

PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE



SATURDAY EVENING E-NEWSPAPER

Saturday 5 April 2025

FUN IN THE SUN



The sun was shining and throughout our four divisions there were battles taking place at both ends of the table. In the Pitching In Southern League Premier South it was an interesting day at the top as leaders, Merthyr Town, suffered a rare defeat at Hanwell Town, whilst second-placed AFC Totton won convincingly at Hungerford Town to go eight points behind with a game in hand. Walton & Hershaw had to come from behind to beat in-form Wimborne Town, whilst a goal deep into stoppage time gave Gloucester City a 3-3 home draw with Dorchester Town, whose place in the top five is now taken by Havant & Waterlooville as they came from behind to beat Swindon Supermarine 3-2.

The Pitching In Southern League Premier Central remains as competitive as ever. Leaders, Bedford Town, and second-placed AFC Telford United were held to 1-1 home draws by Harborough Town and Spalding United respectively.

Also sharing the spoils were ten-man Halesowen Town, at St. Ives Town, and Kettering Town who scored two late goals to draw 2-2 at home to Hitchin Town. Stamford AFC sit fifth after they scored a stoppage time winner against Bishop's Stortford.

In the Pitching In Southern League Division One South, it was a good day for leaders, Yate Town, as two second half strikes from Ross Stearn gave them a 2-0 win at Helston Athletic, whilst just behind them, Evesham United were held to a goalless home draw by Exmouth Town. Just behind them, Mousehole thought they had beaten Bashley with a late goal, but the visitors levelled things up with just two minutes left on the clock, whilst Bishops Cleeve had to come from behind to beat Shaftesbury 3-1. Moving into the top five are Malvern Town as their impressive form continued with a commanding 3-0 triumph over Thatcham Town.

The big story in the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central was that John Staines achieved his 93rd Birthday wish with over 1,000 present at Hertford Town to see them lose 6-4 to Flackwell Heath in a thoroughly entertaining game.

At the top, Real Bedford march on with a 4-1 victory at Aylesbury United as Berkhamsted were held at home by Kidlington, who are involved in what is developing into a fascinating battle to avoid the drop. Elsewhere in the top five, Barton Rovers and Thame United both won to strengthen their positions.

REPORTS FROM ALL GAMES | STATS | FEATURES



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PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

Basingstoke Town 0 Gosport Borough 1

Traffic issues meant that kick-off was delayed for this one and it took until the opening minute of the second half for Dan Wooden to give the visitors the lead. This was to prove to be the deciding moment in this one as the visitors took home all three points.

Frome Town 0 Chertsey Town 1

The visitors went ahead as Oliver McCoy added to his ever-growing tally late in the opening period. It proved to be the all-important goal as the visitors claimed all three points.

Gloucester City 3 Dorchester Town 3

The deadlock was broken when Wes Fogden grabbed an early lead here for the visitors and it was doubled midway through the half as Shaquille Gwengwe found the net.

The home side were given hope when Elis Watts pulled one back just before the hour-mark, however, Olaf Konzsla soon restored the visitors' two-goal advantage. A goal from Joe Hanks thrust the hosts straight back into it and he then went on to bag a dramatic equaliser deep into stoppage time to earn his side a share of the spoils.

Hanwell Town 2 Merthyr Town 1

The second half started with a penalty to the home side which Dan Carr stepped up and drove home to beat the 'keeper. As the clock ticked down, Matt MacKenzie doubled the hosts' advantage before a late penalty from Cole Jarvis set up a nerve-wracking final few minutes for the hosts, but they managed to see it out and secure a big win on a day that they celebrated 70 years of service for Chairman, Bob Fisher.

Havant & Waterlooville 3 Swindon Supermarine 2

The home side seized the initiative on five minutes when Callum Kealy was able to turn the ball home.

Parity was restored by Harry Williams with ten minutes to go until the interval and then the scoreline turned in the favour of the away team on the stroke of half-time thanks to Michael Elias-Fernandes.

