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THE OFFICIAL 2022/2023 MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

Respect 



v Hullbridge Sports



SATURDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2023, 3PM
PITCHING IN ISTHMIAN NORTH LEAGUE



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JOINT CHAIRMAN: **ANDY CLARKE**



Good afternoon and a warm welcome to the AGL Arena for today's visit of Hullbridge Sports.

Well, after what has seemed like a second pre-season break, we finally got back to action last Saturday with a lavishly exciting trip to the beautiful facilities at Tilbury FC.

I can't lie and say its somewhere I relish visiting, and at the same time I don't recall us ever playing to the best of our abilities and coming away with the deserved result on their ground.

Last week proved not to be an exception, with the match itself already being stored in the filling cabinet, under "one to forget".

However, on a very heavy pitch and having gone a goal behind, the lads provided a gutsy, workman like performance to come away with a 3-1 victory. It's these soon forgotten three points that could well be the difference between us making the play offs, or not.

It was pleasing to see Zak get his name on the score sheet, along with GC, and the game's only real piece of class was a quality individual finish from Callum Harrison in the 83rd minute. This put paid to any possible Tilbury comeback in the closing stages.

It was hoped that confidence would have been gained as we moved on to the long awaited re-scheduled match against local rivals Bury Town. In front of a healthy mid-week crowd of over 400, the two sides managed to pretty much cancel each other out for 90 mins.

The match itself never flowed and was always as on the verge of boiling over, as tackles were flying about with nobody holding back. As a result, it did erupt a couple of times with "handbags at dawn". It was pleasing to see the referee, in my opinion using a degree of common sense, only brandishing yellow cards on both occasions.

Bury managed to be the more clinical in front of goal on the night & came away with a 2-1 win from a game that had draw written over it all night long.

At last our long standing home unbeaten record has come to an end, and we now need to dust ourselves down, gather our self-belief and look to start the second half of the season today, as we mean to go on.

Looking at the season to date it could be fair to say that possibly we could be 4-5 points better off than we are and a few places higher in the table but hey that's the nature of this game and we must not dwell on things we can't change.

With players coming back to fitness, competition for places fierce, and our fate being in our own hands, I think we can all look forward to an exciting second half of the season.

Enjoy the game, **Andy**

FROM THE DUGOUT:
STUART BOARDLEY



Good afternoon to you all, finally we feel like the bad weather is behind us (fingers crossed) and we can get a good run of games and hopefully build some momentum similar to that of last season.

With the exception of Tuesday night, I am not going to recap on the games since I last wrote a set of programme notes as they all seem a distant memory now due to the amount of postponements we have suffered.

Bury... Well, that was frustrating to say the least. They came with a specific game plan to frustrate, play off the long ball and be aggressive in both the first and second phase and we just didn't deal with that well enough and found ourselves being drawn into that way of playing ourselves. There was no lack of effort or endeavour, but we just couldn't get our patterns of play working well enough and which lead to us becoming frustrated and then being too impatient and direct. Credit to Bury as their game plan worked perfectly but we must be better at finding solutions to that style of play and ensure we can either assert our style of play better or indeed adapt it accordingly.

It was very disappointing to lose our unbeaten home record this season. It is certainly something that we have been proud of with our home form in general over the past two seasons being a huge catalyst in our rising league position. Disappointing as that may have been, we have the opportunity to start a run all over again and that will be the challenge set to the players.

Our U23 team had a long trip to Haringey Borough this week and despite the loss I'd like to commend the attitude and application of the young lads involved. With numerous unavailability's, it was a big ask for numerous 16/17 year olds to step up and play against a solid Haringey side. Step up they did, doing the club proud on a night where, had they not have applied themselves correctly, things could have ended up very differently – Well done to all involved.

Finally, as we head into today's fixture we have just eight home league games left with some big local derbies in there too, with the likes of AFC Sudbury, Stowmarket and Lowestoft all still to visit the AGL Arena. Our goal has always been to make the playoffs again this year, a goal that is very much in reach, but we need your support to push us on – as it really does make a huge difference.

Enjoy today's game...

Boards

MATCH PHOTOS

PHOTOS
BY STEFAN
PECK

TUESDAY 31ST JANUARY
ISTHMIAN NORTH

Felixstowe & Walton Utd 1

Holland

Bury Town 2

Felixstowe & Walton United welcomed Bury Town to the seaside knowing that a win would take them into the top five, and confident that they would get one, given their previously unbeaten home record. The visitors welcomed back a local legend, Olly Hughes back with the club after leaving - we thought forever - at the end of last season, and whether it was his inspiration who knows, but Town ruined the Seasiders night with a two-one win. The opening goal came from the spot, Joe Hood converting for Town after just four minutes - and five minutes into the second half Darren Mills made it two. As befitting such a tense local derby the match had ten yellow cards, but it had to wait until the very end for a third goal, this one going to the hosts through **Billy Holland** but it was too little, too late for Felixstowe, who are seventh. Town are up to eighth, although nine points behind their hosts.



