

the Seasiders

THE OFFICIAL 2024/2025 MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

Respect



Seasiders v Witham Town



SATURDAY 26TH APRIL 2025, 3PM
ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH



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CHAIRMAN: **TONY BARNES**



A very warm welcome to the Martello Ground for our last regular league fixture of the season. Today we welcome the players, officials and supporters of Witham Town. As well of course today's match officials, I hope you all have an enjoyable afternoon and wish you all a safe journey home this evening.

Well, what a great Easter weekend we had, following the disappointment at Grays the previous week, the lads showed great character and spirit to record two narrow victories against determined opposition in Maldon and Tiptree and then away at local rivals Ipswich Wanderers on a very difficult surface. Both games were physical affairs and neither opponent allowed us to play any flowing football, but I thought we really dug deep and matched them in every department. Maybe a slightly lucky goal for Toby Stevenson to beat Maldon and Tiptree, but it was great improvisation, followed by two classy goals from our "Brothers in Arms" Tom and Charlie to deservedly return home from Ipswich with all three points.

So it is play-offs secured once again for the

Seasiders and congratulations to Brentwood Town on securing the league title in style with a 4-0 victory over lowly Basildon United.

Barring a major upset today, we are pretty secure in third or second place and therefore likely to be at home next Tuesday in the play off semi final with Waltham Abbey likely to be our opponents with Bury or Brightlingsea facing the victors next Saturday - what a massive week ahead for the club, not to mention the small matter of over 2000 descending on the Martello Ground tomorrow for the grand promotion finale of Ipswich Town women.

Certainly, no rest for Chris and all his staff and volunteers behind the scenes, hopefully they can at least catch their breath in 8 days time after our promotion celebrations when it will all have been worth it!

Last Thursday we held our annual sporting Dinner at Venue16 and welcomed Liverpool legend Bruce Grobbelaar as guest of honour and after dinner speaker. We enjoyed a fantastic night with 220 people present and managed to raise a very nice sum for the club. Thank you to all those that attended, particularly to the event sponsors Multifreight Ltd and indeed all the companies that bought tables and all those who kindly supported the auction and the raffle.

I know this is a common theme of mine, but now more than ever we need the full support of our magnificent supporters, make all the noise you can, it is so important and appreciated by the players, cheer them on today and for two more games, then you can all look yourselves in the mirror and say "I helped Felixstowe and Walton United when they had their best season ever and achieved step 3 football for the very first time"

Enjoy the game and look forward to seeing you all again on Tuesday evening.

Tony



STUART BOARDLEY

Good afternoon and welcome to The Martello Ground for today's match against Witham Town.

A warm welcome to Gary and his staff/team who come here today with back to back wins to their name over the Easter period which demonstrates how capable they are of upsetting our applectart...

We approach today's final league game with 3rd position pretty much assured (barring a huge goal difference swing) and that of course will provide us with home advantage in the Playoff Semi Final on Tuesday night. Today's game however is so

important, firstly to try to pip Bury to that 2nd spot and home advantage in the Playoff Final (should we reach it) but also to ensure we go into the playoffs in good form after two important wins against both Maldon and Ipswich Wanderers over the last 7 days. It is at this stage of the season where I look back at previous notes and feel that I am regurgitating the same old stuff so I have decided to give you a quick insight into our thoughts on some of the players and with AC and I providing a few words summary of each player with this being the first few words that came into our heads!

Billy Holland - Family man
Callum Harrison - Technically unbelievable
Charlie Warren - Starboy – dedication personified
Harry Wright - Infectious personality but absolutely mental
Hugh Cullum - Sensible
Jack Ainsley - Rolls Royce
Joe Whight - Pretty boy
Josh Hitter - Loves a night out
Josh Mayhew - Hilarious one liners and always on a windup
Leon Ottley-Gooch - Father figure
Ollie Caley-Brown - Football intelligence unrivalled
Rob Harvey - Fitness freak
Sam Ford - Glass of Rosé
Stuart Ainsley - Adores officials more than the gaffer
Tom Warren - Sparky – 100% committed
Willie Clemons - Laid back beyond horizontal
Hugo Akhuseyin - Polite
Cameron Forde-Brown - Focused on his goals
Toby Stevenson - Loves a tackle
Jordy Matthews - Best trainer by miles

We have also picked out a few of our personal highlights over the years which I'm sure you'll all remember!

- 1:** Suffolk Premier Cup Final 2025
- 2:** Last minute winner vs Grays (Ollie Canfer) to almost secure league status in season 1 before COVID hit
- 3:** FA Trophy vs Hastings (A) Charlie Warren debut and 3-1 victory
- 4:** Peterborough Sports (H) FA trophy 2-1 victory
- 5:** FA Trophy vs Bishops Stortford (A) 6-1 victory
- 6:** 2025 Redbridge (A): Tom Warren last minute winner 1-0

At the time of writing, we are not guaranteed another home game so this could well be my last programme notes as Manager here. I will save the goodbye speech for the presentation evening but would just like to put on record my sincere thanks to all of you who have supported the journey over the last 5 and a half years. We took over from a real

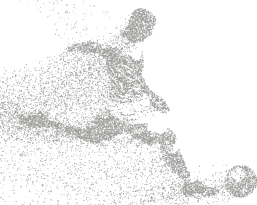
club legend in Ian Watson and we felt the weight of this during that first season when we took over a side who were bottom of the league and in our opinion are unrecognisable from the squad we have here today. It took time to win some of you over, understandably, but we are immensely proud that we leave the club in a position of strength. We have fantastic crowds, we have and are regularly challenging for Step 3 football, we have a thriving Academy, a connection with the Youth Section that has never been better, a strong and improving EJA setup as well as a squad of players that are not only fantastic footballers but are just good people whom I am proud to call friends. We have left you with the title of Suffolk Premier Cup Winners and there is just one more job to do and that is ensure this club gets to Step 3.

Get behind the lads as you have always done and we can get there...

Enjoy today's game.
Boards



SEASIDER PHIL GRIFFITHS



Not many people know this...



Since the clubs merged at the turn of the new century, people breaking records has been an evolutionary thing as we started from zero as Felixstowe & Walton United, so it took a few years to start to have any real records.

To me the first record of note was set by a guy called Ben Cranfield, who spent 6 seasons with us between 2009 & 2015, making 174 appearances and scoring 109 goals to set a bench-mark for goals and appearances. That record looks safe for another season, although Ben's record of 29 goals in the 2012/13 season was just smashed by Charlie Warren who sits on 33 Goals going into today's game. But when linked with brother Tom who from the position of full back has scored 17 goals going into today's game it sets a brotherly record of at least 50 goals in a season which I think may stand for a while yet.

