

PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE



SATURDAY EVENING E-NEWSPAPER

Saturday 22 March 2025

NON-LEAGUE DAY 2025



There were plenty of great activities and initiatives across our four divisions to mark annual Non-League Day as our clubs showcased what they are all about.

In the Pitching In Southern League Premier South, it was a particularly good day for Merthyr Town as not only did they come from behind to beat Chertsey Town 3-1, but they also saw AFC Totton lose to a late goal at Hanwell Town. It means the Welsh club's lead at the top is now nine points.

Also coming from behind to win were Walton & Hersham, who secured a good 2-1 success at Taunton Town to hit the 70-point mark. Meanwhile, Dorchester Town hit Marlow for six and Gloucester City suffered a heavy loss at Havant & Waterlooville.

Over in the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central, Halesowen Town are top again having beaten Lowestoft Town 3-1 despite falling behind early on. Bedford Town are level on points following a commanding 4-0 victory over play-off hopefuls, Stamford AFC.

There was late drama at Kettering Town as they levelled in stoppage time against AFC Telford United.

In the Pitching In Southern League Division One South, Yate Town's lead at the top now stands at three points after they managed to come from behind to salvage a point at Bideford AFC, whilst Evesham United left it late to beat a determined Cribbs 2-0.

Mousehole survived a scare against Shaftesbury as they came from behind to run out convincing 5-1 winners, whilst Bemerton Heath Harlequins leapfrogged Exmouth Town as they beat them 1-0, a result that leaves the Devon club in the last play-off spot, one point ahead of Malvern Town, who won again as they beat Bashley 5-2.

The top of the table clash in the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central ended goalless as Real Bedford and Berkhamstead cancelled each other out, but it was a pulsating encounter for the large crowd to enjoy.

Just behind them, two late goals saw Flackwell Heath to victory at Northwood, whose manager, Gary Meakin, stood down at the end of the game. It was also the late show for Barton Rovers as they beat AFC Dunstable deep into stoppage time. Thame United drew 2-2 at Stotfold to remain just in the top five.

REPORTS FROM ALL GAMES | STATS | FEATURES



Ever thought of volunteering to help your local football club?

There are many different volunteer roles in non-league football and Southern League football clubs need your help with them.

The Trident Leagues and Pitching In's online Volunteer Hub is the place where you can find opportunities and contact your local football club.

Please visit
PitchingInvolunteers.co.uk
to find out more



**TRIDENT
LEAGUES**
VOLUNTEER HUB
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PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

Basingstoke Town 0 Frome Town 1

The visitors broke the deadlock with half-an-hour gone courtesy of James Ollis. The hosts' task was made even more difficult when James Dickson was red-carded for his second booking and the visitors secured an important win on the road.

Bracknell Town 4 Gosport Borough 0

It was lucky seven for Seb Bowerman as he put the home side ahead in the seventh minute before Joel Rollinson added a second midway through the opening period. As the clock ticked down towards the end, Bowerman added another goal and Daniel Roberts completed a commanding triumph.

Dorchester Town 6 Marlow 0

With ten minutes to go until the interval, Luke Roberts put the home side ahead and then Will Spetch added a second on the stroke of half-time. There was still time for Olaf Konzsla to weigh in with a third from the penalty spot. In the second half, the experienced Brett Pitman added a fourth goal for the hosts on his debut before weighing in with two more at the death to complete his hat-trick and a convincing win for his new side.

Hanwell Town 1 AFC Totton 0

This was a hard-fought battle and it swung the way of the home side on 84 minutes when Giovanni McGregor gave them the lead. The hosts managed to see it out to claim a big three points here.

Havant & Waterlooville 4 Gloucester City 0

The home team made the best possible start when Leon Maloney gave them an early lead and then Ryan Seager made it 2-0. A third goal arrived midway through the first half from Nigel Atangana to put the hosts well in command before Seager rounded the first half off with his second and the home side's fourth. There was no further scoring after the break as the hosts already had the job done and the points in the bag.