HOW WE LINED UP

1. Callum Robinson
2. Callum Bennett
3. Charlie Warren
4. Billy Holland
5. Milo Grimes
6. Harry Knock
7. Henry Barley
8. Josh Hitter
9. Oliver Canfer
10. Zak Brown
11. Callum Harrison

SUBS

12. Harry Blackburn
14. Andre Hasanally
15. Stuart Ainsley
19. George Clarke







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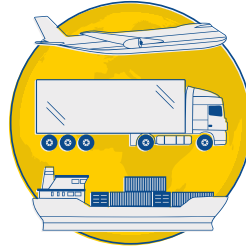
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THE OTHER SIDE HULLBRIDGE SPORTS FC

Records show that Hullbridge United Football Club was formed by a group of local men, fronted by the then proprietor of the Anchor Inn, a Mr. A. W. Moss. He owned a room behind the pub known as Buff's Hall. This was where the club held its first meeting. A Mr. Brown generously allowed the club to play on his land, on the corner of Pooles Lane and Long Lane.

Hullbridge United's first colours were Green and Gold quartered shirts, White shorts and green socks, which, by an amazing coincidence, were the same colours as those on the flag flying outside the Anchor Inn! Affiliating to the Essex County FA in 1947, Hullbridge United entered the Southend & District League for the upcoming 1947-48 season. 1950-51 saw Hullbridge United reach their first Cup Finals. In the Section 'C' Final of the Southend Charity Competition, United beat Maxwell Sports 4-1. Four weeks later, in the Southend & District League's French Cup, Hullbridge faced Rochford Athletic but, somewhat unluckily, lost the Final by three goals to four.

After six seasons of Second Division football, 1951-52 saw Hullbridge finally gain promotion – and they did it in style, winning both the Championship and the French Cup. In the final, Hullbridge defeated the reserves of Great Wakering Rovers by three goals to nil. In all, the club played 28 matches that season, scoring an amazing 141 goals.

The summer of 1953 saw the club change its name to Hullbridge Sports. After a few poor seasons, times improved for the club when they won the 1956-57 Third Division Championship and the League's Shaw Cup.



They finished five points clear of Canvey Island Sports in the League and saw off Victory Athletic reserves 3-2 after extra time in the Cup Final. Suffering relegation at the end of the 1958-59 season, Sports' stay in the Third Division lasted but four seasons as, in 1962-63, 'Bridge won promotion as runner-up in the newly named Second Division with a dramatic final day victory to ensure promotion on goal average. Drawing 4-4 at home to Southwick Rovers, 'Bridge scored three goals in the final fifteen minutes to gain a 7-4 victory and promotion.

Another double was achieved during the 1965-66 season when Hullbridge won the First Division Championship and Section 'C' of the Southend Charity Competition – beating Southchurch Rovers 3-0 in a replay after a 2-2 draw. A respectable fifth-place finish was achieved in the Premier Division the following season, along with being French Cup finalists. 1968-69 saw Hullbridge finish bottom of the Premier Division but just three seasons later the club regained its Premier Division status, finishing runner-up to Canvey Island Amateur FC at the end of the 1971-72 season. Good cup runs that year saw the club reach the semi-final of the Ramuz Cup and the Fourth Round of the Essex Junior Cup.

In the late 1970s, the club decided it wanted its own ground. Negotiations with Rochford Council proved successful, and the club took control of 16.5 acres of farmland in Lower Road (at the top of Coventry Hill), with the club moving during 1980. Transformation of the site was slow, with the clubhouse not officially opened until 1983.

The end of the 1979–80 season saw Sports put six goals past the Southend Estuary 'keeper to win Section 'B' of the Southend Charity Competition. A move up to the newly formed Southend & District Alliance in 1982 found the club wanting. Finishes of sixth and eighth and First Round knockouts in the League Cup weren't exactly what the club had hoped for. The only bright spot was reaching the 1982–83 Southend Charity Shield Final, although they lost 0–4 to Rayleigh Town. Nevertheless, again, looking for a higher standard of football, Sports then joined the Essex Olympian League for the 1984–85 season. They immediately won promotion after finishing third in the Second Division.

At the end of the weather-hit 1987–88 season, Hullbridge (now in the Second Division again) brought home the Essex Intermediate League Cup, beating First Division Benfleet in the Final, held at the old New Writtle Street ground of Chelmsford City FC. After a 1-1 extra time draw, courtesy of a Mark Wood goal, Sports went into the replay 12 days later having played five League matches in between! However, after a goal-less 120 minutes, Sports won 5–4 on penalties.

Looking for a further climb up the non-league ladder, Hullbridge made improvements to the ground during 1989 so it passed the grade for senior football. 1990 saw the Essex County FA grant the club senior status and so the club joined the Essex Senior League for the 1990–91 season. Matt Petre had the honour of scoring the club's first goal in senior football when, on 25th August 1990, in the club's first match of the Essex Senior League season, he scored Sport's only goal in a 1-3 defeat by visitors Stansted, in front of a 163 crowd. At the end of



their first season, the club finished in a respectable 12th place.