The record for appearances at senior level was an interesting one in the early years with several contenders in the running, There were a few who got into the high 200's Callum Bennett (274),

Rhys Barber (278), Danny Crump (280), Miles Powell (292 + 92 goals), and a couple who clicked over the 300 mark, Stuart Ainsley on (339) but still actively involved with the first team squad and Jordy Matthews (353) but retired at the end of last season. So the honour at the start of this season fell to Dan Davis on 362 appearances between 2010 & 2020.

At the end of this season there will be a new name at the top of the list, Stuart Ainsley has demonstrated his longevity and what being a clubman is all about, both on and off the field and is one of the contenders.

Jordy Mathews realised that you are a long time retired and came back to give it one last go. There will definitely be a new name at the top of the list and it will be either Stuart or Jordy, both have passed the 370 appearances mark and their total together is 748, but which one will be the all time appearance maker!

Stay tuned!

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GARY HILLS

Gary reflects on a standout season for the Seasiders—celebrating cup glory, a playoff push, and the growing sense of community at the heart of the club. From the energy of young fans to the goal-scoring heroics of the Warren brothers, it's a heartfelt tribute to a team that's truly become home.

And so, the end is near...

As another season draws to a close the Seasiders are once again in a position to contest the play offs. A promotion to add to a first ever Suffolk Premier Cup secured earlier in April would be a remarkable achievement and a fitting finale to our management team's tenure. Oh, and thank you Boards and Crumpy, what a night that cup final was; all helped by the atmosphere generated by the hoards of Seasiders' supporters squeezed in Needham Market's tidy and compact stadium. Crucially, it was the youngsters from some of the youth sides that

provided plenty of vocal noise, flag waving and drum banging. Hats off to whoever decided it was time to unleash the untapped potential of the numerous junior sides several weeks prior to the final. Their positive energy has really helped to lift the team and encourage many more Seasiders' fans to be more vocal in their support.

For me and Sharon it has been a rather fortuitous coincidence that our move to Felixstowe almost two years ago now has coincided with two play offs and two cup finals. What more could we want? A great set of lads that play attractive, attacking football with goals aplenty. Not that any of this was the original reason for us purchasing season

tickets even BEFORE we'd actually exchanged contracts for our bungalow, a stone's throw from the Martello. The first match attended was a Christmas fixture versus Coggeshall whilst we were still looking for a property in the area. Everyone we encountered that day at the ground was friendly and full of bonhomie; perhaps it was all the extra alcohol that was flowing during the holiday period!? Anyway we had a great conversation with Stuart (Daynes) and he pretty much sold the club to us; so this was definitely where we would be coming for our football fix. A circle of friends and acquaintances has continued to grow since then. Despite nearly half a century following my home town club, Dartford, all over England, Wales and France, through good and plenty of bad, I decided from day one of our move that I'd only venture to see the Darts when the Seasiders were not playing. In fact Mrs H's declaration that she wanted to start watching football with me again was probably the deciding factor as she loved what the club had to offer. Anyway, what's the point in moving to this fantastic town if we're not going to at least embrace some of the many facilities, sporting

or otherwise, on offer? However, little did I anticipate ever 'happily' rubbing shoulders at matches with a couple of former Chelmsford City supporters that have also made Felixstowe their new home town. Supporting this football club is definitely one of the best decisions we have made.

Finally, can I say what a season for the Warren boys; first and second on the club's top scorers' list with 50 goals (unevenly) shared between them and a multitude of assists, too. We couldn't believe our luck back in July when Les (Soall) informed us Charlie hadn't been sponsored so we happily parted with our cash. A first game of the season hat trick provided an early indication of what was to come. And boy has he delivered; 33 goals, 20 plus assists. And Thomas with 17 goals from fullback (including a hat trick. Anything you can do, brother!). Incredible stats. If the club ever decides to change its name again can I respectfully suggest Felixstowe and Warren United?

Up the Seasiders!

Gary



IPSWICH WANDERERS

Madley

FELIXSTOWE & WALTON UNITED

T Warren, C Warren

1

2

Monday 21st April
2025, 3pm

Isthmian League North

Attendance: 309

Photos:
Stefan Peck









An interview with

JACK AINSLEY

As the Seaside prepare for a massive play-off semi-final next week, we caught up with experienced defender –and lately, midfielder –Jack Ainsley.

Jack, you came into the season a little later than planned due to injury - how tough was that period for you, and how satisfying has it been to be ever-present since returning to the squad?

It was a tough one to take once I found out what I had done and how long the recovery time would be, but I knew if I stuck to the plan I would be back, and thankfully I'm feeling great and had no problems since returning.

Looking back over the season as a whole, how do you reflect on the team's journey - did you always feel this group had play-off potential, even during the tougher patches?

Without a doubt, with the players we have a play-off position is a minimum, we started the season very well and had a little blip which every team has, but thankfully we have got back to winning ways over the easter period along with the cup final win helping confidence for the remaining games.

Lately you've been stepping into midfield in place of Billy Holland - how have you found that positional switch, and does it bring out a different side of your game?

I have really enjoyed moving into midfield although there is a lot more running! You don't get as much





time as you do when you're playing at the back so things happen a lot quicker but I'd like to think I've helped the team in Billy's absence.

All eyes are on Saturday's results to see whether it'll be Waltham Abbey or Brightlingsea Regent in the play-off semi-final. How are you feeling ahead of that and how do you approach the uncertainty of not knowing your opponent until the last minute?

As a team we are feeling confident, but we won't be thinking of the play offs until 5pm Saturday evening as we have a tough game against Witham, we need to pick up three points. Once the game is finished then we can look ahead to see who we will be playing but our focus is fully on Witham.

You've been involved in play-offs before with both Lowestoft and Stowmarket - how do those experiences help you prepare mentally and physically for what's coming?

I've had a win and a loss in the play-offs so I know how emotionally it feels, personally I will prepare as I normally do nothing will change but the play-offs are tough games as you're playing against the best teams in the league and who deserve to be there.



I will try to help the others in the group with my previous experience to hopefully get us over the line.

You missed last year's play-off game through injury - how tough was it watching from the sidelines, and does that give you even more drive to make an impact this time around?

Being injured at anytime and watching is tough but when it's a play-off game it was even harder, but luckily I was still involved and helping Crumpy manage the team in Boards is absence, I'm determined even more so this season to put that right.

With the semi-final set to be at home, how big of an advantage do you think that will be, and what do you make of the support from the Felixstowe Ultras this season?

It's huge advantage especially on a Tuesday evening under the lights at home in front of our fans who have been terrific this season and I hope they will come out in force for the remaining games. The ultras have been fantastic their noise and support have helped us especially in the final, so please come along for the final push, bring a friend, be loud be proud and help us get to where we want to be!!!



On a more personal note, your son Oscar is in the Ipswich Town Academy - how proud are you of him, and do you hope he follows in your footsteps in football? Or maybe even surpasses you?

Me and his mum are very proud of him already, as many people will probably see he's football mad, he is going to have a lot of highs and lows in his journey hopefully I can help him along the way.

Be honest, does Oscar already think he's better than you? And more importantly... is he right?