Hungerford Town 0 Winchester City 1

Midway through the second period, this cagey affair saw Jamie Barron give the visitors the lead before getting sent off following his second booking. The visitors were able to see the game out to get a much-needed success on the road.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

Merthyr Town 3 Chertsey Town 1

The visitors got their noses in front in the sixth minute when Jack Mazzone found the net.

It took the hosts until the hour-mark to get back on level terms through Callum Ryan-Phillips and then soon afterwards, Tom Handley put them ahead.

Handley then netted a third to settle any nerves from the home side as they extended their lead at the top of the table.

Poole Town 2 Sholing 0

We had to wait until the 72nd minute for the opening goal to arrive here and it came for the hosts as Ezio Touray gave them the lead.

The victory was rounded off in the final minute as Oakley Hanger rounded the 'keeper to make it 2-0 for the hosts.

Taunton Town 1 Walton & Hersham 2

It was unlucky 13 for the visitors and their defender, Joey Jones, as his own goal gave the hosts the lead with 13 minutes on the clock.

However, Johl Powell was able to level things up as the interval loomed large before Bobby Taylor put the away team ahead deep into first half stoppage time. There was no further scoring in the second half as the away team took home all three points.



Tiverton Town 1 Swindon Supermarine 0

There were less than ten minutes to go when Asa Hall led by example as he put the home side in front in what was a closely-fought clash. They were able to see it out to get an important win.

Wimborne Town 1 Plymouth Parkway 0

There was little to separate the two teams until right at the end of the opening period when Will Fletcher put the hosts in front.

The second period saw no further addition to the scoring as the home team secured maximum points.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

AFC Sudbury 1 Redditch United 0

There was little to choose between these two teams as we went into the closing stages with the score still locked at 0-0, however Ryan Henshaw was on hand to put the hosts ahead late on. That's how it remained as the home side took the points.

Alvechurch 1 Leiston 1

The opening exchanges saw the away team get into the lead when Ismael Botelho Fatadjo was able to beat the 'keeper. The equalising goal arrived from Dan Sweeney just before the hour-mark and that's how it stayed as the spoils were shared.



Barwell 3 St Ives Town 2

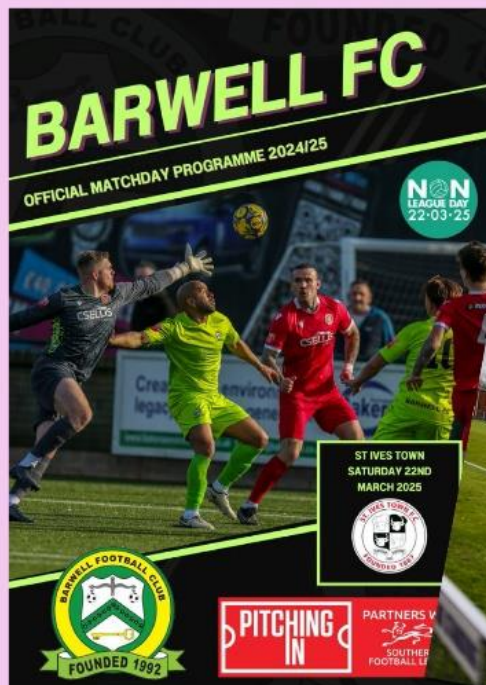
Just before the half-hour mark, Ashley Chambers was able to add to his tally of goals by putting the home side ahead. An equaliser from Will Glennon ten minutes from time made it 1-1 before Amir Hadi turned the scoreline on its head as the half-time break approached. In stoppage time at the end of the opening period, Chambers bagged his second to equalise. The second half was only a couple of minutes old when Kane Richards restored the home side's lead and it proved to be the winning goal.

Bedford Town 4 Stamford 0

This one was finely balanced until leading scorer, Leon Lobjoit, popped up to put the hosts in front early in the second period. A goal from Jack Davies gave the home side a two-goal cushion with just over 20 minutes to go before a late strike from Lobjoit and a stoppage time effort from Bruno Andrade gave the home side a commanding victory.