The new floodlights were put to good use during the 1999–2000 season when, after seven cup-ties, the youth team reached the Third Round (last 64) of the FA Youth Cup. Visitors Blackburn Rovers won the tie 6–0 in front of a crowd of over 800. After taking over the manager's hot seat during February 2006, Enrico Tiritera oversaw a gradual improvement in the club's fortunes on the pitch. The 2008–09 season showed a good improvement for the club, and they attained their highest number of points (41) over a 30-match programme. The club also reached the Quarter-finals of the East Anglian Cup for the first time.

In 2009–10 Hullbridge reached the Quarter-finals of the Essex Senior Cup, again for the first time, before losing narrowly 0–1 to Football League side Dagenham & Redbridge. The 2010–11 season saw Sports reach their first Cup Final as a senior club, the County FA's Tolleshunt D'Arcy Memorial Cup. Unfortunately, Sports were beaten 1–2 by Braintree Town.

Dan Braney and Mark Bliss took over the reins from Enrico Tiritera, who departed the club in March 2013. In their first full season, 2013–14, Dan and Mark guided the team to their best ever FA Vase Cup run, reaching the Fourth Round (last 32), before being beaten 1–3 by eventual winners Sholing FC. It was unfortunate that the club had to travel to Southampton for the fixture on a wet Tuesday evening in January. The team under Braney and Bliss took the new record of points that had been achieved in the 2008/09 season, finishing ninth with 53 points from a 38-game season, but the icing on the cake was winning the Gordon Brasted Memorial Trophy, the first ever silverware as a senior club, beating Haringey Borough 1–0 in the final, Michael Edgar scoring the only goal.

Mark Bliss took sole charge of the team during the 2014/15 season and was joined by coach Steve Tapley.



Between them they took the club to its highest ever league position and points tally, finishing fourth in the Essex Senior League with 71 points and 73 goals along the way. With yet another Fourth Round FA Vase run, only losing away to Flackwell Heath FC. Mark and Steve decided to step down from the management of the men's senior side for the 2015/16 season and Hullbridge appointed its youngest ever management team installing Rob Hodgson as the new First Team Manager along with Aaron Hunwicks as the new Coach.

In their first season (2015/16) Rob Hodgson and Aaron Hunwicks took the club to new FA Cup heights by making Hullbridge Sports history and reaching the Second Qualifying Round, where they were unfortunately beaten by Grays Athletic of the Ryman Premier Division. It was a last 32 exit again in the FA Vase equalling previous records and demonstrating the FA Vase consistency shown from previous seasons.

In their second season (2016/17) running the First Team Rob Hodgson and Aaron Hunwicks found life more difficult as the side finished 11th

in the Essex Senior League and disappointing early exits from most of the cup competitions, but they did take the side to the second Tollshunt D'Arcy Memorial Cup Final in successive seasons but were unfortunately beaten again by Heybridge Swifts FC. Rob Hodgson and Aaron Hunwicks continued in the hot seat at the start of the 2017/18 season, but early exits from the FA Cup, Essex County Cup and poor league form saw an emotional farewell after the FA Vase victory over Wembley FC at Lower Road. Rob stayed for a short while to play for new manager Darren Manning, but Aaron left the club that had been his home since 2012 for pastures new.

New manager Darren Manning had one main objective after taking over and that was to keep the club in the Essex Senior League and he managed to achieve this finally finishing 15th (out of 21), but unfortunately, Hullbridge exited the FA Vase again under Darren in the last 32 away at Tring FC. 2018/19 saw Darren Manning's first full season at the helm and his side were playing at the newly renamed Ryan's Heating Stadium at Lower Road.

Darren and number two James Wakeling started the 2018/19 campaign in the Essex Senior League. In the first major cup competition of the 2018/19 season, Hullbridge went out of the FA Cup in the Preliminary Round away at Newmarket Town FC (2-1) and they didn't have much joy in the other cup competitions in Darren's first season, exiting all the other big competitions in a 6 week period, as they lost in the FA Vase (Newport Pagnell Town FC 0-2), followed by defeat in the BBC Essex Senior Cup (Hoddesdon Town FC 5-1), the Gordon Brasted Memorial Trophy (Stansted 0-3) and the BBC Essex Senior Cup (Coggeshall Town FC 1-2), but they made the Semi Final of the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Memorial Trophy losing to Brightlingsea Regent of the Bostik League (5-1).

In the league Darren and James overtook the previous management teams in highest

league points total achieving a total of 87 points and not only making Hullbridge history for the points total, but also winning the Essex Senior League and being promoted to the Isthmian League for the first time in the clubs 29 year history.

Hullbridge Sports first season at the highest level the club has played at in their history was, like most things around this time, interrupted by the COVID pandemic. Both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons were terminated due to the virus. In their first season at this level, Hullbridge were in 16th place with 28 points from 27 matches when the season was terminated.

The following season, 2020-21, came to an abrupt halt even earlier with The Bridge in 16th place on 6 points from 5 matches.

Finally, The Bridge could complete a full season in the division at the third attempt in season 2021-22. This season is now famous for 'The Great Escape' as The Bridge staged an unbelievable rescue mission after appearing to be in an impossible position in December. A change in personnel on the pitch that included Tony Stokes, who led the team with all his vital experience and goalscoring contributions, plus some excellent additions brought in by newly installed managers, Steve Southgate and Rob Moore, combined to produce one of the most amazing turnarounds imaginable. The Bridge survived the rollercoaster ride and finished, yes 16th, with 39 points from 38 games.

