

the Seasiders

THE OFFICIAL 2023/2024 MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

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v Walthamstow



SATURDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 2024, 3PM
ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH

CHAIRMAN: **TOYN BARNES**



Good afternoon to one and all and welcome to the AGL Arena for another very important league game against fellow promotion hopefuls Walthamstow.

A particularly warm welcome to all the players, officials and supporters who have travelled up from north London and we wish you all a safe journey home this evening. Welcome too to today's match officials, we hope you enjoy your short time with us and our hospitality.

On paper today's match looks like another very tough encounter, we seem to be having



many of these against teams from the South Essex/London area – Brentwood, Basildon and Redbridge in recent weeks.

Ironically the only more comfortable result recently was against table topping Lowestoft. I fully expect today's match to be equally as tight, as Walthamstow gave us a tough match away earlier in the season when it ended 1-1 courtesy of a last-minute equalizer from Josh Mayhew.

The Redbridge game last Saturday won't live long in the memory for the quality of football on show but it was certainly a physical battle that called for guts, determination and character which I felt the lads showed in abundance. We were the first team this season to leave there with a clean sheet, our third in a row!



So, a special mention to Josh and his defenders, keep it going lads - it isn't always pretty to watch but I'll take 1-0 each week at the moment! We got our share of goals up at the other end during the first half of the season so no complaints.

What I was most impressed with last Saturday was our support - to comfortably out number the home support for a league game at this level taking place 70 miles from home is truly amazing, I can only imagine



what confidence and lift it must give to the players to see so much red and white and it also helps prevent any attempted intimidation from the home fans, albeit they did try their best!

Where has the season gone? It seems like yesterday we were looking forward to the season and the excitement of the FA Cup

and FA Trophy, now I'm dealing with emails and questions about the end of season presentation night, Summer Sportsmans Dinner and close season pitch maintenance! I suppose it is a sign of old age!!

However, still at least 15 league games to go, plus a Suffolk Premier Cup to win first! If you guys carry on supporting the club like you have been then no reason why the end of season can't be a truly memorable one so start thinking about your event tickets before it's too late!

Back on the road next week with games on Tuesday and Saturday at Brightlingsea and Wroxham, before hosting Grays back here on 24th February.

Enjoy and game and have a great week!
Tony

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FROM THE DUGOUT: **STUART BOARDLEY**

Good afternoon to you all and a warm welcome to our visitors Walthamstow as they visit the AGL Arena in the sequel to an enthralling 1-1 draw in London back in October, where we grabbed a 90th minute equaliser.

Both teams approach this game in good form, Walthamstow having only lost the once since the turn of the year and that loss was against a top Brentwood side gunning for promotion. Us, of course are in a similar good vein of form remaining unbeaten in 2024



with dropped points only against the aforementioned Brentwood.

Since last writing these notes (Andy covered the Basildon fixture), we've gone on to beat Lowestoft, Basildon and Redbridge all without conceding a goal which is so pleasing. We've worked hard on our defensive shape over the last month or so. It was evident that during our inconsistent December a reset and back to basics approach was needed because goals had become a little tougher to come by than earlier in the season but we were still leaking far too many ourselves.

“Josh has had a great start and we believe there's so much more to come from him at just 20 years of age - great start Blunks, keep it up!”

That hard work by the players and Andy on the training field has certainly provided a solid foundation and that's not to mention the positive impact our new No 1 who boasts three clean sheets in his first four games has



had at the Seaside. Josh has had a great start and we believe there's so much more to come from him at just 20 years of age - great start Blunks, keep it up!

That's enough from me.... Let's hope I've not cursed our unbeaten run and can continue where we left off here two weeks ago against Basildon.

Enjoy the game

Boards



Before the match against Basildon, Isthmian League Director Pete Bowers presented Stuart Boardley with the Manager of the month award for October. Here he proudly shows off his award alongside his team - congratulations Boards!



SEASIDER PHIL GRIFFITHS



Not many people know this...

Hopefully today will be one of those good days all football clubs like – as I write this there is no rain forecast (Wednesday), bit of sun and ok temperature (for the time of year), Ipswich Town at home, they kicked off at 12:30 so the guys who support both clubs can watch the Tractor Boys then get back here to the AGL to see the majority of this game!

Both sides are in good form, with Walthamstow winning in midweek 2-0 over Wroxham while we remain unbeaten since the turn of the year.

Both clubs have been averaging over 300 per home game, with our visitors splitting the

four Suffolk Clubs. Bury Town lead the way with a home average of 546, followed by Lowestoft Town on 410 – we are third on 373 and Walthamstow with a 315 average, struggling Stowmarket making up the five teams in the North Division with a better than 300 average on 302.