The hosts didn't take long after the restart to level matters as leading scorer, Ryan Seager, made it 2-2 and then he put his side back in front, a lead which they were to hold on to.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

Hungerford Town 0 AFC Totton 3

The opening goal arrived on the quarter-hour mark and it came from Charlie Austin.

Another experienced head soon doubled the lead as Scott Rendell made it 2-0 to the away team and then early in the second period, a goal from Tony Lee put them firmly in the driving seat as they saw it out to claim a big three points against opponents who still have play-off aspirations.

Poole Town 1 Marlow 0

This one was finely poised up until the 73rd minute when Ezio Touray made it advantage to the hosts.

Late on the home side went agonisingly close to grabbing a second goal, but they managed to see this one out for an important win over opponents who pushed them all of the way.

Sholing 2 Taunton Town 0

The home side edged in front when Dan Mason found the net in the fourth minute and just before the break, a penalty from Michael Folivi gave them a two-goal advantage to take into the second period. As the clock ticked down at the end, Pat Nash saw red for the home team but they held on to claim the victory.

Tiverton Town 2 Bracknell Town 1

First blood went to the home side when Daniel Koita fired them in front towards the end of the first half.

A second goal arrived in the opening exchanges of the second half as player-manager, Asa Hall, gave his side some breathing space.

The visitors pulled one back through Jonathan Efedje to set up a tense final 20 minutes, but the home side saw it out to get a welcome win.

Walton & Hersham 2 Wimborne Town 1

After a hard-fought and evenly-matched opening period, it was the visitors who edged in front early in the second period as Josh Carmichael got the goal.

The visitors' task was made more difficult following a red card for Billy Walker on the hour-mark and then a Harvey Wright own goal levelled things up going into the final 15 minutes.

A goal from Ralph Vigrass late on put the home team ahead for the first time and they were able to see it out.

Winchester City 0 Plymouth Parkway 1

The deadlock was eventually broken here just past the hour when Rio Garside put the visitors ahead and that was to prove to be the deciding goal here as three points headed down to Devon.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

AFC Sudbury 3 Stourbridge 0

The opening goal fell to Callum Page on 13 minutes as he turned the ball home and then the same player doubled the advantage midway through the first half. Just before the hour and Marcel Lewis added another for the hosts to put them firmly in the driving seat.

A bad day for the visitors was made worse when Vladimiro Granjal Martins Pais saw red.

AFC Telford United 1 Spalding United 1

In the sunshine, Matt Stenson was able to put the hosts ahead in the early exchanges of this one only for Liam Moore to level matters just past the hour-mark.

This one was to end with honours even.

Alvechurch 0 Royston Town 2

It was lucky seven for the visitors as they took the lead through Aaron Greene in the seventh minute.

This was a pretty evenly-matched affair but as the hosts chased the game late on, Damaray Anyadike was able to weigh in with a second for the away team in stoppage time at the end.

Barwell 3 Biggleswade Town 1

The experienced Brady Hickey gave the home side the lead in stoppage time at the end of the opening period and then went on to double the advantage from the penalty spot just past the hour.

Hickey completed his hat-trick to make it 3-0 on 72 minutes and then Liam Andrews hit a consolation for the visitors who were well beaten in the end.

Bedford Town 1 Harborough Town 1

The early advantage went to the home side as Edward Gyamfi broke the deadlock but it was cancelled out by Alex Morris midway through the second half.