The amazing run of form that produced 'The Great Escape' allowed The Bridge to survive and take their place in the Isthmian League North for the 2022-23 season as we celebrate 75 years of Hullbridge football and look forward to many more years to come.

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PHOTOS TAKEN AT HULLBRIDGE SPORTS FC
EARLIER THIS SEASON

MATCH REPORT

PHOTOS
BY TOM
BRADFORD

SATURDAY 28TH JANUARY
ISTHMIAN NORTH

Tilbury 1

Felixstowe & Walton Utd 3

Brown, Clarke, Harrison

Felixstowe & Walton United maintained their 100% winning start to 2023, coming from behind to beat lowly Tilbury at a chilly Chadfields ground. The home side took a surprise early lead through debutant James Ewington but **Zak Brown** equalised in the 31st minute, beating the offside trap and coolly finishing. **George Clarke** put the Seasiders ahead on 48 minutes from close distance before the away side lived dangerously for a ten-minute spell, Tilbury seeing the woodwork and a goal line clearance from Billy Holland deny them. Felixstowe's win was confirmed on 83 minutes, **Callum Harrison** superbly beating two men and scoring low into the far corner.



HOW WE LINED UP

1. Callum Robinson
2. Callum Bennett
3. Charlie Warren
4. Billy Holland
5. Milo Grimes
6. Harry Knock
7. Josh Hitter
8. Noel Aitkens
9. George Clarke
10. Zak Brown
11. Andre Hasanally

SUBS

12. Harry Blackburn
14. Henry Barley
15. Oliver Canfer
16. Callum Harrison

MATCH REPORT: STUART DAYNES





Felixstowe were without Joe Whight due to a hamstring injury, Charlie Warren slotting into the left back role. Leon Ottley-Gooch was also missing due to injury alongside Stuart Ainsley. Tilbury started with four debutants and a new manager in the dugout after a poor run of ten defeats from thirteen matches. From the first whistle it was clear that the bumpy pitch was going to limit flowing, passing football, but to both sides credit they adapted well and were both making good use of the space afforded to each team high up the field. Tilbury were unlucky not to score in the first minute when Ewington raced clear but he couldn't finish, the striker, making his debut, was not be denied though on 5 minutes, receiving the ball from the centre and beating his man to find himself clear in the box and he calmly stroked the ball past Robinson for the opening goal. The match then turned into a stop-start affair for a period, with plenty of breaks in play, including Noel Aitkens having to make an early exit with what looked like a



knee issue, and already, plenty of timewasting from the home side. A 30 yard volley was taken care of by Robinson on 13 minutes and George Clarke saw his 20 yard curling effort deflected just wide on 23 minutes. The opening half had not been pretty on the eye but the Seasiders soon loosened up after their enforced three week break and a through ball on 31 minutes saw **Zak Brown** beat the offside trap from near the half-way line to find himself one-on-one with the goalkeeper, any fears



that he had too much time to overthink it were unfounded as he coolly slammed the ball past the keeper to equalise. The always involved Josh Hitter curled a free kick from distance just over on 35 minutes as the away side took control of the play and so nearly went ahead on 45 minutes, Callum Harrison had looked on fire since replacing Noel Aitkens and his superb play out on the far right saw him jink past the

defence and deliver a pinpoint ball in to Zak Brown on the edge of the six yard box, he glanced his header towards the far post but saw it go agonisingly just wide. Another great chance was created just on the stroke of the whistle, Josh Hitter doing all the hard work before sending in a vicious attempt from 30 yards that the goalkeeper somehow got to and scrambled it round the post.

Felixstowe made a perfect start to the second half, taking the lead on 48 minutes, just after Zak Brown had seen the keeper get the better of him one-on-one in the box. A ball right across the goal line evaded the home defence and found Andre Hasanally at the far post, his shot from a yard out was somehow cleared, but only to **George Clarke** who smashed the ball into the net from close distance. That goal certainly woke the home side up and they had three unbelievable chances to equalise in the next ten minutes, a ball into the box on 51 minutes was side footed towards goal from 8 yards, the ball hit

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the inside corner of the post and crossbar, bounced down onto Callum Robinsons shoulder before being cleared to safety! Two more golden opportunities were squandered shortly after, with Billy Holland being the saviour with a stunning goal line clearance when a goal looked a certainty and some more desperate defending denying the Dockers once more. That brief spell of danger was all the home side could muster and Felixstowe again took control from then on, with Tilbury probably deflated at the sight of players like Ollie Canfer and Henry Barley being introduced off the bench, with both showing quality touches and assists. Callum Harrison again found space through the middle on 62 minutes but he shot wide, and Billy Holland headed just over from a corner on 72 minutes. Felixstowe had suffered a late equaliser at this venue last season, but fears of a repeat were quashed on 83 minutes when **Harrison** showed his class to score a third for the Seaside. He beautifully beat two men on the edge of the box to create



space for himself and he confidently found the far corner of the net to seal the points. A fourth goal wasn't out of the question as first Zak Brown and Callum Harrison caused havoc yet again for the home defence who had chased them all game, Zak tried for goal when perhaps a pass would have been the better option, and Harrison curled a shot over from outside the area in injury time.