Yes, I think he is he can definitely strike the ball better than me!

A bit of a dilemma this weekend - your former club Ipswich are playing against your beloved Newcastle. How do you feel about that matchup, and does your connection to ITFC make it hard to pick a side emotionally?

If Newcastle didn't need to win to help with their Champions League position then I would have been happy with a draw but I think Newcastle need the points more than Ipswich!

You were part of the team that lifted the Suffolk Premier Cup recently - how special was that night for you, and what did it mean to bring silverware back to Felixstowe?

To lift the trophy and bring it back to my home town club was great especially for the fans who haven't seen silverware for a very long time and thank them for their support this season.

Were you down to take the fifth penalty if it had come to that?

Yes, I was and going off my last penalty I'm glad it didn't get to me!

With Jack in the mix, Felixstowe will head into the play-offs with experience, passion, and a point to prove. One thing's certain, he won't be watching from the sidelines this time.



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BY MATT BADCOCK

STOCK the fridges with bubbly, cue up the Queen CD and get ready to chomp through those fingernails.

The final day for clubs at Step 2-4 is suddenly here. Those dropped points back on August may seem a long time ago, but will they make all the difference this weekend?

While there are plenty of clubs throughout the National League System already in party mode and, in the National League, Barnet are just one point away from a return to the EFL, things aren't quite so clear cut everywhere.

Especially at Step 2. In the National League North, Kidderminster Harriers, Brackley Town and Scunthorpe United will all wake up in the morning hoping they are crowned champions come 5pm.

Kiddy, who beat Hereford 5-1 on Easter Monday, will start the day in top spot on goal difference. They travel to Southport knowing a win will seal their place back in Non-League's top flight – barring a 22-goal swing from Brackley! The Saints host already relegated Farsley Celtic so will be hoping to bank the three points and that Harriers slip.

Scunthorpe United are two points back. Their goal difference is vastly superior to Brackley's but five behind Kiddy. Ideally they need Kiddy to lose at Southport or, should Phil Brown's side draw, and they need to smash Hereford, who are trying to secure their own play-off place too. That, along with Brackley making an unlikely mess of things at Farsley with a draw or defeat, will put Scunny on top.

That's all relatively straightforward compared to the National League South where SIX teams are in with a shout!

Truro City begin the day top on goal difference, narrowly ahead of Torquay United.

Eastbourne Borough and Worthing sit a point back from those two, with Boreham Wood and

Dorking another two points behind and only able to finish first on goal difference. Crucially, however, both have a better goal difference than both Truro and Torquay. Talk about exciting.

You'd argue all six have games they would be expected to win. Football tends to show us it's unlikely they all will.

Truro host a St Albans City side who are in the final relegation spot and need to better Salisbury's result. Torquay are at Hemel, Eastbourne host Weston-super-Mare – who are now out of the play-off running – while Worthing travel to Enfield Town, who can almost taste survival but still aren't quite there and could end up dropping if both Salisbury and St Albans pick up victories.

Dorking host Chesham and Boreham Wood are at Tonbridge Angels. The play-offs will be quite something regardless who is in them.

The drama continues further down too with a three-way fight between Billericay Town, Horsham and Dartford in the Isthmian Premier.

The trio are split by goal difference – it's just one between Billericay and Horsham – and all are at home to teams with nothing to play for.

Bedford Town are a point away from glory in the Southern Premier Central as they sit three points ahead of Kettering Town. However, the Poppies' goal difference means things would change if they lose at home to Stourbridge and Kettering beat Banbury at home.

It's a similar story in NPL Division One West where Widnes start the day three points ahead of Hednesford Town but if they lose and the Pitmen win, they could be pipped on goal difference.

And Yate Town are three points in front of Evesham United in Southern League Division One Central with a plus two goal difference as it stands.

Where the bubbly will be sprayed at full-time remains to be seen. For those who miss out it will have to go back in the fridge. There's always the play-offs...

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ISTHMIAN NORTH

DIVISION TABLE 2024/25

POS		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
C	Brentwood Town	41	28	5	8	97	44	+53	89
2	Bury Town	41	25	9	7	74	44	+30	84
3	Felixstowe & Walton United	41	25	7	9	89	46	+43	82
4	Waltham Abbey	41	23	10	8	79	42	+37	79
5	Brightlingsea Regent	41	22	9	10	68	49	+19	75
6	Tilbury	41	21	7	13	60	52	+8	70
7	Witham Town	41	21	6	14	70	58	+12	69
8	Gorleston	41	19	10	12	64	46	+18	67
9	Grays Athletic	41	19	8	14	59	49	+10	65
10	Walthamstow	41	19	7	15	72	56	+16	64
11	Redbridge	41	16	9	16	75	67	+8	57
12	Cambridge City	41	16	9	16	63	62	+1	57
13	Heybridge Swifts	41	13	12	16	59	70	-11	51
14	Maldon & Tiptree	41	13	11	17	48	50	-2	50
15	Concord Rangers	41	13	8	20	57	71	-14	47
16	Mildenhall Town	41	12	10	19	39	52	-13	46
17	Wroxham	41	10	13	18	49	64	-15	43
18	Newmarket Town	41	11	9	21	54	83	-29	42
19	Haringey Borough	41	9	14	18	57	72	-15	41
R	Basildon United	41	7	6	28	39	86	-47	27
R	Ipswich Wanderers	41	6	8	27	33	79	-46	26
R	Sporting Bengal United	41	6	7	28	36	99	-63	25

LAST UPDATED: MONDAY 21ST APRIL 2025 AT 17:05:44



ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH FIXTURES

Saturday 26th April, 3pm

Basildon United v Cambridge City
Brightlingsea Regent v Haringey Borough
Concord Rangers v Newmarket Town
Felixstowe & Walton United v Witham Town
Heybridge Swifts v Ipswich Wanderers
Mildenhall Town v Waltham Abbey
Redbridge v Gorleston
Sporting Bengal United v Grays Athletic
Tilbury v Maldon & Tiptree
Walthamstow v Brentwood Town
Wroxham v Bury Town



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FIXTURES 2024/25

AUGUST

SAT 10	NEWMARKET TOWN <i>C Warren (2), Ford, Forde-Brown, Clemons</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 6-1	ATT 401
SAT 17	BURY TOWN <i>Brown, C Warren</i>	A	3PM	FA CUP	D 2-2	ATT 465
TUE 20	BURY TOWN <i>Harrison (2), Ford, C Warren</i>	H	7.45PM	FA CUP REPLAY	W 4-0	ATT 446
SAT 24	WITHAM TOWN <i>Holland, Harrison</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 3-2	ATT 192
MON 26	BURY TOWN <i>Clemons, Hitter, Ford</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-1	ATT 624
SAT 31	LEVERSTOCK GREEN <i>C Warren (3), Ford, Whight</i>	H	3PM	FA CUP 1ST QR	W 5-1	ATT 218