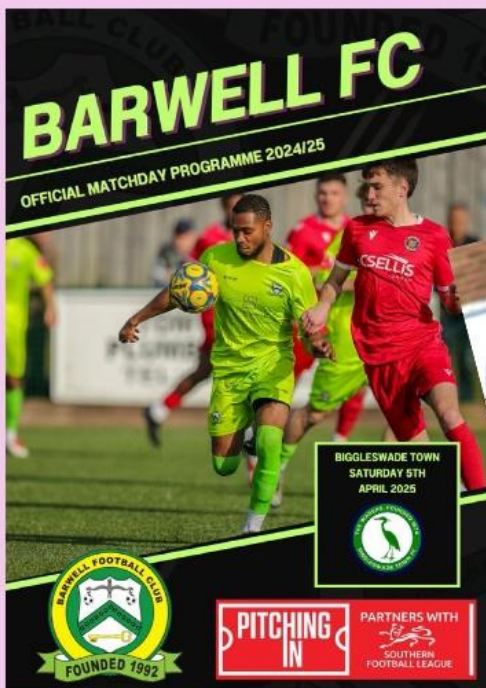
That's how the scoreline remained as the spoils were shared.

Bromsgrove Sporting 3 Lowestoft Town 1

It was the hosts who gained an early advantage through Theo Robinson and then Carter Lycett doubled the advantage towards the end of the first half.

The second period was barely five minutes old when Robinson added to the lead from the penalty spot.

A goal from Travis Cole saw the away team reduce the arrears but it proved to be a mere consolation effort for them.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

Kettering Town 2 Hitchin Town 2

There were five minutes gone in the second half when the visitors opened the scoring here as Dominic Dos Santos Martins got the goal.

A second goal for the away team came late on courtesy of Rio Deall but there was still time for Jonny Edwards to pull one back for the hosts from the penalty spot.

A dramatic finish saw Lewis White snatch a point for the home team in stoppage time.

Leiston 3 Banbury United 0

It was first blood to the home side when Kyran Clements got his name on the scoresheet after 11 minutes.

The lead was doubled ten minutes into the second half courtesy of Adam Mills, who then went on to get another shortly afterwards to complete a deserved win.

Redditch United 1 Stratford Town 1

The visitors took the lead within the opening minute here thanks to Callum Ebanks.

An equaliser for the hosts arrived on the hour-mark as Robbie Bunn was able to beat the 'keeper and that's how it remained as the teams shared a point apiece.

St Ives Town 0 Halesowen Town 0

An early red card for visiting defender, Jamie Willetts, put a spanner in the works but they managed to keep the hosts at bay without being able to find the net themselves as this one ended in stalemate.

Stamford 1 Bishop's Stortford 0

This one went right down to the wire and just as it looked as though both teams had cancelled each other out, Connor Bartle popped up to beat the 'keeper and give the home side the three points.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Bemerton Heath Harlequins 0 Falmouth Town AFC 1

It was the visitors who were looking the most likely team here for long periods and it came as little surprise when they finally took the lead through Rubin Wilson as the clock ticked down.

This was to prove to be the only goal of the game as the away teams took home a deserved three points.

Bideford AFC 2 Didcot Town 1

The home side went into the lead with ten minutes on the clock through Scott Robinson but that goal was cancelled out by Charlie Cook in the 25th minute.

A second goal from Robinson towards the end put the hosts back in front and earned them three big points to move them further away from the lower reaches of the table.



Bishops Cleeve 3 Shaftesbury 1

Recent arrival, Toy Holmes, continued to make his presence felt for the visitors as he put them ahead but it was soon cancelled out by Ross Langworthy.

The home side then went ahead midway through the opening period through Jay Malshankskyj and it wasn't long before Langworthy further increased the advantage.

There was to be no further addition to the scoring after the break as the hosts were able to maintain their play-off push.

Bristol Manor Farm 3 Larkhall Athletic 2

The opening goal went to the home side as George Dowling beat the 'keeper in the opening exchanges.

It soon became 2-0 when Harry Lucas got his name on the scoresheet. The visitors pulled one back through Spencer Dymond-Hall and then a strike from distance by Jake Hicks levelled the scores.

A red card for Jack Camm saw the away team reduced to ten men and Dowling took advantage as he grabbed a winner for the hosts late on.

Cinderford Town 0 Willand Rovers 2

The deadlock was broken towards the end of the opening period as Finley Rooke put the visitors ahead and they added a second through Ross Edwards with just over 20 minutes left on the clock.