ISTHMIAN NORTH DIVISION TABLE 2022/23

POS		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	AFC Sudbury	23	20	2	1	58	20	+38	62
2	Hashtag United	23	19	1	3	60	23	+37	58
3	Lowestoft Town	21	14	3	4	49	21	+28	45
4	Heybridge Swifts	24	13	6	5	42	23	+19	45
5	Grays Athletic	23	14	2	7	40	25	+15	44
6	Stowmarket Town	21	13	4	4	41	22	+19	43
7	Felixstowe & Walton United	21	13	3	5	47	25	+22	42
8	Bury Town	22	9	6	7	24	19	+5	33
9	New Salamis	22	9	6	7	41	41	0	33
10	East Thurrock United	22	10	3	9	32	36	-4	33
11	Brentwood Town	22	9	2	11	32	33	-1	29
12	Wroxham	23	6	8	9	31	39	-8	26
13	Maldon & Tiptree	23	7	3	13	27	39	-12	24
14	Basildon United	21	5	6	10	21	35	-14	21
15	Tilbury	22	5	4	13	23	42	-19	19
16	Witham Town	21	6	1	14	27	47	-20	19
17	Hullbridge Sports	22	4	3	15	22	45	-23	15
18	Gorleston	21	4	2	15	26	53	-27	14
19	Great Wakering Rovers	23	3	3	17	30	55	-25	12
20	Coggeshall Town	22	1	6	15	11	41	-30	9

LAST UPDATED: TUESDAY 31ST JANUARY 2023 AT 21:43:41

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH DIVISION

SATURDAY 4TH FEBRUARY - 3PM KO

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





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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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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.

SPONSORS: Felixstowe Radio, Pat Haseman



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.

SPONSORS: Chris & Jayne Ryan



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 Seaside's 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.

SPONSOR: George Baker (Shipping) Ltd



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.

SPONSOR: Barry Caley



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.

SPONSORS: Chris & Jayne Ryan



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.

SPONSORS: Richard & Jenny Bugg



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.

SPONSOR: Dave Ablitt



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.

SPONSORS: George & Shirley Ainsley



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.

SPONSORS: Stefan Peck, Stan Baston, Tom Bradford, Stevan Webb & Sons Roofing



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 Seaside for the 22/23 campaign. A highly sought after creative and technically gifted midfielder that loves to get forward and provide the team with both goals and assists.

SPONSOR: Winnifred McClean



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.

SPONSOR: Steve Foley Transport Ltd



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 Seaside 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.

SPONSOR: Kedan Logistics Ltd



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



ANDRE HASANALLY FORWARD

Andre joins the Seaside following a successful loan spell from Colchester United in the 2021/22 season. A versatile forward with the ability to create as many as he scores.

SPONSORS: Matthew Daynes



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 Seaside's Youth sections and has returned to lead the forward line as the club's 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.

SPONSOR: Craig Studd

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

"The Isthmian Football League strongly supports the FA statement that there should be a zero-tolerance approach against racism and all forms of discrimination.

Accordingly, any form of discriminatory abuse whether it by reason of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex and sexual orientation or any other form of abuse will be reported to The Football Association for action by that Association." (The FA 0800 085 0508 / Kick it Out 020 7253 0162). The Isthmian League and all Member Clubs in the League are committed to promoting equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and providing access and opportunities for all members of the community."



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FIXTURES 2022/23

AUGUST

SAT 13	BRENTWOOD TOWN <i>Hitter</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	Att 167
TUE 16	GORLESTON <i>Warren, Harrison, Canfer</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 3-2	Att 332
SAT 20	DEREHAM TOWN	A	3PM	FA CUP PRELIM RND	L 2-0	Att 229
SAT 27	BASILDON UNITED	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-0	Att 283
MON 29	COGGESHALL TOWN <i>Aitkens, Harrison, Hitter</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-1	Att 157

SEPTEMBER

TUE 13	BURGESS HILL TOWN <i>Whight, Harrison - Burgess Hill Town win 3-2 on pens</i>	H	7.45PM	FA TROPHY 1 ST	D 2-2	Att 185
SAT 17	NEW SALAMIS <i>Harrison 2, Canfer 3</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	D 5-0	Att 317
TUE 27	WITHAM TOWN <i>Holland 2, Maycock</i>	H	7.45PM	VELOCITY CUP 1 ST	D 3-1	Att 239

OCTOBER

SAT 01	WROXHAM <i>Brown, Harrison</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 2-2	Att 180
SAT 08	MALDON & TIPTREE <i>Hitter, Holland, Whight</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-1	Att 460
TUE 11	CHERTSEY TOWN <i>Brown, Holland</i>	A	7.45PM	VELOCITY CUP 2 ND	L 2-0	Att 203
SAT 15	GRAYS ATHLETIC <i>Hitter, Holland</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 3-2	Att 309
SAT 22	HASHTAG UNITED <i>Brown, Clarke, Warren, Hitter</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	L 4-0	Att 658
TUE 25	AFC SUDBURY	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	Att 320
SAT 29	GREAT WAKERING ROVERS <i>Hitter, Clarke</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	Att 334