The players certainly enjoy a big supportive crowd at home games and are equally impressed when 50 travel to places like Redbridge to make up 60% of the attendance. Hopefully as we begin the run in we can garner more support, particularly for home games and make the AGL Arena the fortress it needs to be if we are to make the play-offs.



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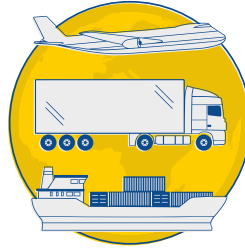
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LAST SIX MATCHES: FORM GUIDE

Bury Town	W 5-0 v NEW..	D 2-2 v BOWE..	W 2-0 v REDB..	W 4-1 v STOW..	W 4-2 v MALD..	W 4-1 v BRIG..
Bowers & Pitsea	W 2-1 v FELI..	W 2-0 v WITH..	D 2-2 v BURY..	D 2-2 v HEYB..	W 1-0 v IPSW..	W 3-1 v STOW..
Brentwood Town	D 2-2 v FELI..	W 3-1 v MALD..	W 3-1 v REDB..	W 2-0 v WALT..	W 3-2 v GORL..	L 1-0 v LOWE..
Felixstowe & Walton	L 2-1 v BOWE..	W 2-1 v STOW..	D 2-2 v BREN..	W 3-0 v LOWE..	W 1-0 v BASI..	W 1-0 v REDB..
Lowestoft Town	W 2-1 v BRIG..	L 3-0 v FELI..	W 3-1 v WITH..	W 2-0 v GRAY..	D 2-2 v WALT..	W 1-0 v BREN..
Basildon Utd	W 1-0 v NEW..	W 2-1 v BRIG..	W 4-2 v STOW..	L 1-0 v IPSW..	L 1-0 v FELI..	W 4-0 v WITH..
Madon & Tiptree	W 1-0 v GRAY..	W 2-1 v IPSW..	L 3-1 v BREN..	W 2-0 v BRIG..	L 4-2 v BURY..	W 1-0 v ENFI..
Gorleston	D 0-0 v HEYB..	W 3-2 v LOWE..	D 1-1 v STOW..	W 1-0 v REDB..	W 3-0 v ENFI..	L 3-2 v BREN..
Walthamstow	W 3-2 v BRIG..	D 2-2 v NEW..	L 2-0 v BREN..	W 2-0 v ENFI..	D 2-2 v LOWE..	W 2-0 v WROX..
Heybridge Swifts	D 1-1 v ENFI..	W 3-1 v GRAY..	D 2-2 v BOWE..	L 3-0 v WITH..	L 2-1 v REDB..	W 2-1 v NEW..
Grays Athletic	L 1-0 v MALD..	L 3-1 v HEYB..	W 4-1 v IPSW..	L 2-0 v LOWE..	W 3-1 v WITH..	D 1-1 v WROX..
New Salamis	L 1-0 v BASI..	W 3-2 v ENFI..	L 5-0 v BURY..	W 4-3 v STOW..	D 2-2 v WALT..	L 2-1 v HEYB..
Witham Town	W 3-1 v BRIG..	L 2-0 v BOWE..	L 3-1 v LOWE..	W 3-0 v HEYB..	L 3-1 v GRAY..	L 4-0 v BASI..
Wroxham	L 2-1 v BURY..	D 1-1 v REDB..	W 3-2 v STOW..	L 1-0 v ENFI..	D 1-1 v GRAY..	L 2-0 v WALT..
Enfield	D 1-1 v HEYB..	L 3-0 v GORL..	D 2-2 v STOW..	W 1-0 v WROX..	L 2-0 v WALT..	L 1-0 v MALD..
Redbridge	L 1-0 v GORL..	D 1-1 v WROX..	L 3-1 v BREN..	L 2-0 v BURY..	W 2-1 v HEYB..	L 1-0 v FELI..
Ipswich Wanderers	L 6-1 v BREN..	L 2-0 v HEYB..	L 2-1 v MALD..	W 1-0 v BASI..	L 4-1 v GRAY..	L 1-0 v BOWE..
Stowmarket Town	L 4-2 v BASI..	L 4-3 v NEW..	D 2-2 v ENFI..	L 3-2 v WROX..	L 4-1 v BURY..	L 3-1 v BOWE..
Brightlingsea Regent	L 2-1 v BASI..	L 3-1 v WITH..	L 2-1 v LOWE..	L 3-2 v WALT..	L 2-0 v MALD..	L 4-1 v BURY..

