for the 1938 World Cup. As a result, the list of nations that actually went to the competition was oddly curtailed. Austria, for example, qualified top of their group but withdrew after Anschluss, with a number of players joining the German team (but not star Matthias Sindelar, who would die in mysterious circumstances). Latvia, who finished second behind Austria, were not offered their place, leaving the competition lopsided with just 15 teams. And outrage at the hosting of a second successive World Cup saw South American giants Argentina and Uruguay boycott, leaving the fewest number of teams from outside the host continent of any edition of the tournament. One of those teams was the Dutch East Indies, Asia's first World Cup

representatives.

Modern day Indonesia, as the Dutch East Indies have called themselves since they gained independence in 1945, did not have to undertake the arduous and lengthy qualification process that faces teams today. Not many teams were all that interested in taking part in the early World Cups, especially outside Europe. Football was underdeveloped outside of European colonies and a few early trendsetters. The D. E. I. team was put into a qualification group with just Japan, and then the Japanese federation withdrew from the competition. As the only Asian entrants, the D. E. I. qualified by default. But that didn't make the process of sending a team to France particularly easy.

As with many colonies, football developed in Indonesian cities before spreading out to rural areas. This was where the imperial administrators were based, and this was

where they played the game. Often, the native population were not invited to play with the Europeans, but that didn't stop them making balls of their own. Football thrived in Indonesia, as it would across the rest of Asia and the world. But the official Dutch East Indies Football Federation was run by the Dutch, and had its power in the cities. The preference was for what would essentially be a team of Dutch players.

Outside the cities, the PSSI was formed. It represented native football, outside of the auspices of the Dutch administrators. Its players were too talented to ignore, and they lobbied for inclusion in the team that would represent their nation. Eventually, the pressure they put on the Dutch East Indies Federation was too great, backed up by the burgeoning independence movement, and the Dutch decided to quell the coming storm by inviting those playing for PSSI clubs to participate in selection matches, from which the eventual squad would be selected. More militant Indonesians, those more committed to freedom from their European occupiers, refused, but some accepted the call and the team that was sent to France was a mix of colonists and natives.

The squad had not only never played together, they had also never actually played an international match, as they boarded the ship for the long journey to distant France. So while they gained their sea legs, they took part in training, got to know each other, and

played practice matches on the deck of the ship. It wasn't the best preparation for a tournament against the professional teams based in Europe, but that wasn't the point. They were representing more than their nation. They were representing their continent. And, for the native Indonesian players at least, they were representing freedom.

The Dutch East Indies did not fare well at the tournament, getting drawn against Hungary in the first round, at that time a straight knockout round. While not the Golden Team of the 1950s, Hungary were well drilled and played exciting, attacking football. They beat the debutants 6-0, condemning them to be recorded as the worst team to have ever played a World Cup, with just one game, a defeat, and no goals scored.

But that didn't matter to the players. They had shown up on the biggest stage in football, and that was an honour in itself. Isaac Padua, one of the native players that made the squad and travelled to France, was proud of his achievement. The single match was the highlight of his and his teammates' careers and helped coalesce a resistance to Dutch rule that would see Indonesian independence within a decade. When asked about the game, he remembered it fondly.

'No matter what happened, I was defending Indonesia.'

Enjoy the game.

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MATCHDAY SQUADS

PITCHING IN Isthmian North League
Saturday 3rd December, 3pm



Felixstowe & Walton United FC

Manager: Stuart Boardley

Assistant Manager: Andy Crump

- Stuart **Ainsley**
- Noel **Aitkens**
- Henry **Barley**
- Callum **Bennett**
- Harry **Blackburn**
- Zak **Brown**
- George **Clarke**
- Ollie **Canfer**
- Sam **Ford**
- Milo **Grimes**
- Callum **Harrison**
- Andre **Hasanally**
- Curtis **Haynes-Brown**
- Josh **Hitter**
- Billy **Holland (C)**
- Lamel **Howell**
- Harry **Knock**
- Tom **Maycock**
- Leon **Ottley-Gooch**
- Rory **Porter**
- Callum **Robinson (GK)**
- Armani **Schaar**
- Charlie **Warren**
- Joe **Whight**

red/yellow - goals - played

Witham Town FC

Manager: Chris Taylor

Assistant Managers: Scott Canham

- Michael **Agboola**
- Sam **Collins**
- Jamahl **Godward**
- Luke **Ige**
- Rhys **Madden (C)**
- Rian **McLean**
- Munashe **Mhrapara**
- Ramiah **Mills**
- Lewis **Payne**
- Rash **Salau**
- Kieran **Southgate**
- Archie **Tamplin**
- Ide **Udebhu-Osimeh**
- Adam **Vyse**
- Liam **Whipps**

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Referee: Mr Adrian George Assistant Referees: Mr Alexander Shipp and Mr Jak Clark