SEPTEMBER

SAT 7	BASILDON UNITED <i>Caley-Brown, C Warren (2), T Warren</i>	H	3PM	FA TROPHY 1ST QR	W 4-2	ATT 337
TUE 10	WROXHAM <i>C Warren, Whight</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 210
SAT 14	CANVEY ISLAND	A	3PM	FA CUP 2ND QR	L 2-0	ATT 393
MON 16	MALDON & TIPTREE <i>C Warren (2), OG, Aitkens</i>	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 4-1	ATT 166
SAT 21	ENFIELD <i>OG, Harrison</i>	H	3PM	FA TROPHY 2ND QR	W 2-1	ATT 319
SAT 28	BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 1-0	ATT 255

OCTOBER

WED 2	MILDENHALL TOWN <i>Mayhew, Forde-Brown, C Warren, Ford</i>	H	7.45PM	SUFFOLK PREMIER CUP	W 4-0	ATT 151
SAT 5	HARINGEY BOROUGH <i>Mayhew (2), Forde-Brown (2)</i>	H	3PM	FA TROPHY 3RD QR	W 4-0	ATT 315
TUE 8	BASILDON UNITED <i>C Warren, T Warren</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 283
SAT 12	TILBURY <i>Mayhew</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 2-1	ATT 295
SAT 19	WALTHAMSTOW <i>Mayhew, Hitter</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 269
TUE 22	CAMBRIDGE CITY <i>Ford, C Warren</i>	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 2-0	ATT 133
SAT 26	BISHOP'S STORTFORD <i>Forde-Brown, OG, Mayhew (2), T Warren, C Warren</i>	A	3PM	FA TROPHY 1ST RP	W 6-1	ATT 339
SAT 29	BRANTHAM ATHLETIC <i>Forde-Brown (3), Ford, T Warren</i>	A	7.45PM	SUFF PREM CUP QF	W 5-1	

NOVEMBER

SAT 2	BRENTWOOD TOWN <i>T Warren, C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 347
SAT 9	CAMBRIDGE CITY <i>OG, C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-0	ATT 500
TUE 12	REDBRIDGE <i>Harvey, C Warren, Ford (2)</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 4-0	ATT 279
SAT 16	BOREHAM WOOD <i>Hitter</i>	A	3PM	ISUZU FA TROPHY	D 1-1 (LOST ON PENS)	
TUE 19	WROXHAM <i>Mayhew, T Warren</i>	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	D 2-2	ATT 221
SAT 23	BRIGHTLINGSEA REGENT <i>Hitter (2), Forde-Brown</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	D 3-3	ATT 357

TUE 26	CONCORD RANGERS <i>C Warren, J Ainsley, Harrison</i>	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 3-0	ATT 120
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SAT 30	MILDENHALL TOWN <i>Harvey (2), Clemons</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-0	ATT 343
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DECEMBER

TUE 3	BASILDON UNITED <i>C Warren</i>	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	ATT 90
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SAT 7	HARINGEY BOROUGH <i>Hitter</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	ATT 220
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SAT 14	WALTHAM ABBEY <i>Clemons, C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-0	ATT 351
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SAT 21	GORLESTON <i>Clemons, C Warren</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 139
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THU 26	IPSWICH WANDERERS <i>T Warren</i>	H	1PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	ATT 558
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SAT 28	NEWMARKET TOWN <i>C Warren, Forde-Brown, T Warren, Harrison</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 4-0	ATT 295
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JANUARY

TUE 7	BURY TOWN	A	7.45PM	LEAGUE	L 2-0	ATT 803
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SAT 11	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS <i>Boswell (2)</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-0	ATT 352
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SAT 18	SPORTING BENGAL UNITED <i>Holland, J Ainsley, C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 3-2	ATT 347
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TUE 21	GRAYS ATHLETIC <i>T Warren</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	L 3-1	ATT 312
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SAT 25	HARINGEY BOROUGH	H	3PM	LEAGUE	D 0-0	ATT 413
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FEBRUARY

SAT 1	MILDENHALL TOWN <i>J Ainsley</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	ATT 240
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SAT 8	REDBRIDGE <i>T Warren</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	ATT 121
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SAT 15	TILBURY <i>Holland, C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 472
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SAT 22	WALTHAMSTOW <i>Ford (2), Harvey</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 5-3	ATT 336
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MARCH

SAT 1	CONCORD RANGERS <i>J Ainsley, Harrison, Hitter, T Warren, C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	W 5-2	ATT 510
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WED 5	NEEDHAM MARKET <i>Hitter, T Warren</i>	A	7.45PM	SUFFOLK PREM CUP SF	D 2-2 (WON ON PENS)	ATT 422
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SAT 8	BRENTWOOD TOWN <i>Clemons, Ford</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 3-2	ATT 746
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SAT 15	WALTHAM ABBEY <i>C Warren</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	ATT 286
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SAT 22	GORLESTON <i>C Warren</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	D 1-1	ATT 815
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SAT 29	SPORTING BENGAL <i>Stephenson, T Warren (3), C Warren, Ford, Harrison, Forde-Brown</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 8-0	ATT 63
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APRIL

SAT 5	HEYBRIDGE SWIFTS <i>T Warren, Forde-Brown</i>	H	3PM	LEAGUE	L 3-2	ATT 374
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WED 9	LEISTON <i>C Warren, Forde-Brown</i>	A	7.45PM	SUFFOLK PREMIER CUP FINAL	D 2-2 WON 4-3 ON PENS	ATT 813
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SAT 12	GRAYS ATHLETIC	A	3PM	LEAGUE	L 1-0	ATT 269
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FRI 18	MALDON & TIPTREE <i>Stevenson</i>	H	7.45PM	LEAGUE	W 1-0	ATT 706
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MON 21	IPSWICH WANDERERS <i>T Warren, C Warren</i>	A	3PM	LEAGUE	W 2-1	ATT 309
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SAT 26	WITHAM TOWN	H	3PM	LEAGUE		
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OUR SQUAD

Introducing the
Felixstowe & Walton
United playing squad
and management
team of 2024/2025