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH: LEADING GOALSCORERS

1. Cemal Ramadan	Bury Town	20	11. Olly Sotoyinbo	Brightlingsea Regent/Walthamstow	10
2. Jake Reed	Lowestoft Town	20	12. Kai Brown	Basildon Utd	9
3. Harvey Sayer	Lowestoft Town	19	13. Adam Hipperson	Lowestoft Town	9
4. George Smith	Maldon & Tiptree	15	14. Mekhi McKenzie	Brentwood Town	9
5. Louis Britton	Maldon & Tiptree	13	15. Ryan Curtis	Gorleston	8
6. Luke Brown	Bury Town	13	16. Samuel Ford	Felixstowe & Walton Utd	8
7. Callum Harrison	Felixstowe & Walton Utd	13	17. Luke Johnson	Gorleston	8
8. Ben Williamson	Bowers & Pitsea	13	18. Derek Asamoah	New Salamis/Brightlingsea Regent	7
9. Samir Ali	Basildon Utd	11	19. Ryan Hawkins	Wroxham	7
10. Matt Price	Bowers & Pitsea	10	20. Ryan Miles	Wroxham	7



TODAY'S MASCOTS

We welcome Felixstowe and Walton's Under 10's reds as mascots for today's game against Walthamstow. We hope you enjoy the game!

Thanks to their sponsor Boast International.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

"The Isthmian Football League strongly supports the Football Association's statement that there should be a zero-tolerance approach against all forms of discrimination. Any inappropriate conduct toward others, including but not limited to that based on an individual's sex, race, colour, weight, size, religion and belief, national origin, age, marital or domestic-partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, will not be tolerated and will be reported to the relevant authorities. The Isthmian League and our Member Clubs are committed to promoting equity and equality by treating all 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 our communities."

ISTHMIAN NORTH DIVISION TABLE 2023/24

POS		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Lowestoft Town	23	17	2	4	63	27	+36	53
2	Felixstowe & Walton United	23	14	5	4	54	28	+26	47
3	Bowers & Pitsea	23	14	3	6	44	31	+13	45
4	Bury Town	23	13	5	5	59	35	+24	44
5	Brentwood Town	23	13	5	5	43	22	+21	44
6	Heybridge Swifts	23	12	5	6	38	29	+9	41
7	Basildon United	22	12	3	7	45	33	+12	39
8	Maldon & Tiptree	23	12	3	8	45	36	+9	39
9	Walthamstow	22	10	6	6	35	33	+2	36
10	Brightlingsea Regent	22	10	1	11	40	39	+1	31
11	Gorleston	20	7	5	8	28	27	+1	26
12	Witham Town	23	6	6	11	31	43	-12	24
13	Wroxham	21	5	7	9	30	32	-2	22
14	New Salamis	21	5	7	9	33	48	-15	22
15	Redbridge	19	5	5	9	28	37	-9	20
16	Grays Athletic	22	4	6	12	28	41	-13	18
17	Enfield	22	5	3	14	24	53	-29	18
18	Ipswich Wanderers	21	5	1	15	18	40	-22	16
19	Stowmarket Town	24	0	4	20	25	77	-52	4

LAST UPDATED: TUESDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT 21:40:27

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH FIXTURES



FRIDAY 9TH FEBRUARY

New Salamis v Grays Athletic

SATURDAY 10TH FEBRUARY

Brentwood Town v Stowmarket Town
 Bury Town v Heybridge Swifts
 Felixstowe & Walton Utd v Walthamstow
 Lowestoft Town v Enfield
 Maldon & Tiptree v Redbridge
 Witham Town v Ipswich Wanderers
 Wroxham v Basildon Utd

SUNDAY 11TH FEBRUARY

Bowers & Pitsea v Gorleston



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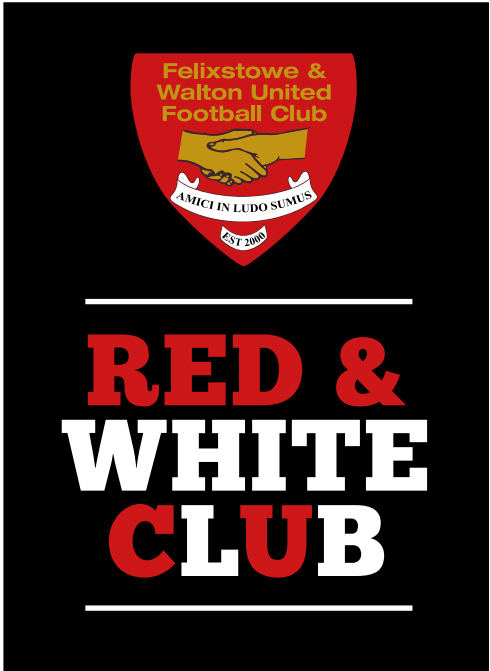