This is how it remained as the away side picked up a big three points, leaving the hosts in trouble amongst the relegation places.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Evesham United 0 Exmouth Town 0

There was no scoring in our Game of the Day as the high-flying hosts were left frustrated in their attempts to find a way through a resolute visitors' back-line.

Helston Athletic 0 Yate Town 2

It took until the 54th minute for the deadlock to be broken here and it went to the away side as the experienced Ross Stearn put his side ahead.

Just like buses, when you wait for one to come along, another is not too far behind as Stearn soon notched his second and that was to be the end of the scoring as the leaders secured the win.

Malvern Town 3 Thatcham Town 0

Midway through the first half and Joe Tumelty put the hosts in front before young debutant 'keeper, Ryan Smallwood saved a penalty to keep the hosts in front. A second goal with 15 minutes to go, from Sam Clark, put the hosts well in command and the victory was rounded off in stoppage time as Ryan Brunt bagged a third.

Melksham Town 0 Cribbs 1

This one looked like heading for a goalless draw as neither side could find a way through two well-organised back-lines, that was until David Duru popped up to give the visitors a last-minute lead. It earned the away team three precious points.

Mousehole 1 Bashley 1

The home sides' patience paid off as Hayden Turner was in the right place at the right time to give them the lead in the 86th minute. But, credit to the visitors, as they hit back a couple of minutes later through Conor Whitely, and it was to end with honours even.

Westbury United 2 Tavistock AFC 2

It was unlucky 13 for the visitors as they fell behind to a goal from Josh Jenkins but parity was restored from the spot as Tyler Elliott converted just before the half-hour mark.

The hosts went back in front early in the second period thanks to Bevan Cross only for Liam Prynn to bring the scores back level late on as the spoils were shared.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Aylesbury United 1 Real Bedford 4

The League leaders went ahead with 13 minutes on the clock through Archie Jones and then two quickfire strikes from Joey Evans just before the break sent the visitors in at the interval three goals to the good and well in command.

The second half started with Ben Stevens extending the away team's lead before Luqman Kassim hit a consolation goal for the home team late on.

Barton Rovers 2 Welwyn Garden City 0

The opening goal arrived on 41 minutes as Charlie Milton set the hosts on their way before Taylor Rhiney doubled the advantage just before the hour-mark.

It proved to be a routine success for the play-off chasing hosts.

Berkhamsted 0 Kidlington 0

It was a frustrating afternoon for the hosts who just couldn't get into their stride against well-organised and determined opponents who were good value for their point and clean sheet.

Hadley 1 Enfield 0

Things came to life here when Callum Taylor was dismissed for the visitors with just under 20 minutes left on the clock and Billy Hayes took full advantage as he fired the hosts in front.

This was to prove to be the key moment of the afternoon as it gave the home side the victory.

Hertford Town 4 Flackwell Heath 6

John Staines' Birthday bash was going well until the game kicked off and within a minute the visitors proved to be party poopers as Jack Shakespeare opened the scoring.

The lead didn't last long as Riley Carr levelled matters with six minutes on the clock and then Marcus Painter put some gloss on the day as he turned the scoreline on its head by the tenth minute.

The explosive start continued when Adeniyi Gbolahan made it 3-1 shortly afterwards and then Michael Harding quickly reduced the arrears.

Painter then notched his second with ten minutes to go until the break and there was still time for Shakespeare to grab his second goal of the day too to make it 4-3 before the interval.

On the hour the scoreline was levelled up when Wiktor Makowski guided home for the away team and then he fired home from the spot to put his team back in front.

A late strike from Dylan Kearney gave the away team a 6-4 win on an entertaining afternoon played in front of a crowd of over 1,000.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Kings Langley 0 Beaconsfield Town 2

The visitors got their noses in front ten minutes from the end of the opening period courtesy of Joshua Marcon. It was the same player who doubled the advantage early in the second half and that was enough to seal the triumph for his side.