Bishop's Stortford 0 Harborough Town 4

There was just one goal separating the two teams in the first half as the visitors went ahead on 20 minutes through Jutorre Burgess. The final 15 minutes saw the away team grab the game by the scruff of the neck as Alex Morris, Dempsey Arlott-John and Josh Walsh netted three goals in quick succession to complete a successful away day.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

Bromsgrove Sporting 1 Banbury United 2

The visitors went ahead on the quarter-hour mark thanks to Harry Reilly but Theo Robinson cancelled it out on 30 minutes. A goal from AJ George early in the second half put the away team back in front and they were to hold on to their advantage to take the points home with them.

Halesowen Town 3 Lowestoft Town 1

The away team grabbed an early lead when Kyle Haylock was able to get the final touch to beat the 'keeper.

A goal from Ryan Wynter in the 32nd minute levelled matters up and then Alex Cameron turned the scoreline on its head. The hosts ended the opening period with a goal from McKauley Manning right at the death to give them a two-goal advantage and this is how the scoreline remained as the majority of the almost 1,600 crowd went home happy.

Kettering Town 1 AFC Telford United 1

There was drama right at the end of the first half when Matty Stenson gave the visitors the lead from the penalty spot. Just as there had been at the end of the opening period, the second half concluded in drama when Kai Fifield levelled the scores in stoppage time as it ended with honours even.

Royston Town 2 Stourbridge 2

The visitors wasted little time in getting ahead here as Alex Moore put them in front with just two minutes on the clock.

There were just two minutes remaining of the first half when Joshua Coldicott-Stevens converted from the spot to level the scores.

A corner from Coldicott-Stevens went straight into the net to put the hosts ahead, something he's done before, however, the visitors refused to let their heads drop and levelled late on from the spot as Alex Bradley despatched having been brought down to win the penalty.

This one ended with the spoils shared.

Spalding United 3 Hitchin Town 2

The home side went ahead on the ten-minute mark thanks to Jack Roberts and then midway through the opening period, James Clifton was able to double the lead.

A third goal from Sam Cartwright put the hosts firmly in the driving seat, but Rio Deall gave the visitors a lifeline with a goal back straightaway.

This entertaining encounter saw Deall hit another goal as the interval approached to make it 3-2.

After five goals in the opening period, there were none in the second half as the home team saw out the win.

Stratford Town 1 Biggleswade Town 0

It was first blood to the hosts as Lewis Ludford-Ison fired them ahead within the opening two minutes but that was to be it as far as the scoring was concerned as the hosts edged the victory.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Bemerton Heath Harlequins 1 Exmouth Town 0

The hosts got their noses in front when Joe Smith was able to open the scoring and as the visitors chased the game, they saw Louis Morison sent off with 22 minutes left on the clock.

This one ended with the home side claiming a big three points against their play-off rivals.

Bideford AFC 1 Yate Town 1

There was just over ten minutes to go until the break when Finn Roberts put the home side in front.

It was a lead that they were to hold until the 60th minute when Ross Stearn levelled things up for the League leaders.

Try as they might, they failed to find another goal as this one ended with the spoils shared.



Bishops Cleeve 2 Didcot Town 0

As half-time approached, the deadlock was broken when Matthew Liddiard fired the home side ahead.

The second goal arrived from Ethan Dunbar on 66 minutes as the hosts made a return to winning ways following a couple of losses in a row.

Bristol Manor Farm 0 Tavistock AFC 3

The visitors grabbed the lead as the interval approached with a goal from Tyler Elliott and then shortly afterwards doubled their advantage through Jack Crago.

It was Crago who got the next goal with around quarter-of-an-hour to go as he put his side well and truly in the driving seat.

The visitors' impressive recent form continued here as they added another three points to their tally.

Cinderford Town 2 Thatcham Town 2

A goal from Alex Bonthron gave an early advantage to the home side but it was cancelled out midway through the opening period through Harvey Flippance.