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MATCH PHOTOS

SATURDAY 27TH JANUARY
ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH
**Felixstowe & Walton Utd 1
Basildon United 0**

PHOTOS
BY STEFAN
PECK



Second place Felixstowe and Walton United welcomed sixth place Basildon United. The Seasiders were three unbeaten, and had defeated the Bees the previous four times they'd met, and they were quickly ahead in this one, **Joe Whight** with the opener. That turned out to be the only goal of the game, and it kept the Seasiders on the heels of Lowestoft, whilst United slip to eighth. Felixstowe have now defeated United five times in a row.



HOW WE LINED UP

1. Joshua Blunkell
2. Lamell Howell
3. Stuart Ainsley
4. Billy Holland
5. Jack Ainsley
6. Joe Whight
7. Henry Barley
8. Noel Aitkens
9. Josh Mayhew
10. Josh Hitter
11. Charlie Warren

SUBS

12. Callum Bennett
14. Sam Ford
15. Tom Bullard
16. Zak Brown
17. Callum Harrison









OUR SQUAD

Introducing the Felixstowe & Walton United playing squad and management team of 2023/2024.



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.



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.



DANNY POTTER GOALKEEPER COACH

A former pro footballer/TV star, Danny was cast into the Sky TV programme 'Dream Team' where he played for the fictional team Harchester United. Danny boasts clubs such as Torquay, Colchester and Cambridge as former employers. Recently appointed as Goalkeeper Coach, Danny brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and professionalism to Stuart's management team.



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.



CHARLOTTE LONG SPORTS THERAPIST

Charlotte graduated from the University of Worcester in 2014 with a BSc (Hons) in Sports Therapy. She had previously worked with Leiston FC before joining the Seaside's in 2019. Her main focus is overseeing the recovery programmes of injured players through her private practice.



DOUG FRENCH **KIT MAN**

Doug started his career in 1986 and played for East Anglian Customs, Walton United, Felixstowe United and Tattingsstone, breaking his leg four times in the process. Whilst playing for Ipswich Wanderers vets, Doug finally hung up his boots. Having found his vocation in washing players dirty pants, Doug is excited for a new challenge with the Seaside.



JOSHUA BLUNKELL **GOALKEEPER**

Josh joined the club in January 2024. The former AFC Sudbury keeper signed a professional contract with Wycombe Wanderers after impressing in Sudbury's televised FA Cup in 2021. Previous clubs also include AFC Sudbury, Bowers & Pitsea, Braintree Town and Kettering Town.



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.



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.



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.



JACK AINSLEY **DEFENDER**

Rejoins from Stowmarket. Jack played professionally for ITFC after coming through their academy and went on to make 4 appearances playing under Roy Keane. Jack went on to have spells at Step 3 Lowestoft and Leiston but finds himself back at the Seaside where many describe him as a "Rolls Royce" type of player who can play in any position for the team.



TOM BULLARD **DEFENDER**

Another who joins us from Stowmarket. 'Bully' has experience across Step 3 and 4 with long and successful spells as captain at both Leiston and Bury Town. Tom is a serial winner who's experience, defensive qualities and leadership skills will add to an already impressive back line.



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.



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!



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.



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.



CALLUM HARRISON **MIDFIELDER**

Former Colchester United, Needham, Sudbury and more recently Chelmsford midfielder joined the Seasiders 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.



IVAN COSTA **MIDFIELDER**

Promoted into the first team squad from our Academy after a strong preseason. Ivan is an industrious central midfield player whose work ethic and attitude is second to none.



KUBI KUSSAN **MIDFIELDER**

Another young player promoted to the first team squad from our Academy. Kubi is a technically gifted midfield player who enjoys moving with the ball. He has an edge to his game that has impressed the management throughout preseason.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



JOSH MAYHEW FORWARD

Josh joins us from promotion winners AFC Sudbury. An experienced front man who has been prolific at Step 4 and 5 with an impressive spell at Stowmarket yielding 136 goals in 173 games. Josh's physical presence will bring a focal point to our attack as well as a being natural finisher who is a proven goalscorer at this level.