STUART BOARDLEY
MANAGER

Pat Haseman for Felixstowe Radio



ANDY CRUMP
ASSISTANT MANAGER

Chris & Jayne Ryan



STUART STEVENSEN
COACH

Shirley Ainsley



ALEX EGELTON
GOALKEEPER COACH

Lorro & Jed, Neil & George



DOUG FRENCH
KIT MAN

Lorro & Jed, Neil & George



JOHN ABBOTT
PHYSIO



HARRY WRIGHT
GOALKEEPER

Andy & Kim Wilding



STUART AINSLEY
DEFENDER

Chris & Jayne Ryan



JOE WHIGHT
DEFENDER

Tony & Lynne Barnes



OLLIE CALEY-BROWN
DEFENDER

Les Soall



JACK AINSLEY
DEFENDER

KD Construction



LEON OTTLEY-GOOCH
DEFENDER

Garraitt & Pearson Plumbing & Heating



HUGH CULLUM
DEFENDER

Chris Walne



HUGO AKHUSEYIN
DEFENDER

Matthew Daynes



THOMAS WARREN
MIDFIELDER

Suffolk Carpet Weavers/SCW Racing



CALLUM HARRISON
MIDFIELDER

Richard & Jenny Bugg



BILLY HOLLAND
MIDFIELDER

Winnifred Wedderburn-Soall



CAMERON FORDE-BROWN
MIDFIELDER

Joe Ward



JOSH HITTER
MIDFIELDER

Daniel & Cheryl Ward



JORDY MATTHEWS
MIDFIELDER

Barry Caley



CHARLIE WARREN
MIDFIELDER

Sharon & Gary Hills



JOSH MAYHEW
FORWARD

Howdens Martlesham/Richard & Jenny Bugg



ROB HARVEY
FORWARD

Capstick Dale & Partners Solicitors Ltd



SAM FORD
FORWARD

Ryecroft Freight Ltd



WILLIE CLEMONS
FORWARD

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DEFENDER



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Stan Baston



SEASIDERS PEN PICS

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.

STUART STEVENSEN – 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 Seasiders 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 ROBINSON – 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 Seasiders in 2019. Her main



focus is overseeing the recovery programmes of injured players through her private practice.

ALEX EGELTON – GOALKEEPER COACH / COACH

Alex returns to Felixstowe having spent many years coaching within the youth and reserve setups at the club. Alex heads up the Goalkeeping section of the club and works with the Youth section right through to the Seniors and is an important member of the First Team Management structure.

DOUG FRENCH – KIT MAN

Doug started his career in 1986 and played for East Anglian Customs, Walton United, Felixstowe United and Tattingstone, 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 Seasiders.





DEFENDERS

HARRY WRIGHT (GK)

Harry started his career as a professional at Ipswich Town and left there in 2021 where he then went on to play for Fleetwood Town and Bury before joining the Seaside in the summer of 2024. He has quickly become a firm fans favourite and works within the clubs Academy system.

ZAC TUVEY (GK)

Zac has impressed consistently with our U18's and despite his tender age of 16 is playing regularly both for our U18's and Haverhill Borough first team. Zac is Harry's understudy, is a fantastic shot stopper and has a bright future in the game.

STUART AINSLEY

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

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.

JACK AINSLEY

Rejoined 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.

OLLIE CALEY-BROWN

Ollie was signed in the summer of 2024 from neighbours AFC Sudbury and has played in recent years for Stowmarket and Leiston. An energetic and attacking full back who loves to get forward and create chances and with a wealth of higher level experience to boot.

HUGH CULLUM

Hugh is a local lad who left Felixstowe's youth system and progressed through the Needham Market Academy. Hugh signed back with his local club in the summer of 2024 and has immediately impressed with his consistent and confident defending.





HUGO AKHUSEYIN

Hugo is an academy graduate that is now starting to flourish with his progression into the first team squad. A tough tackling and tenacious defender who likes to get forward.

THOMAS WARREN

Another new signing for the summer of 2024 and joins his brother Charlie at the club. Signed from Hadleigh United, Tom is an Athletic, strong and pacy full back or winger with a fantastic left foot and keen eye for a goal.

MIDFIELDERS

CAMERON FORDE-BROWN

Cameron joins us on loan from Kings Lynn having impressed the management at previous loan spells with other clubs. A technically gifted and versatile midfielder, Cam has really hit the

ground running this season and continues to impress with both goals and assists that have topped off some exciting displays.

BILLY HOLLAND

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 for the 22/23 season led to him being appointed captain the following year.

LEON OTTLEY-GOOCH

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

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.

JORDY MATTHEWS

"Jordy" rejoins the club following a brief spell in retirement. He made his first team debut at 18 and has been a loyal and trusted midfielder for the club for many years clocking up well over 300 appearances. The term 'club legend' is often used to describe Jordy and he remains a firm fans favourite for his tenacious and all action style.





CALLUM HARRISON

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

CHARLIE WARREN

Having initially joined on loan from Needham Market, Charlie made an instant impact on his debut in the FA Trophy win at Hastings in 2021. Following a number of impressive performances, manager Boardley moved quickly to secure the permanent services of one of Suffolk's brightest young players.

FORWARDS

SAM FORD

Having spent a successful period with Arbroath 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 in 2022. 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

Josh joined 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 brings a focal point to our attack as well as a being natural finisher who is a proven goalscorer at this level.

WILLIE CLEMONS

After a successful preseason with the Seaside Willie decided that Felixstowe were the club for him despite competition from other clubs. A full Bermudan international with 30 plus caps, Willie's experience, whilst still only 30 years old will be a real asset. An attacking player with bags of quality and creativity is proving to be an exciting signing.

ROB HARVEY

Signed from Brentwood Town, Rob is a player who has been on Stuart Boardley's radar for some time. Another of our first team group to work within our Academy setup, Rob is a pacy, fit and dynamic wide player who loves to be direct and excite fans.



FELIXSTOWE & WALTON UNITED

Stevenson

MALDON AND TIPTREE

1
0

Friday 18th April 2025
7.45pm

Isthmian League North

Attendance: 704

Photos:
Stefan Peck











THE OTHER SIDE WITHAM TOWN FC



Origins & Early History

Witham has a history of football teams going back to the 1830's when the first recorded match involving a side representing the town was played at Lanham Green near Cressing. This was before the 'modern' game was codified in England in 1863 following the formation of The Football Association, whose 'Laws of the Game' created the foundations for the way football is played today. The first formation of a Witham side, post-FA creation, was in 1876 when Mr. H. Green, Mr. W. Rust, Mr. F. Bridge and Mr. E. Turner sought permission from a farmer to play football in a field next to the River Brain in the town, close to Saul's Bridge. This site was Witham FC's home for a few seasons with play later being transferred to The Park, a pitch nearby, which was shared with the town's Cricket Club.

The 1885-86 season saw the first Witham player appear for the County side with that honour going to R. H. Stevens. After some years the cricket side objected to the damage being done to the surface of the pitch, so another move was made, in 1894, to 'The Grove'. The Grove itself was a large private house that was built in the late 1600's, which was eventually demolished in 1932. The pitch, noted as one of the best in the county, was located to the rear of the property not far from the old Witham to Maldon Railway line, which roughly corresponds with today's Mayland Road and Abercorn Way. Mr. P. E. Laurence, a local sports enthusiast and President of the club at that time, owned this field. The entrance to the ground was via Chess Lane, which is now a short cut to an industrial estate.