It was Flippance who then put his side in front midway through the second period but the leveller came late on from Marley Thomas.

A draw did neither side any favours here in their quest to escape the clutches of the relegation zone.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Evesham United 2 Cribbs 0

The deadlock was finally broken on 78 minutes when Toby Raison gave the hosts the lead and the same player was able to add a second with five minutes to go. They had to work hard for it, but the hosts were deserved winners in the end.

Helston Athletic 1 Larkhall Athletic 1

The deadlock was broken on the half-hour mark when Jake Hicks put the away team ahead, but it was cancelled out with 20 minutes to go through substitute, Liam Eddy.

There was to be no further addition to the scoring here as both sides had to settle for a point apiece.

Malvern Town 5 Bashley 2

The opening goal fell to Joe Bullock who put the home side in front with 18 minutes on the clock, only for the experienced Brett Williams to level things up just before the half-hour.

Parity did not last long, though, as Jack Watts soon put the home side back in front and then Lewis Spurrier further increased the lead as half-time approached. A fourth goal for the home side came from Spurrier for his second of the afternoon before Williams also got his second for the away team late on.

In stoppage time, Ryan Brunt added a fifth goal as the hosts' impressive form continued.

Melksham Town 3 Willand Rovers 0

It was Henry Sady who was able to add to his tally as he put the hosts ahead here.

The lead was soon doubled when Elliot Haffenden found the net and the same player grabbed his second of the afternoon to make it 3-0 just before the break.

There were no further goals after the break as the home side saw the game out to get a deserved win.

Mousehole 5 Shaftesbury 1

It was the away team who got their noses in front here as Remus Nixon was able to beat the 'keeper.

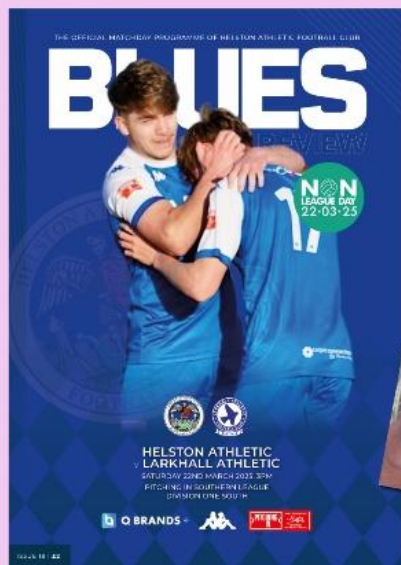
Parity was restored on the 25-minute mark when Hayden Turner found the net for the hosts and buoyed by the leveller, they wasted little time in getting ahead through Tim Nixon.

Nixon then extended the lead just past the hour-mark before Oscar Massey further extended the lead to put the Cornish side firmly in command.

At the death, Will Sullivan added a fifth goal for the hosts to complete the victory.

Westbury United 2 Falmouth Town AFC 1

Just past the 20-minute mark, Ben Starr sparkled as he gave the hosts the lead but it wasn't long until Rubin Wilson equalised from the penalty spot. A second goal from Starr put the home side back in front with 15 minutes to go and that's how it remained.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Aylesbury United 0 Kidlington 1

A late goal from Patrick Osborne was enough to win this one for the visitors, who also missed a late penalty. Up to that point it had been a pretty evenly-matched affair.

Barton Rovers 2 AFC Dunstable 1

It was Albie Hall who struck first as the hosts took a tenth minute lead but that was cancelled out ten minutes from time when Sean Duodu added another goal to his tally for the visiting team. There was late drama as Matt Moloney hit the winner for the home side deep into stoppage time to secure a big three points and break the visitors' hearts.

Beaconsfield Town 1 Enfield 1

It was the visitors who drew first blood courtesy of a ninth minute goal as the ball deflected in off the unfortunate Master Sankoh from a Myles John effort. The start of the second period saw the hosts get back on level terms when Jacques Kpohomouh got his name on the scoresheet. That was how it finished as both sides took a point apiece from this one.