NEXT UP AT THE AGL ARENA

Saturday 24th February
3pm Kick Off

**Felixstowe &
Walton United v's
Grays Athletic**

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MATCH PHOTOS

SATURDAY 3RD FEBRUARY
ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH

**Redbridge 0
Felixstowe & Walton Utd 1**

Second place Felixstowe and Walton United were in East London, visiting Redbridge. The Seasideers broke the deadlock ten minutes before half time, **Tom Bullard** with the opener, and it turned out that was all that we were going to get - but it was enough for the visitors to close the gap on the leaders to three points, although they have played a game more

PHOTOS
BY THOMAS
BRADFORD



HOW WE LINED UP

1. Joshua Blunkell
2. Lamell Howell
3. Joe Whight
4. Billy Holland
5. Jack Ainsley
6. Tom Bullard
7. Zak Brown
8. Noel Aitkens
9. Josh Mayhew
10. Josh Hitter
11. Charlie Warren

SUBS

12. Callum Bennett
14. Sam Ford
15. Stuart Ainsley
16. Henry Barley
17. Callum Harrison









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THE OTHER SIDE WALTHAMSTOW FC

The history of our great club is not what you'd call straightforward. Having reformed on at least three occasions, we've played under seven different names, but can lay claim to being the second-oldest club in London, and one of the oldest in the country.

The initial Leyton FC was formed in 1868 when The Reverent Morgan Lloyd obtained a pitch behind The Lion & Key public house. The first Leyton played mainly friendlies, but did take part in the FA Cup, before folding in 1880 when they lost their ground.

Seven years later, the members of Matlock Cricket Club, based on Hoe Street established a football club named after the Matlock Villas, which overlooked the club's pitch. In 1894, Swifts moved out of Leyton, to a new ground in Blackhorse Road, Walthamstow. This lasted just a season though, as the club moved back to Leyton and changed their name to Leyton FC in the process.

The club won the Essex Senior Cup on no fewer than five occasions, and the London Senior Cup, as well as the South Essex League four times.

Leyton turned professional in 1904, joining the London League. The following year, Leyton moved to Osborne Road, which would later become Leyton Orient's Brisbane Road.

In April 1912 a loan by a donor was called-in, and without any hope of paying it, the club disbanded for a second time.

Only a year later a third Leyton was formed, but this incarnation was extremely short-lived. The outbreak of war meant there was essentially no one to watch or play for the club, and it was suspended.



The fourth Leyton was established in 1919, and it would be arguably the most successful period for the club, now back at the Hare and Hounds. Leyton won the FA Amateur Cup (now FA Trophy) twice, and were runners-up on four more occasions. They also reached the first round of the FA Cup four times and the second round three times.

After a successful 1950s and 60s, things dried up for Leyton, and by the 1970s they could not carry on, so a merger was completed with Wingate from north London.

The pinnacle of this club was winning the Athenian League in 1982, but by the early 90s with most of the former 'Wingate' committee now either deceased or having had left, the newly-merged Wingate & Finchley requested Leyton drop the 'Wingate' title from their name.

By 1995, the Hare & Hounds was really beginning to show its age, and with Leyton not having the funds to bring it up to standard, a merger was completed with Walthamstow Pennant, with the new club being Leyton Pennant and playing at Wadham Lodge.

This club spent most of its life in Divisions One and Two of the Isthmian League, with no notable success, save for two London Challenge Cup final appearances. Its first season in 1995 saw the club finish 4th in Division One, but it was mostly mid-table obscurity after that.

In 2003 the club changed names to Waltham Forest and were bankrolled heavily with aspirations of playing in the Football League. Sadly, these never came to fruition and an Essex Senior Cup was the only thing to show for it.

Disputes with the then-management at Wadham Lodge in 2008 saw the club exiled for five seasons, playing in Ilford. The first



season back at Wadham Lodge, in 2013 ended in relegation to the Essex Senior League for the first time in the club's history.

In 2018, the club changed names once more to Walthamstow FC. This kick-started the club and saw the highest attendances in many years, and a third-placed finish in the Essex Senior League, the club's highest finish since the 1980s.

After two seasons cut short by the Covid-19 pandemic, Stow finally secured promotion from step five by winning the Essex Senior League title in 2022, the club's first league win for 37 years. Managers Terry Spillane and John Mackie were unable to build on their title-winning campaign and were relieved of their duties a month into the 2022-23 season. Experienced manager Nicky Ironton was brought in, and took the club from 16th at Christmas, to a play-off place in the club's first season back at step four.

Unfortunately, after an inconsistent start to the 2023-24 season, Stow and Ironton amicably parted ways.