NOVEMBER

TUE 08	ENFIELD TOWN <i>Ford</i>	H	7.45PM	VELOCITY CUP 3 RD	L 2-1	Att 209
SAT 12	TILBURY <i>Ford, Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	Att 329
SAT 19	HULLBRIDGE SPORTS <i>Brown, Ford</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	Att 148
SAT 26	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS <i>Whight</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 2-1	Att 343

DECEMBER

SAT 03 WITHAM TOWN H 3PM LEAGUE W 4-1 Att 364
Aitkens, Hitter, Whight 2

TUE 27 COGGESHALL TOWN H 1PM LEAGUE D 1-1 Att 464
Warren

JANUARY

MON 02 STOWMARKET TOWN A 3PM LEAGUE W 3-2 Att 516
Warren, Canfer, Whight

SAT 07 BRENTWOOD TOWN H 3PM LEAGUE W 2-0 Att 310
Clarke, Hitter

SAT 28 TILBURY A 3PM LEAGUE W 3-1 Att 170
Brown, Clarke, Harrison

TUE 31 BURY TOWN H 7.45PM LEAGUE L 2-1 Att 404
Holland

FEBRUARY

SAT 04 HULLBRIDGE SPORTS H 3PM LEAGUE

TUE 07 EAST THURROCK UNITED A 7.45PM LEAGUE

SAT 11 GREAT WAKERING ROVERS H 2PM LEAGUE

TUE 14 AFC SUDBURY H 7.45PM LEAGUE

SAT 18 MALDON & TIPTREE A 3PM LEAGUE

TUE 21 NEEDHAM MARKET A 7.45PM SUFFOLK FA PREMIER CUP 2ND ROUND

SAT 25 WROXHAM H 3PM LEAGUE

TUE 28 GORLESTON A 7.45PM LEAGUE

MARCH

SAT 04 NEW SALAMIS H 3PM LEAGUE

TUE 07 LOWESTOFT TOWN H 7.45PM LEAGUE

SAT 11 GRAYS ATHLETIC H 3PM LEAGUE

SAT 18 HASHTAG UNITED A 3PM LEAGUE

SAT 25 BASILDON UNITED A 3PM LEAGUE

APRIL

SAT 01 EAST THURROCK UNITED H 3PM LEAGUE

SAT 08 BURY TOWN A 3PM LEAGUE

MON 10 STOWMARKET TOWN H 3PM LEAGUE

SAT 15 WITHAM TOWN A 3PM LEAGUE

SAT 22 HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS H 3PM LEAGUE

PITCHING IN ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH ROUND UP

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



Leaders **AFC Sudbury** have maintained a four point lead at the top despite Hashtag's charge, but the Yellows faced the tricky challenge of a trip to third place **Grays Athletic**. Athletic were on their best run of the season, with six consecutive wins, but Sudbury once again brought home the bacon (non-meat products are also available) and delivered a win double, breaking home resistance with two late goals. Josh Stokes put them ahead with just eleven minutes to go, and then right at the end that man Nnamdi Nwachuku continued his incredible goalscoring run by adding his thirty second goal of the season - and he has only played twenty six times! Our image of that goal comes from **Steve Screech**.

Hashtag United put the best winning run in the country on the line as they headed to

Wroxham. The Tags last league defeat was at the hands of their closest title rivals back in November, since when they'd swept everything before them and had been scoring goals for fun. We knew that the Yachtsmen were unlikely to be pushovers, and they were given an advantage when Ben Brookes was dismissed for the visitors on ten minutes - and advantage they took when Harry Barker opened the scoring on fourteen minutes. It took only one minute for the ten men to equalise through Max Cornhill, and eight minutes before half time Percy Kiangebeni put them ahead. Tags then shot themselves in the other foot by picking up a second red card, Greg Halford departing, but somehow managed to add a third goal with nine men, Kiangebeni scoring from the spot. Ryan Miles set up a grandstand finish with the Yachtsmen's second goal six minutes from time, but that was that- twelve wins in a row for the Tags.

Lowestoft Town look to have almost recaptured their early season form, and were five games without defeat as they welcomed **New Salamis** to the seaside. Salamis travelled on the back of their first difficult run of the campaign, with only one win from six matches, and this one was close, but it went the way of the Trawler Boys, up to third. Jake Reed got the first goal of the game with twenty one minutes to go, and the lead was doubled in added time, Travis Cole volleying home. The hosts are, however, thirteen points behind

the Tags, seventeen behind the Yellows, as the title race looks to have only two horses.

Heybridge Swifts hoped to hold on to their top five spot as they travelled to **Hullbridge Sports**, and they looked to have the match won by half time, Callum Taylor's seventh minute opener and a second from Ross Wall giving them a two-nil lead. Sports made the closing stages interesting, pulling a goal back with eleven minutes left, Sam Elwood with it, but the visitors made sure, Rob Harvey making it three-one right at the end. Swifts have won six of the last seven meetings between the clubs, and are up to fourth - whilst Sports have lost four in a row.