Berkhamsted 0 Real Bedford 0

This was a pulsating game despite there being no goals. The home side played some neat stuff whilst the visiting defence was in stubborn mood. At the other end, the visitors' potent strike force was thwarted by a committed and determined display from the hosts' defence.

Hertford Town 2 North Leigh 1

The home side finally broke the deadlock just before the hour-mark when Joseph Nardelli was able to guide the ball past the 'keeper. It wasn't long before that opener was cancelled out by Samuel Olawale only for Adeniyi Gbolahan to put the hosts back in front late on and this time they held on to claim the victory.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Leighton Town 2 Welwyn Garden City 0

The home side forged ahead just past the half-hour when an effort from Tolu Ikuyinminu found its way into the net, possibly with the aid of a slight deflection. Kyal Williams then found the back of the net to double the hosts' lead and they still had time to miss a penalty before the break.

There were no further additions to the scoring in the second period as the home side continued what has been impressive form since the turn of the year.

Leverstock Green 3 Kings Langley 0

The hosts went ahead in the opening exchanges as Rawn Seale found the net and then the same player doubled the lead just before the half-hour mark.

It was an impressive showing from the home team as Jeffrey Sekyere made it 3-0 with just over half-an-hour gone.

The day got worse for the visitors when Adisorn Connolly was dismissed as the home side glided to a deserved victory.

Northwood 0 Flackwell Heath 2

This one looked like it was heading for a goalless draw until Dylan Kearney was able to turn the ball home in the closing stages for the visitors. A goal from Wiktor Makowski right at the death sealed the win for the away team.

Stotfold 2 Thame United 2

On 38 minutes Patrick Matejko gave the home side the edge in this encounter but things turned around pretty quickly right at the end of the opening period when a leveller from Leo Galpin was followed by a strike from Jack Tutton to put the visitors ahead.

The hosts were able to level through Tommy Reynolds just past the hour-mark and that's how it ended with honours even.

Ware 1 Biggleswade FC 1

Jon Clements was spot-on to give the home side the lead from the penalty spot in the opening exchanges before Dan Bond levelled things up just past the hour-mark and that was to be the end of the scoring.



NEWS ROUND-UP

TAVISTOCK AFC | HAPPY DAYS

They are the club that sparked the Non-League Day initiative.

It was back in 2010 that James Doe went on a trip to Devon to watch his team, Queens Park Rangers, in a pre-season friendly at Tavistock AFC. He enjoyed the experience so much that he set up Non-League Day as a social media experiment to try and encourage others to get along to their local non-League club whenever the opportunity arose. For Tavistock AFC, they go into Non-League Day on Saturday on the back of victories in their last three outings, which has pulled them out of the relegation places in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South.

The upturn has come after long-serving manager, Stuart Henderson, freshened up his squad, with Luke Mortimore one of the players coming in as he made the step up from Okehampton Argyle. His brace in the 4-0 victory over Cinderford Town at the weekend has made it five goals for him since his February arrival.

"It took me a couple of weeks to get settled and up to speed again with this level," Mortimore admitted to us. "Obviously the results weren't great at the time and I came into a team low on confidence, but things have really picked up since then and there's a real buzz around the team now. "That has helped me to get into my stride and I am pleased with the contribution that I am making. "It just shows how important confidence is in football. The new faces that have come into the group have freshened things up and had an effect on everyone. The self-belief has grown and now the results are starting to go our way. "We're by no means out of danger, but we're moving in the right direction and Saturday's win saw us reach the 40-point mark. "This level of football is very different to what I have been playing over the past few years – it's much more of a percentage-based style where teams like to get the ball forward as quickly as possible and go from there. "I've also noticed pretty much straight away that you don't get many chances in games, so when they do come along you have to be clinical. "I face the run-in to the end of the season with a mixture of excitement and nervousness. It's exciting because we're on a good run and enjoying our football, but it's also a nervy time because things are still extremely tight and all it takes is a couple of results to go against you and you are right back in it again. "But we have momentum from three straight wins and we'll take that into Saturday's game at Bristol Manor Farm. "The ultimate aim is to stay in this League, of course, and if I can put in good performances and add a few goals to help towards that, I will be extremely happy."