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FIXTURES 2023/24

AUGUST

SAT 12	MALDON & TIPTREE <i>Holland, Hitter</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 2-2	ATT 211
SAT 19	WELLINGBOROUGH <i>Ford, Harrison, Holland, Warren</i>	A	3PM	EMIRATES FA CUP	W 4-1	ATT 135
SAT 26	BURY TOWN <i>Ford, Harrison, Hitter</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-0	ATT 401
MON 28	STOWMARKET TOWN <i>OG, Ford</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 2-2	ATT 433

SEPTEMBER

SAT 2	WOODFORD TOWN <i>Holland, Brown, Hitter, Aitkens</i>	A	3PM	FA CUP FIRST QR	W 4-1	ATT 225
SAT 9	BRENTWOOD TOWN <i>Whight (P), Aitkens</i>	H	3PM	ISUZU FA TROPHY	W 2-0	ATT 371
SAT 16	ENFIELD TOWN	A	3PM	FA CUP SECOND QR	L 3-0	
TUE 19	BOWERS & PITSEA <i>Warren, Harrison, Ford</i>	H	7.45PM	ISTHMIAN LEAGUE	W 3-2	ATT 263
SAT 23	HERTFORD TOWN <i>Harrison (2), Holland, J Ainsley, Barley, Mayhew</i>	H	3PM	ISUZU FA TROPHY	W 6-3	ATT 225
WED 27	LAKENHEATH <i>Mayhew, Warren (2), Barley</i>	A	7.45PM	SUFFOLK PREM CUP	W 4-1	
SAT 30	BASILDON UNITED <i>Whight, Bullard, Warren, Brown</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 4-2	ATT 112

OCTOBER

SAT 7	BILLERICAY <i>Mayhew (2), Ford</i>	A	3PM	ISUZU FA TROPHY	L 4-3	ATT 527
TUE 10	BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT <i>Mayhew (3), Ottley-Gooch, Ford</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 5-3	ATT 402
SAT 14	WALTHAMSTOW <i>Mayhew</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	ATT 434
TUE 24	REDBRIDGE <i>Warren (2), Ford, Harrison</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 4-0	ATT 313
SAT 28	GRAYS ATHLETIC <i>Aitkens, Brown, Hitter</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-0	ATT 226

NOVEMBER

SAT 4	ENFIELD <i>Harrison (3), Warren, Ford</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 5-1	ATT 360
WED 8	HADLEIGH UNITED <i>Hitter, Warren</i>	H	7.45PM	SP CUP QF	W2-1	ATT 208
SAT 11	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS <i>Warren, Harrison (2)</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-2	ATT 310
TUE 14	WROXHAM	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	L 2-0	ATT 467
SAT 25	WITHAM TOWN <i>Harrison (2)</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 3-2	ATT 168

DECEMBER

SAT 2	GORLESTON <i>Ford, Hitter, Warren, Harrison</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 4-0	ATT 223
SAT 9	NEW SALAMIS <i>Harrison</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	ATT 78
SAT 16	MALDON & TIPTREE	H	3PM	LEAGUE	L 1-0	ATT 341
SAT 23	IPSWICH WANDERERS <i>Ford, Barley</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 232
SAT 30	BOWERS & PITSEA <i>Holland</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 2-1	ATT 302

JANUARY

MON 1	STOWMARKET TOWN <i>Holland, Whight</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 561
SAT 6	BRENTWOOD TOWN <i>Aitkens, Mayhew</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 2-2	ATT 246
SAT 13	LOWESTOFT TOWN <i>Mayhew, Holland, Harrison</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-0	ATT 431
SAT 27	BASILDON UNITED <i>Whight</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	ATT 340

FEBRUARY

SAT 3	REDBRIDGE <i>Bullard</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	ATT 83
SAT 10	WALTHAMSTOW	H	3PM	LEAGUE		
TUES 13	BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 17	WROXHAM	A	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 24	GRAYS ATHLETIC	H	3PM	LEAGUE		

MARCH

SAT 2	ENFIELD	A	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 9	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS	H	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 16	BRENTWOOD TOWN	H	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 23	LOWESTOFT TOWN	A	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 30	BURY TOWN	A	3PM	LEAGUE		

APRIL

MON 1	IPSWICH WANDERERS	H	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 13	WITHAM TOWN	H	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 20	GORLESTON	A	3PM	LEAGUE		
SAT 27	NEW SALAMIS	H	3PM	LEAGUE		

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CLUB CONTACTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Dave Ashford	07850 618940	dave@dashford.co.uk
Chairman	Tony Barnes		chairman@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Vice Chairman	Andrew Clarke		springcroftcdr@outlook.com
Director of Operations	Chris Daynes	07415886803	clubhouse@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Club Secretary	Mike Titchener	07513 376708	secretary@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Club Secretary	Phil Barber		
Finance Director	Gary Hammond	07803 244721	treasurer@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Director of Football	Kevin O'Donnell		