The occupants of the cottages there on 'Finals' days reaped a bonanza from the two pennies charged for bicycles left in their care. Witham's first recorded appearance in a final, that of the very first Essex Junior Cup, came in 1893-94 when they lost 4-1 to Matlock Swifts (later to become Leyton FC). During this time the team enjoyed the reputation of being one of the strongest junior sides in the country and built up a large following. They were known in those days as the 'Red Herrings' because of their all red kit. Two days after the Great War broke out in 1914 (28th July)

the entire team under the guidance of Reginald Brown went to Warley Barracks near Brentwood to enlist in the 5th Battalion of the Essex Regiment.

Between The Wars

Witham FC re-formed in July 1919 after a meeting held at the Spread Eagle Hotel in the town centre. Again, the side played in red shirts, and, in one season, Witham won 24 matches and only lost once.

Postman Mr. Fred Perry used to pay Albert 'Summer' Bickmore one shilling for each goal he scored. Bickmore recalled with pleasure the day he scored five. The re-formed club, which changed its name to Witham Town FC in 1921, won the Braintree & District League Championship in 1920-21, appeared in the Divisional Final of the Essex Junior Cup, won the Braintree & District league again in 1924-25 and secured the Essex Division 2 Shield in 1925-26. During these years the popularity of football seemed to have grown in the town with a Crittall's Athletic team also forming.

Crittall's Windows Works, which opened in 1919, was one of the largest employers in the town and the site of the old factory is now occupied by Morrison's supermarket. For a small town like Witham this was perhaps too much for both these clubs to thrive, and, with waning support largely due to the increasing prominence of the Crittall's team, after less than a decade the re-formed Witham Town disbanded. However, local opinion must have been in favour of a true 'town' team, as after a meeting with the Spread Eagle again forming the backdrop, Witham Town FC re-formed again in July 1933. At this meeting, held by Mr.C.Ingram (who was elected club Chairman), Mr .S. Slinger and Mr .S .Howell (who was chosen to be Hon. Secretary) the decision was made to join two competitions, The North Essex League and the Kelvedon & District Junior League with club colours being red shirts and white shorts.

In 1934-35 Witham reached the final of the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup, losing to Tiptree United 4-2, and the following season they became Division 3 Champions of the North Essex League. That same year the club gained the use of the football pitch at Rickstones Road Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, as the clouds of war slowly gathered, and with falling support once more, in 1938 Witham Town folded.

A New Beginning

In 1948 the Witham Town FC of today re-formed thanks to the efforts of a small band of stalwarts who met in an old British Legion hut under the Chairmanship of Mr. Sid Rice who was the driving force behind the

club re-forming. Although the pitch was only a cow pasture with a barn as changing rooms, these basic conditions did not seem to affect the team though as in their first season back playing they became champions of the Chelmsford and Mid Essex League Division 2, winners of the Tiptree Charity Cup and the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup courtesy of a 1-0 win over Feering. During the following season the club moved to the Crittall Windows works ground at The Park in the centre of the town and they also became founder members of the Mid-Essex League Premier Division.

Their first game at The Park was a friendly v Ipswich Town which the Suffolk side won 7-0. That year the Premier Division Cup was won.

After two more seasons in the CMEL, a dispute with the League over a cup match played in blizzard like conditions, saw Witham Town switch to the South Essex League where they spent seven seasons winning the Championship in 1955-56. A supporters club was then formed and in 1958 the decision was made to join the Essex and Suffolk Border League and thus step up to an intermediate level of football.

Gaining Senior Status

During the 1964-65 season Witham won the Essex & Suffolk Border League Championship and they decided to seek new playing facilities suitable for senior football. The following season, 65-66, they won the E&SB League Cup after beating Whitton United 3-0 and were runners up in the E&SBL in 66-67. 1967-68 saw Witham just miss out on their second League Cup honour when they lost 3-2 to close rivals Tiptree United in the final. In 1970, the club was finally offered its present ground at Spa Road, although the move did not happen until after the end of the 1974-75 season due to the allocated plot being under cultivation. The last game at The Park ground was a 1-0 win against Basildon United on the 19th April 1975. In the meantime, Witham Town again won the Essex & Suffolk Border League (in 1970-71), and were invited to become founder members of the Essex Senior League and were the inaugural Champions in 1971-72, pipping Billericay Town to the title by just one point.

Witham went on to spend more than 15 seasons in this league, usually finishing in the top half of the table. In 1981 Witham won the Essex Senior League Cup by defeating Sawbridgeworth Town 4-2 at Chelmsford City's New Writtle Street ground. The mid 1980's provided several top 3 finishes including runners-up in 1984-85 and 1986-87, with the Championship being won for the second time in 1985-86. March 1985 saw the Spa Road grounds'

new floodlights 'officially' switched on in a friendly versus Colchester United. 1986 saw more success as Witham won the Essex Senior Trophy, defeating local rivals Heybridge Swifts 3-2, after extra time. During the following 1986-87 season Town enjoyed their best run in the FA Vase when they reached the last 16 (the 5th round), before losing 2-1 at home to Falmouth, and they also secured the Harry Fisher Memorial Trophy (the predecessor to the Gordon Brasted) after beating Sawbridgeworth Town in the final. This good run of form in league and cup competitions again led the club to seek a higher level of football to play at. They applied to join the Isthmian League and this was accepted in 1987.

The Isthmian Years

Their first match in the Isthmian League (Division 2 North) in 1987-88 saw Witham win 6-0 at Ware which ended with the club finishing in 7th place. During this time, former Southend United manager Steve Tilson started his career with the club before moving on to the Shrimpers as a player. The end of the 1990-91 season would see the two Isthmian Division 2's (North and South) 'de-regionalise', therefore making a top half finish imperative if Witham were to retain their Division 2 status and avoid the drop into what would be the next seasons new Division 3. A good finish saw Witham end up in 6th place, thereby ensuring their position in the restructured division and the club also made a semi-final appearance in the Loctite Associate Members Trophy. In 1993-94 Witham had their highest ever league finish, 5th in the Isthmian League Division 2. Back in the mid-90's there was no 2nd tier to the Conference so this was their best finish at what was then Step 4. Unfortunately, this could not be built upon and Town were relegated at the end of the 1999-2000 season to Division 3 after 13 years in Div 2. However, during the previous season, 1998-99, Witham saw their best run in the FA Cup, to the 3rd Qualifying Round, before losing out to Havant & Waterlooville in a replay. The next few years saw further restructuring of the Isthmian League culminating in a runners-up spot in Division 2 (formerly Div 3) at the end of 2005-06 as Witham took their place the newly formed step 4 Division 1 North. A goal difference of just +1 separated Witham from Brook House and 3rd place. In 2007-08 they achieved their best run in the FA Trophy, making it to the 3rd Qualifying Round. After beating Chatham Town away 3-0 Spa Road saw a giant killing over Horsham who at that time were leaders of the Isthmian Premier Division. Town crashed out in the next round though after losing at Hayes & Yeading. During 2008, one



of Town's rising stars, top scorer Cody McDonald, moved on to Maldon Town and then Dartford, before being bought by the then Championship side Norwich City. This move to the Canaries makes Cody our highest profile ex-player.