NON-LEAGUE DAY 2025 | STARS IN STRIPES

The appeal of Non-League Day has spread far and wide over the past 15 years since James Doe, inspired by his pre-season visit to Tavistock AFC, decided to set up the day as a social media experiment to encourage others to give the non-League game a try. It has even reached the shores of Spain where LaLiga giants, Athletic Bilbao, are preparing for a third edition of their own Euskal Non-League Day over the coming weekend.



"Non-League Day is an initiative that connects directly with Athletic Club's identity," said a club spokesperson. "Besides playing a crucial role in local communities, grass-roots football is a fundamental part of the club's youth development strategy and Athletic has affiliate agreements with close to 170 clubs across the Basque Country. "We are the only side in LaLiga that organises such an event with the purpose of celebrating non-professional football and encouraging attendance at local grounds during the March international break."

Athletic Bilbao, who are eight-time LaLiga winners, have also got involved in the UK version of Non-League Day by collaborating with six clubs from the non-League game who share their famous red and white stripes, two of which are members of the Southern League.

Both Bromsgrove Sporting of the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central and Pitching In Southern League Division One South high-flyers, Evesham United, have received Athletic Bilbao shirts to raffle off in order to raise funds for their chosen charities and there will also be other cross-club initiatives.

"Athletic Bilbao reached out to us and we were only too happy to get involved," said Max Banner, Bromsgrove Sporting's Media Officer. "They wanted to do something to mark Non-League Day that was linked to the heritage of their red and white stripes and so the idea was born.

"Six clubs are collaborating on this; as well as ourselves and Evesham United, there's also Altrincham, Sheppey United, Steyning Town and Witton Albion. It's really exciting and unique and has created plenty of interest.

"We've used it to promote our own events that will be taking place at Saturday's game and we're discussing ways in which we can also develop things further."

Athletic Bilbao is known for its unique policy of only fielding players who were born or raised in the Basque Country or have Basque ancestry.

Their distinctive red and white stripes are iconic in Spain and have been the clubs chosen colours since 1910 when Juan Elorduy, on a trip to England, was tasked with bringing back new kit.

The club, formed by British migrant workers, had previously turned out in kit purchased from Blackburn Rovers, which was blue and white, but when Elorduy was unable to purchase new kit in the same colour scheme, he turned to the local football club of where he was based, which happened to be Southampton FC, and he was able to buy kit from them, red and white striped shirts with black shorts and socks. These colours have become synonymous with the club.

It's fantastic that Athletic Bilbao have got involved in this way both here in the UK and closer to home.

INFLUENCER

We find out which players most influenced our Pitching In Southern League stars...

CHRIS OVENDEN (MARLOW) > ALAN SHEARER

Alan Shearer was my hero as a kid, England captain, Newcastle legend, Premier League top goalscorer, it says it all really. When I play striker I always aim to copy that style of play.

MERTHYR TOWN | FLYING HIGH

To go 30 League games unbeaten is a phenomenal achievement at any level of football, so it's hats off to Merthyr Town who achieved this feat at the weekend.

The Pitching In Southern League Premier South club had to come from behind to win 3-1 at Gosport Borough and in doing so maintained their six-point lead at the top of the table.

Playing his part in the run since joining the club at the turn of the year has been Cawley Cox.

The 20 year-old striker had a summer trial with the Welsh outfit before going on to score 19 goals in 24 games for Westfields in the Hellenic League Premier Division, which prompted his return to Penydarren Park, in what manager, Paul Michael, describes as a 'long-term signing'.

"I feel I've settled in nicely," Cox told us. "The lads and everyone around the club have all been really welcoming, so it's been a really positive experience and I think that's carried over to the pitch.