GENERAL COMMITTEE

Safeguarding/Welfare	Lynne Hakes		lynnehakes@btinternet.com
Fixture Secretary	Les Soall	07825 058857	lgsfxt@aol.com
Junior Vice Chairman	Scott Dunne	07790 820396	sjd_sw@yahoo.co.uk
Press Officer	Stuart Daynes	07717 577497	media@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Health & Safety Officer	Paul Secker		

PRESIDENTS CLUB

President	Dave Ashford	07850 618940	dave@dashford.co.uk
Life Vice Presidents:	Andy Wilding, Tony Barnes, Mick Gosling, Chris Ryan, Jayne Ryan, Phil Griffiths, Jim Seymour		

OTHER CONTACTS

Press Officer	Stuart Daynes	07717 577497	media@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Facilities Manager	Chris Daynes		clubhouse@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Clubhouse Manager	Christine Daynes	07493 555131	clubhouse@felixstowefootball.co.uk
Hospitality	Winnifred McClean	07900 591367	winnifred.mcclean@btinternet.com
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PITCHING IN ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH ROUND UP

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

We had a flurry of early goals in the North Division, and the first of them arrived at **Walthamstow**, Bilal Sayoud shocking leaders **Lowestoft Town** after just two minutes - but the Trawler Boys were quickly level, Harvey Sayer scoring his tenth goal of the season only two minutes later. Adam Hipperson put the visitors ahead on seventeen minutes, but it was a lead they couldn't hold on to, and new signing Kymani Thomas equalised just before the half hour. We had an hour to find a winning goal, but neither side could manage it, and the Trawler Boys find their lead at the top cut to three points. Image from Shirley Whitlow.

Stowmarket Town were still looking for their first win of the season, but our bottom side couldn't have had a better start against promotion chasing **Bowers and Pitsea**, Ewan Gordon-Clement putting them ahead after just three minutes. The visitors hit back just before the break, Benas Vaivada with the equaliser, and the turnaround was complete five minutes after half time, Solomon Addy putting Bowers ahead. Thirteen minutes from time Bowers got a third, Solomon Addy with that one, and they held onto their lead and to third place, five points behind the leaders.

Bury Town, eleven games unbeaten and in fourth place at kick off, looked to continue that run at **Brightlingsea Regent** - and they

couldn't have had a better start, Cemal Ramadan scoring his twenty first goal of the season to put them ahead after seven minutes. Ramadan added another ten minutes after half time, and although Regent quickly got one back through Kojo Apenteng Ramadan went straight back up the other end and completed his hat trick on sixty one minutes, putting Town three-one ahead. The next goal was crucial, and it went to the visitors, Ed Upson putting them four-one up, and that turned out to be that, another fine Town victory.

Gorleston welcomed high flying **Brentwood Town**, and the Greens broke through the Blues rearguard after just twelve minutes, Joe Jefford with the goal. The visitors, seven unbeaten at kick off, hit back five minutes before half time, Mekhi McKenzie continuing his fine form with a ninth goal in thirteen games, but the next goal went the way of the hosts, Ryan Curtis putting Gorleston ahead once more eight minutes after half time. Again Town hit back, Shad Ngandu making it two-two with twenty six minutes left, and they went ahead for the first time with six minutes to go, Jonathan Nzenzo sending the visiting fans wild. That, finally, was that- the Blues holding onto to fifth place.

Heybridge Swifts, trying to get back on an even keel after two defeats, welcomed **New**

Salamis – and fell behind after forty seven minutes, Panny Boxer with the opener. The visitors gave the hosts hope when Tommy Boxer saw red with twenty three minutes to go, and they capitalised, Jack Adlington-Pile equalising almost immediately. Right at the end the eleven men had three points, Kieran Jones scoring from the spot to make it two-one Swifts, who are three points and one place outside the play off places.

Basildon United, under new management, gave their new boss something to smile about when Clyde Semazzi opened the scoring on fourteen minutes against **Witham Town**. His grin must have grown when Samir Ali made it two just before the break, and when Callum Fitzer made it three soon after half time the Bees were well and truly buzzing. It got even worse for Town when Josh Osude saw red, and their bad day got even worse when Samir Ali added a fourth. That's where

the goals stopped, and the Bees are five points shy of the top five.

Maldon & Tiptree wanted to quickly put their defeat against Bury Town in midweek behind them, and they went ahead at **Enfield** just after the break, George Smith seventeenth of the season doing the damage. That turned out to be that, the Jammers eighth, five points away from the top five.

Grays Athletic, looking to build on their midweek victory, welcomed **Wroxham** to Tilbury – but they didn't have the best of starts, the Yachtsmen making the breakthrough after only eight minutes through Josh Harvey. It looked as if the visitors were sailing home with three points, but right at the end new arrival Elliot Sartorius earned Athletic a point.