Stowmarket Town, still without a permanent manager as we write, had lost three of their last four - a sequence which had seen them slip from the top five. Stow were on the road to **Brentwood Town**, the Blues, who defeated Stow in the play off Semi Final last season, having a rather average campaign. After a goalless first half the visitors made the breakthrough on forty nine minutes, Chris Casement with the goal, and although Bryan Ifeanyi brought the hosts level on sixty six minutes parity lasted only three minutes, Reggie Thompson-Lambe getting a winner and ensuring that Stow did the double over the Blues and closed to within a point of the top five.

Maldon & Tiptree welcomed **East Thurrock United**, and the two delivered a thrilling first half. An own goal gave the Rocks, who had lost their previous three matches, a tenth minute lead, only for Terrell Egbri to equalise just before the half hour. Brian Moses quickly restored the visitors lead, only for Harry Phillips to just as quickly cancel it out for the Jammers. The winner came five minutes from time, and it went to the hosts, Danny Nesbitt delighting the home faithful and sending his side up to thirteenth.

Witham Town, who had perhaps forgotten what winning felt like, became reacquainted

with it as they welcomed **Bury Town**. Witham had lost their last nine matches and were desperate not to create an imperfect ten, whilst Bury had only one win from their last seven. The game had just one goal, and it was delight for the hosts, Jamahl Godward scoring it on sixty eight minutes as his side climbed to fifteenth.

Basildon United, six points above the bottom four, travelled to face bottom side **Coggeshall Town**. The Seed Growers had improved of late but that improvement hadn't transformed their results, and they kicked off still without a league win all season and ten points from safety - but that was to change, in the last two minutes of the match! When Callum Fitzer put the Bees ahead on eighty three minutes it looked as if the points were heading back to Basildon, but the Seed Growers levelled two minutes from time, George Frodsham with the goal. Right at the end that first win arrived as Josh Osude made it two.

Finally, we had eighteenth v nineteenth as **Great Wakering Rovers** welcomed **Gorleston**. Rovers, under new management, were without a win since October 8th - and the two sides delivered a six goal first thriller, with four of them going the way of the visitors. Connor Ingram opened the scoring for the Greens, and Ross Gifedder quickly made it two on twenty five minutes, and although Jay Nash halved the arrears for Rovers it was three-one to the visitors at the break, George Keys with Gorleston's third. Four minutes from time Christy Finch made it four-one, and a stoppage time Ade Adedjoja goal for Rovers wasn't much of a consolation. The hosts were down to ten men by then, Billy Johnson seeing a late red card. That's two away wins in a row for Gorleston, who move to within two points of safety.

Follow the Pitching In Isthmian League on Instagram. Search for theisthmianleague on your app. We're also on Facebook and Twitter.

THE NON-LEAGUE PAPER

ESSENTIAL READING FOR FOLLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL GAME



DID YOU see the video of former Cardiff City manager Mark Hudson on social media recently? The first part shows him telling his sons he has been appointed assistant and their pride is clear to see.

In the second part, he is telling them he is out of a job and they will be moving again, but not to worry: "That's football".

That is indeed and unfortunately we're probably all a bit guilty of forgetting the human side of it.

Away from the pitch there is a reality we don't always see. Occasionally we get little glimpses into it, like with Hudson's video. As football fans on the outside, it's easy to see everything as black and white, winning and losing.

If a player doesn't play very well, it's because he's not up to it. More often than not, we don't stop to consider what else might be going on. In this role I've come to learn there are often deeply personal reasons why a player might not be performing – or why a manager might not be able to get the results despite the fact they're putting in all the hours they can.

Hereford manager Josh Gowling saw Hudson's video and it resonated. In Sunday's NLP he took on the subject in his column to give us a unique insight into what it is like as a Non-League gaffer.

He wrote: "When we lose a game, my missus will message me: Are you ok? I have a four-hour drive home after the majority of our games. That's a lot of time to go over things in my head.

"When I get home I will get a nice cuddle from her and my kids, but she knows I won't be in a good place.

"Look, I've chosen to do this so it's not an



excuse, but it can take you away from your family in an emotional sense.

"When you're with your kids but your team is on a three-game losing streak, you're not fully present.

"I'm sure many other managers will say the same. This is your life. When it's not working, your life doesn't work."

The majority of managers say the same. Football is a unique 24/7 world, where there is very little time to switch off.

You certainly need to be a certain character to take on the job and deal with your week's work being played out in full view of the public. Even at Non-League level.

"Everything is out there to see," Gowling wrote. "It's on social media, in the news, if kids go to school in the area you manage, they might get some stick. There is no escape from the game."

That's partly why they all do it. Football gets under all our skin. However you interact with the game, it's because we love it.

Gowling also says being a manager is the best job in the world. And that is probably why so many come back to try again after they disappointments. That's football...