"On a more personal note I'm happy with the way I've started and I've been growing in confidence every game. I'm really enjoying my football, but I'm always looking at little things that I can improve in my game.

"Obviously as far as the team is concerned, to go 30 games unbeaten is a great run and a fantastic achievement at any level.

"I think it's been done by a combination of the way we've been set up by the Gaffer, the quality of the players that we have in the squad and the fans, who are behind us so fantastically well home and away every week, which makes such a big difference.

"There's such a good feeling around the club and everyone is full of confidence, so that always helps, but at the same time we're only too aware that there's still a long way to go until the end of the season.

"The League is a good standard, quick and physically demanding, which is similar to what I was expecting. Every game is a challenge but I've enjoyed it and I'm looking forward to the final seven games, as are the rest of the team.

"That's why we play football, for opportunities such as this, and we'll just take things one game at a time in a bid to get the job done.

"Obviously promotion is the main focus, but I want to make sure that I keep my standards high and continue contributing to the cause. I am learning and improving all of the time and doing it whilst thoroughly enjoying my football, so what's not to love?"

A 2-1 loss at Gloucester City on August Bank Holiday Monday was the last time that the team tasted defeat in the League. They were at home to Chertsey Town earlier today.



AFC DUNSTABLE | HOLT BACK IN BLUE

This time last year things were going great for Ethan Holt.

His goals were helping to send AFC Dunstable into the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central play-offs, the chance to play at Luton Town's Kenilworth Road in the final of the Bedfordshire Senior Cup sat on the horizon and a number of higher level

clubs were closely monitoring the teenager's fantastic progress.

It was during that aforementioned Bedfordshire Senior Cup final that Holt tore his ACL, with scans subsequently revealing that he required surgery and faced a lengthy spell of at least a year on the sidelines.

"The first thing I did when I was given the news was call my coach, JT [AFC Dunstable manager, James Townsend]," Holt recalled. "I'm not embarrassed to say that I broke down in tears as I spoke to him; it was heart-breaking considering how I felt I was performing and realising how long I was going to be out for.

"Playing football was – and still is - my life; there was so much to look forward to and then all of a sudden it was taken away from me, all from an innocuous challenge where I just fell awkwardly. It was no-one's fault, just one of those things.

"But as an 18 year-old to find out that it was going to be at least a year before I could even consider playing again was tough both physically and mentally. The long road to recovery began and I had to watch the lads in the play-offs from the sidelines, which was hard, before knuckling down to the rehabilitation over the summer and into this season.

"The physios, along with my family and friends, have been so supportive and really helped me. There have been ups and downs along the way, of course, but I have remained focused and the club has kept me involved, which has been a big help.

"There's a new group of players here this season, but they are a great set of lads and I have enjoyed getting to know them during my rehab. Their talent doesn't reflect their position in the table in what is another extremely competitive Division One Central this season."

There were more tears at the weekend, but this time they were tears of joy as Holt was introduced as a late substitute in the dramatic 3-2 victory over Hertford Town.

"Saturday was emotional," continued Holt. "I knew that I wasn't going to get long on the pitch, but just to put my kit on and be part of it again was massive for me. It's been just under a year since I last played so to be back out there again meant so much.

"Yes, there were a few tears shed at the end! There are so many people who have played a part in my journey to get back onto the pitch and I am so grateful to each and every one of them. This is just the start and if anything, I am even more determined and focussed to make my way in the game and make up for lost time.

"My short-term goal is to continue building up my fitness levels and see what the rest of the season offers me. I know that I have to be sensible and not try to do too much, too soon, but I've got the buzz of being involved back again – you don't realise how much you miss it until it is gone.

"If I can make a contribution to a positive end to the season for the club, I will be happy. We're back in the Bedfordshire Senior Cup final at Kenilworth Road again next month, so it would be nice to be involved in that.

"The Gaffer and coaches here have been absolutely fantastic, so too have my teammates and the supporters. I am lucky to be surrounded by good people and that's why I have got back a little earlier than expected.