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KUBANISCH FUSSBALL

BY MARTYN GREEN, THE UNTOLD GAME

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Bonner SC are perennial strugglers. They have spent almost their entire existence in the third and fourth tiers of German football, the kind of history that invokes a fierce loyalty from a small fanbase with little hope of glory. The club, like most in their position, try to make the most of even the merest opportunity to improve, no matter how seemingly absurd or questionable. In the aftermath of the 1998 World Cup, Brazil hosted a friendly game against the communist Caribbean nation of Cuba. Their players, all amateurs playing domestically, put up a fight against the new world champions, succumbing to a creditable 2-0 defeat. Bonner owner **Hans-Robert Viol** thought a few of them could add something to his struggling German side and made enquiries. He ended up with the entire squad.

Football had been popular in Cuba before Castro enacted his communist coup, but in the years following he focused his attention on the

United States. They were strong in baseball and boxing, so Cuban athletic programmes were tailored to beat their large neighbours at their own games. Control of sport was centralised, and professionalism was banned. Any footballer who was good enough to receive a professional offer from abroad was required to reject it, or to defect and give up their chances of playing for the national team. Cuba, as a footballing entity, suffered.

When Viol made his approach, he thought of signing a handful of Cuban players. But the government didn't want to break up the squad, and demanded he take all 15 of them. The conditions were strict, but very welcome to a poor German lower league club. Food and accommodation were to be provided, and a little spending money, but under no circumstances were the players to be paid wages. Perfect for Viol.

The travelling party of 15 players was joined by a translator and a couple of coaches. Fans weren't happy about what they saw as a publicity stunt, but neither the German football authorities or the EU could find anything technically wrong with the move. Viol repaid Cuba by sending football equipment across the Atlantic, and put his new players into a training camp. The best would join the first team, and the rest would play for the reserves. For the Cubans, it was a chance to learn from European coaches at elite European facilities. Which might sound fanciful, in the German

fourth tier, but the entire nation of Cuba had just 11 footballs, so it was a significant step up.

The Cubans played in two friendlies for club, the first a 1-0 win and the second a draw. But the outcry within German football was growing too loud. Before they could make senior debuts, Franz-Josef Antwerpes, president of the district, cancelled their promised visas. But that didn't spell the end of the entire Cuban project. A couple of players were able to earn visas conventionally, and stayed in the country. Two of them played out the season, which ended in relegation, while a third, Vladimir Alejo Cordoves, stayed for three seasons.

For Cuba, there was no immediate benefit. The 2002 World Cup qualifying campaign went worse than the 1998 campaign, despite a squad boasting all three of Bonner's senior players, and a number that had made the journey. But eight years later, it would start to yield results.



When Cuba sacked another manager after another poor campaign, former Bonner coach **Reinhold Fanz** put in a phonecall to some of his Cuban contacts. Cuba would have to repay the kindness Bonner had shown in the same way - accommodation, food, and a little spending money - and Fanz agreed to take



the team into the following campaign. He was bullish about his new side's chances, declaring that while the USA and Mexico would take the first two qualification places, the third was up for grabs.

The draw couldn't have been worse though. In a group with the USA and Trinidad & Tobago, who had qualified for the 2006 World Cup, and Guatemala, who had just missed out. Cuba put up a fight - the very quality that had started the entire German affair - but it wasn't enough. They lost 3-1 at home to Trinidad, but the USA only struggled to a 1-0 win. Fanz claimed his side were the better in both games, but were held back by a lack of professionalism. He left his post in 2008.

With Cuba looking increasingly to the west, in 2013 they heeded Fanz' criticism. Cubans were allowed to sign professional contracts overseas, as long as they paid taxes on those salaries to the Cuban government. It was a major step for the national team.

A decade on, players are starting to make progress. Onel Hernandez of Norwich is perhaps the most successful, but there are Cuban players in Chile, Costa Rica, the USA, Spain, Austria and Switzerland. Maybe as World Cup campaign is finally coming to fruition. All thanks to a little German adventure.

Enjoy the game.



MATCHDAY SQUADS

Isthmian League North
Saturday 10th February 2024, 3pm



Felixstowe & Walton Utd FC

Manager: Stuart Boardley

Assistant Manager: Andy Crump



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- Charlie **Warren**
- Joe **Whight**

Walthamstow FC

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Emmanuel **Dasho**

Kai **Davis**

Luke **Foster**

Callum **Ibe**

Ashlee **Jones**

Brian **Moses**

Aliou **Njie**

Eman **Okunja**

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