A short spell in the Essex Senior League

At the end of the 2008-09 season Witham Town finished 21st out of 22 teams consigning them to relegation to the Essex Senior League. Despite the obvious disappointment at being relegated the club had the chance to start afresh in the same league where their senior aspirations were initiated back in 1971. Off the field, former player Olly Murs became the TV show X Factor's runner up in December 2009. As the 2009-10 season drew to a close, and on the back of eight straight wins, Witham earned the necessary point on the last game of the season at Barkingside in a tense 2-2 draw that guaranteed runners-up position just ahead of Burnham Ramblers. Unfortunately, this was not enough for Town to regain their spot in the Isthmian League.

During the 2010-11 season, for the last 4 games, current manager Garry Kimble took over the reins as the club finished third. In the following campaign, Kimble's first full term in charge, Witham Town enjoyed arguably their most successful season ever as they broke many long standing club records on the way to the Essex Senior League title, last won in 1986, and therefore securing a return to Isthmian football.

In addition to league success, Witham won the League Cup, the Gordon Brasted Memorial Trophy and the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup. They remained unbeaten away in the league. Striker Billy Hunt secured the Don Douglas Trophy by becoming the league's top scorer, with Rob Whitnell and John Watson coming second and third highest league scorers as well.

The Isthmian Years (Part 2)

The return to Isthmian level began in spectacular style as the club finished 4th in the Isthmian League Division 1 North and qualified for the Play Offs, only going down 3-2 to eventual winners Thamesmead Town. The club also retained the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Cup beating Heybridge Swifts 4-0.

They went one better in 2013-14, finishing in their highest ever league position, runners up in the Isthmian League Division 1 North. In the play-offs Needham Market were beaten 1-0 in the semi final and Harlow Town 3-0 in the final as Witham Town secured a place in the Isthmian Premier Division for the first time. A gallant attempt was made to compete at Isthmian Premier level, but this proved too much

for a club with limited resources.

Relegation followed in 2014-15. A number of key players moved on after relegation and it was hard to find a settled squad in 2015-16. Garry Kimble left the club towards the end of the season and a new management team was appointed, consisting of Adam Flint and James Robinson.

The team finished in 19th place. Stability was achieved in the next two seasons as the club finished in 13th and 11th place respectively. At the end of 2017-18, Adam and James moved on to manage Bishops' Stortford.

Mark Ashford became the new Witham manager before the start of the 2018-19 season. It proved to be a challenging season and safety from relegation was only assured on the final day of the season at Basildon. Mark Ashford resigned before the start of the following season. He was replaced by Marc Benterman.

After assembling almost a complete squad in a few weeks before the start of 2019-20, the team were in 15th place after 28 games when Covid-19 caused the season to be abandoned. Season 2020-21 only lasted until 31st October 2020 when it was abandoned for the same reason. After an indifferent start to 2021-22 Marc resigned from his role in November 2021. Assistant manager Chris Taylor was appointed manager in January 2022. Automatic relegation was avoided by the narrowest of margins and a 3-0 win against Saffron Walden Town in the Inter-Step play-off match assured safety.

In 2022-23 the club achieved 16th place. Chris Taylor resigned before the start of 2023-24. He was replaced by former manager Garry Kimble, who led the team to a 14th place finish. The club won silverware in the shape of the Tolleshunt d'Arcy Cup after beating Chelmsford City 4-3 in the final.

Garry and his management have remained at the helm in 2004-25 and the club have made a solid start to the season.





PARTNERS WITH
ISTHMIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

PITCHING IN ISTHMIAN LEAGUE NORTH ROUND UP

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

Brentwood take the title as Ogunleye hits four, Regent clinch fifth, and we have a last day three way fight to avoid the drop!

After two Play Off Finals in the last three years **Brentwood Town** headed into their penultimate match of the season knowing exactly what they had to do to clinch the title - and they did that, and more, as they hit **Basildon United** for four. Given their superior goal difference a draw would undoubtedly have been enough, but none of the one thousand, four hundred and sixty seven who packed the Arena expected that; not only because their own side have been rampant in front of goal but because the travelling Bees, already relegated, were without a win since mid October and had taken five points from their last twenty nine matches- all draws.

When the sides met on Boxing Day one solitary goal from Daniel Ogunleye was all the match had to show for it, but the Blues number ten had equalled that tally by the time that thirty three minutes had passed- and quadrupled it by the seventieth. One-nil at half time, his thirty ninth of the season, by full time that total was forty three, and the Blues were dreaming of the Premier Division. Many congratulations to all at the club on a richly deserved triumph- we look forward to seeing you in the top flight next season.

Below Brentwood the battle was about securing play off home advantage, and **Bury Town** are in pole position in that particular race after coming

from behind to defeat **Mildenhall Town**. Jarid Robson put the visitors ahead from the spot on five minutes, but Taylor Parr levelled for the Blues fourteen minutes later and the winner arrived twenty minutes from time, Cemal Ramadan scoring for the twenty eighth time this season to give his side the points- and a two point advantage in the battle for second. The battle isn't over, however, as Bury travel to Wroxham on the last day, and the Yachtsmen may need a victory to stay up. One thousand and forty two watched on.

Felixstowe and Walton United are third, the Seasiders coming from behind to take the points at relegated **Ipswich Wanderers**. Jack Madley put Wanderers ahead on ten minutes, but the Seasiders levelled in added time at the end of the first half, Thomas Warren scoring his seventeenth of the season, rather remarkable for a player who wears the number three shirt. Ten minutes into the second half an even more familiar Warren visited the score sheet, Charlie scoring goal number thirty two. United welcome Witham Town next weekend - and if they win, Bury will need to do the same to avoid being replaced in second place.

Waltham Abbey are three points further back in fourth, the Abbotts held at home by **Redbridge**. Malachi Napa gave the travelling Motormen the lead just after the hour, scoring from the spot, but Jason Hallett replied for the hosts ten minutes later- ten minutes after emerging from the bench. For the Abbotts to take third place they will have to defeat Mildenhall Town next weekend and hope that Felixstowe slip up.

Brightlingsea Regent secured fifth spot with a draw at **Gorleston**, but Regent will hope to get back to winning ways after ending a fourth match in a row without a victory- the last three ending level. That said, the Greens were always going to pose a tough task, and are now an incredible twenty matches unbeaten. Regent went ahead on seven minutes, Harry McDonald the scorer, but the Greens were soon level courtesy of Joseph Marsden and went ahead just after the hour, Adam Tann making it two-one. Eight minutes from time Regent were awarded a spot kick, and Louie Kudiabor took his total for the campaign to twenty one by converting it.

Tilbury needed to win their derby match with **Grays Athletic** to keep their play off hopes alive, but Athletic went into the match in fine form after winning nine in a row and took their unbeaten run to eleven with a goalless draw. That leaves Grays in ninth, five points behind their landlords, who are sixth, five points away from a play off spot with that door now firmly closed.