"Long-term, the dream never changes. As I say, if anything I want to make it into professional football even more now. It's a tough world; football can give you so much joy but it can also turn on you when you least expect it."

AFC Dunstable were at Barton Rovers earlier today where free sausage and chips were being handed out to fans as part of Non-League Day 2025.



FIXTURES | THE WEEK AHEAD

Pitching In Southern League Premier South

TUESDAY 25 MAR 25

Chertsey Town v Taunton Town
Frome Town v Wimborne Town

FRIDAY 28 MAR 25

Gloucester City v Tiverton Town

SATURDAY 29 MAR 25

AFC Totton v Dorchester Town
Chertsey Town v Bracknell Town
Frome Town v Hungerford Town
Gosport Borough v Wimborne Town
Marlow v Havant & Waterlooville
Plymouth Parkway v Poole Town
Sholing v Hanwell Town
Swindon Supermarine v Taunton Town
Walton & Hersham v Basingstoke Town
Winchester City v Merthyr Town

Pitching In Southern League Premier Central

TUESDAY 25 MAR 25

Alvechurch v AFC Sudbury
Biggleswade Town v Lowestoft Town
Bromsgrove Sporting v Harborough Town

SATURDAY 29 MAR 25

AFC Telford United v Barwell
Banbury United v Stratford Town
Biggleswade Town v Bishop's Stortford
Harborough Town v Halesowen Town
Hitchin Town v Royston Town
Leiston v Bedford Town
Lowestoft Town v Spalding United
Redditch United v Bromsgrove Sporting
St Ives Town v AFC Sudbury
Stamford v Kettering Town
Stourbridge v Alvechurch

We are extremely proud of the Southern League Goals of the Week Show that David Square and his team work so hard to produce on our behalf each week of the season and we urge clubs to please send your goals footage for use in the show each week.

The email address to send your footage to, by 7pm each Tuesday evening, is:

thesouthernfootballleague@gmail.com

The show can be viewed via our Official You Tube Channel from 7pm every Wednesday evening.

GOALS OF THE WEEK SHOW



Pitching In Southern League Division One South

TUESDAY 25 MAR 25

Cribbs v Bideford AFC
Falmouth Town AFC v Malvern Town
Thattham Town v Cinderford Town

WEDNESDAY 26 MAR 25

Willand Rovers v Shaftesbury

SATURDAY 29 MAR 25

Bashley v Cinderford Town
Cribbs v Westbury United
Didcot Town v Bristol Manor Farm
Exmouth Town v Bishops Cleeve
Falmouth Town AFC v Melksham Town
Larkhall Athletic v Malvern Town
Shaftesbury v Bideford AFC
Tavistock AFC v Evesham United
Thattham Town v Helston Athletic
Willand Rovers v Mousehole
Yate Town v Bemerton Heath Harlequins

Pitching In Southern League Division One Central

TUESDAY 25 MAR 25

AFC Dunstable v Thame United
Hadley v North Leigh
Northwood v Barton Rovers
Real Bedford v Stotfold

WEDNESDAY 26 MAR 25

Aylesbury United v Leighton Town

SATURDAY 29 MAR 25

AFC Dunstable v Ware
Biggleswade FC v Hadley
Enfield v Stotfold
Flackwell Heath v Leverstock Green
Kidlington v Northwood
Kings Langley v Hertford Town
North Leigh v Leighton Town
Real Bedford v Beaconsfield Town
Thame United v Barton Rovers
Welwyn Garden City v Aylesbury United

Fixtures are subject to change. Compiled in association with Atos

There is plenty of great action coming up throughout the Pitching In Southern League. Please show your support wherever possible and if you are interested in getting more involved and finding out about volunteer opportunities, check out the Pitching In Volunteer Hub via: southern-football-league.co.uk/Pitching-In-Volunteer-Hub We hope that you enjoyed this edition as we look to showcase all that is good within the Pitching In Southern League. Feedback is always welcome, please email: news@southern-football-league.co.uk Enjoy the rest of your weekend...

Andy Poole (Editor)

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