By Matt Badcock, Editor-at-large

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THE AMERICAN DREAM

BY MARTYN GREEN, THE UNTOLD GAME

Find more at TheUntoldGame.co.uk or on social media @TheUntoldGame



When we think of football in the United States – and not the Super Bowl kind – we tend to think of it as a fairly modern invention. The North American Soccer League of the 1970s and 80s that attracted the likes of Pele, George Best, Johann Cruyff and, in a slightly bizarre turn of events, a young Peter Beardsley. After its demise, the MLS' faltering start and thus far successful revival after David Beckham's move to LA Galaxy. But soccer has a long history in the USA, and the first national league created was earlier than some of the top European leagues. The inaugural season of the American Soccer League kicked off in 1921.



Football in the USA goes back to the nineteenth century. In 1869, the representatives of Princeton and Rutgers Universities took part in one of the more pivotal games in sporting history. It has gone down as the first gridiron game in history. But the laws used that day were the FA's Laws of the Game,

and there was definitely spherical ball. This was a game of European football.

Football in the United States then filtered its way down to the working classes, exploding in popularity, especially among European immigrants. Teams started to spring up in American cities. By 1884 an American Football Association had been formed, just in time to prevent the formation of what would have been the first league, backed by the owners of Major League Baseball teams to give their players something to do in the winter. The AFA, even at this early stage, was unwilling to lose its control of the game.

They did, however, set up a cup for teams to compete in. This first organised competition drew teams from factory towns, usually made up of factory workers and often sponsored by the company. The first three were won by Clark ONT, owned by the Clark Thread Company. But then it was dominated by Fall River Rovers, who won six of the next seven. They were the only team to win both the American Cup and the later Challenge Cup, although the struggles of their parent company forced Rovers to withdraw by the start of the twentieth century.

Turmoil, it seemed, was catching. When the AFA applied for FIFA membership in 1912, a breakaway organisation (The American Amateur Football Association) applied at the same time. FIFA rejected both, needing just one governing body. The delay in FIFA affiliation did little to hurt the growth of the sport, but did not stop teams from as far afield as Third Lanark in Scotland and Hakoah Wien in Austria to embark on lucrative tours. Third Lanark won 24 of their 25 games in the United States,



eventually drawing the last against Fall River Rovers. Hakoah Wien, full of exciting central European talent drew record-breaking crowds and at least one of their players chose not to return to Austria at the end of the tour, finding the life of celebrity and riches too enticing to give up.

As the AAFA gained the upper hand over their rival federation, it changed its name to the USFA and, before eventually turning its attention to a league. The American Soccer League claimed to be a national competition, but because of travel difficulties in reality it was limited to the northeast. Not that this impacted on popularity. Football was never as popular as baseball, but it was very lucrative, and those riches were used to attract European players, much to European chagrin. As a result, early crowds in the tens of thousands threatened to make soccer America's

second sport, ahead of gridiron.

Sadly, as so often with football in America, it wasn't to be. The ASL fell out with the USFA when the latter tried to impose new rules to boost popularity even further. These American innovations included end of season playoffs and a league table sorted by winning percentage rather than points. Also, interestingly, the USFA wanted substitutions. The ASL conceded this and introduced them in 1926; the World Cup didn't allow substitutes until 1970.

In the end, the ASL initiated a boycott of the USFA's challenge cup. Three teams went against the boycott and were kicked out of the league, but the courts found in their favour. Rancour and disharmony within the sport smashed headlong into the collapsing American economy, and fans decided against spending what little they had watching football. By 1932, amid falling crowds and financial problems, the league eventually folded. But not before it sent a team to the first World Cup, to finish third, still the best finish for a team outside of Europe and South America.



Enjoy the game.

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MATCHDAY SQUADS

PITCHING IN Isthmian North League
Saturday 4th February, 3pm



Felixstowe & Walton United FC

Manager: Stuart Boardley

Assistant Manager: Andy Crump

MATCH SPONSOR:

Maze Logistics

BALL SPONSOR:

Source One

Hullbridge Sports FC

Managers: Steve Southgate
and Rob Moore



Stuart **Ainsley**

James **Askew**



Noel **Aitkens**

Keiran **Bailey**



Henry **Barley**

Samuel **Brogan**



Callum **Bennett**

Ross **Elsom**



Harry **Blackburn**

Sam **Elwood**



Zak **Brown**

Emmanuel **Folarin**



George **Clarke**

Joe **Gardner**



Ollie **Canfer**

Lewis **Green (GK)**



Sam **Ford**

Reggie **Gregory**



Milo **Grimes**

Darius **Ghinea**



Callum **Harrison**

Billy **Harris**



Andre **Hasanally**

Alex **Hawney**



Josh **Hitter**

Harry **Honesty**



Billy **Holland (C)**

Luke **Hornsley**



Lamel **Howell**

Lee **Hursit**



Harry **Knock**

Ryan **Karrer (GK)**



Leon **Ottley-Gooch**

Ellis **Lawson**



Rory **Porter**

Joe **Linley**



Callum **Robinson (GK)**

Alex **Moss**



Charlie **Warren**

Guy **Norton**



Joe **Whight**

Roland **Oteniya**



Archie **Toomey**



Tommy **Woodcock (GK)**



Adam **Topley**



red/yellow - goals - played

MATCH OFFICIALS:

Referee: Mr Ashley Tyne Assistant Referees: Mr James Sneddon and Mr Auberon Limmer