Witham Town are seventh, after defeating **Concord Rangers** two-one. Sonny Dutton put them ahead just before the half hour only for Liam Jones to seemingly earn the visitors a point with twelve minutes to go, but only two minutes later Kamani Mcfarlane scored his twelfth of the season to earn Town victory.

Haringey Borough very much needed victory in a local derby against **Walthamstow**, but instead they reverted to their draw habit- and it might cost them dear. Stow went in front on eight minutes, Louie Johnson scoring his eighteenth goal of the season, and although Borough quickly levelled through Mekhi McLeod that turned out to be that - and it saw the side from White Hart Lane slip back into the bottom four, a point behind Newmarket Town and two points behind Wroxham. Borough are eight games unbeaten- but they have drawn six of them, and may well need to travel to fifth place Brightlingsea Regent next weekend and win to avoid a second successive relegation.

Newmarket Town and **Wroxham** met in a tense relegation battle at the Tristel Global Stadium. The hosting Jockeys very much needed to win, and they started well, going ahead on fourteen minutes through Stan Leech, but the Yachtsmen quickly levelled through Asa McGeachy and twelve minutes into the second half went ahead, Ryan Hawkins scoring from the spot. The visitors just needed to hold on to be safe, but they couldn't do it, as Josh Lee levelled with twenty one minutes to go, and ten minutes from time Leech struck again to make it three-two.

Wroxham are two points clear of fourth bottom Haringey Borough but have a difficult match against second place Bury Town next weekend, whilst Newmarket are one point above Borough and travel to face Concord Rangers.

Maldon and Tiptree welcomed local rivals **Heybridge Swifts**, and the best thing that can be said about the afternoon for the travelling fans is that they didn't have to walk far to get home. The Jammers went ahead on two minutes, Zack Littlejohn with the opener, and on the half hour they added a second, Amine Sassi with his seventh in eleven Maldon matches. Matt Yates made it three-nil five minutes into the second half, but the next goal went to the visitors, Eddie Carrington-Alberdi pulling it back to three-one. Five minutes from time Carrington-Alberdi got another, but by then the hosts had added two more, Matt Price scoring against his former club and Sassi adding another. Five-two was the final score, one thousand, six hundred and fifteen was the attendance, and the Jammers will go into the summer with local bragging rights. They are one point behind their neighbours in the table with one match remaining.

Finally, a goal from Codey Cosgrave seventeen minutes from time gave **Cambridge City** victory over **Sporting Bengal United**. That leaves City in twelfth, whilst the visitors remain bottom of the table.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BY MARTYN GREEN, THE UNTOLD GAME

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Serie A has always been a hotbed of international talent. Players from around the globe have lined up to make their way in the Italian game. Apart from those from these shores. British players in the peninsula are few and far between, although a few more in recent years have made the journey. In the 1960s there was another spate of expats in search of La Dolce Vita, with Jimmy Greaves heading to Milan and Denis Law trying a spell at Torino. Neither, however, had the impact on Calcio of a miner from Staffordshire. All but forgotten at home, both in his time and since, in Italy, Gerry Hitchens is a bit of a legend.

The forward from Rawnsley had obvious talent as a youngster, but like so many was simply not identified by clubs who might have had use of a prolific striker. He began his career as a miner and contented himself with playing for the local works side. It wasn't until he reached a cup final in 1953 that someone finally spotted something in him. Two productive years at Kidderminster in the Southern League followed, before he was off again, this time to professional football with Cardiff.

His time at Cardiff really showcased his talent. The forward made 108 appearances across two seasons, scoring 58 goals, which drew the attention of genuine giants of the game, in the form of FA Cup winners Aston Villa. Back in the Midlands in 1957, he formed a partnership with Peter McParland and scored just under a century of goals in four years. In 1961, he got his first international call up, scoring on his debut. Two weeks later, he scored twice in Rome. It was the game that would change his life.

Unbeknownst to the former miner, the visionary Helenio Herrera was looking for a



1961–62 Inter Milan's Balleri, Morbello, Hitchens, Bicchierai, Corso, Dellagiovanna and Bolchi

goalscorer to tip his revolutionary catenaccio, and after seeing him against Italy, he decided Hitchens was his man. Internazionale made a bid of £85,000 to Villa, and the forward's career in his homeland was over. He moved to Italy, saying 'my ability has taken me a long way from the pits. I want to see just how far it will take me.'

In what was becoming a trend, Hitchens scored on his debut for the Nerrazzurri, and didn't stop scoring all season, finishing the season as their top scorer as Inter just missed out on the title. Unfortunately, out of sight of the England selectors, it took a run of injuries before he was allowed to add to his caps, eventually selected for the 1962 World Cup. He had perhaps adopted to the Italian lifestyle too quickly, however, heading to South America with a collection of designer suits and standing out conspicuously among his more earthy teammates. England crashed out of the tournament, and for the first time replaced their manager, bringing in Alf Ramsey. The new man made clear that he wouldn't be picking players who plied their trade abroad, and Hitchens' international career was over.

Unfazed by his exclusion, Hitchens moved not back to his homeland, but to Torino to fill the void left by Denis Law, who had been signed by Matt Busby. Life was tougher in Turin, and Hitchens found goals harder to come by. It didn't stop him notching 11 in his first season though, as his side just missed out on the Coppa Italia, losing in the final to Atalanta. The following season he got just nine, his first haul of less than double figures since turning professional, and Torino once again lost the Coppa Italia final, this time to Roma. Not that it dampened enthusiasm for the Englishman, whose legend in Italy is considered greater than Law or Greaves, and on a level with John Charles. With his blonde hair and blue eyes, his model wife, and his adoption of an Italian lifestyle, he was a celebrity in his own right, earning the nickname Il Cannone, or occasionally, The Prince of Football.

After four years in Turin, he spent two years at Atalanta and then one at Cagliari, before a brief spell at Merthyr Tydfil finished his career. He managed a factory in Wales after his retirement, until tragically asked to play in a charity game. In 1983, over a decade after plying his trade in Italy, he collapsed on the pitch and was rushed to Wrexham General Hospital. Only 48, they were unable to revive him.

Gerry Hitchens should be revered as a pioneer of English football, staking a claim on the continent like nobody else. Of English players, only Bradley-Wright Phillips has a longer continuous stay abroad than Hitchens' 8 years. No Englishman has played in Europe longer. He gave up his international career to see where his ability took him, and paved the way for others to do the same.

Enjoy the game.

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MATCHDAY SQUADS

Isthmian League North
Saturday 26th April 2025
Kick-off 3pm



Witham Town FC

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Assistant Manager: Kevin Hunter

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Ollie **Bell**
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Harry **Fairs**
Tyler **Forbes**
Golden **Igbneweka**
Luke **Ige**
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Referee: Mr Daniel Ripton **Assistant Referees:** Mr James Perry & Mr Leigh Ballinger