Leighton Town 1 Thame United 2

A goal from Mark Riddick just before the break put the away team ahead but it was cancelled out by Anthony Ball in the opening exchanges of the second half. There was drama at the death when an own goal from Lee Cooksey gave the visitors the win as the hosts' long unbeaten run came to an end.

Leverstock Green 2 North Leigh 0

It was first half stoppage time when Callum Neal broke the deadlock to put the home side ahead and then grabbed a second through Dan Weeks just past the hour-mark. The home side saw it out without too many problems to get a big three points in their quest to avoid the drop.

Northwood 6 Biggleswade FC 0

It was a case of leading by example when co-manager, Jon-Jo Bates, put his side ahead early on here and then Troy Perez-Duah, hat-trick hero last weekend, doubled the lead on the half-hour mark. A third goal wasn't too far away as Samuel Folarin found the net and then as the interval loomed, Rio Connell made it 4-0. The opening period was rounded off with another Bates goal to put his side in dreamland. There were just under 20 minutes to go when Folarin added a sixth goal to make it a memorable afternoon for his side.

Stotfold 2 AFC Dunstable 1

With 20 minutes played, Robbie Buchanan put the hosts ahead and then Mitchell Gooch was able to double the lead with five minutes to go to half-time. A goal from Joel Anker brought the visitors back into it with just under quarter-of-an-hour to go but the home side saw it out.



NEWS ROUND-UP

WESTBURY UNITED | STRONG BONDS

It takes a special kind of resolve to be able to put together a competitive team on little or no budget. That's what has happened at Westbury United during a campaign in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South that has brought its fair share of challenges both on and off the pitch, yet going into the final month of the season, they sit tucked just inside the top ten. To then see the players embark upon a 370-mile round trip to Falmouth Town for a Tuesday evening fixture and put in a display full of grit, determination and commitment to bring home a point from a goalless draw, shows exactly what a special group co-managers, Ricky Hulbert and Lewis Porter, have at their disposal. Popular defender, Dan Restorick, is one such hero. He was up in the early hours of the morning on the day of the game to start work so that he could finish in time to make the minibus down to Cornwall.

"I worked 6am until 2pm on Tuesday so that I could leave work in time to make the journey," he told us. "It's a long old day; after playing a tough 90 minutes we then had the trip home and didn't get back until the early hours of the morning.

"I think it makes you work even harder on the pitch to make sure that you get something from the game and our performance on the night certainly warranted at least a point.

"It's all part of non-League football. If you want to play at this level, you have to deal with long away trips on a Tuesday night from time to time, it's a case of working your job and personal life around it.

"It's been a strange season for one reason or another. There have been things happen that are out of our control but the fact that 90% of the players opted to stick together and continue playing here for free speaks volumes for the spirit we have amongst the group.

"The job that the Gaffers have done is nothing short of incredible. To get us to where we are with no budget takes something really special.

"We had a tricky start to the season but then managed to put a decent run together. There was a little blip following our move to play home games at Frome Town, but since being back at Westbury, we've gone on to pick up some decent results recently.

"Personally, I am having one of my best-ever seasons. My confidence is high and I've also chipped in with a few goals as well, which is always nice.

"Having players around you that you can trust is such a massive thing and the issues that the club has had has only brought us even closer together and strengthened the bond.

"As a team we know that we're not going to pass opponents off the pitch, but what we are is big, strong and hard to break down.

"It's been very much an up and down division this year. Some of the teams that were down towards the bottom last season have been up there challenging this time around, including ourselves.

"It's a very competitive League and there's always something to play for; if you can get on a run of four or five wins it can make such a big difference.

"We've already beaten the record number of points that Westbury United have ever achieved at this level, so between now and the season we want to be able to add to that and finish as high up the table as we possibly can.

"A few more goals for myself would be nice too!"

BANBURY UNITED | NUMBERS GAME

It's fair to say that the Banbury United supporters have been starved of goals this season, at both ends of the field.

With 34 goals scored from their 37 Pitching In Southern League Premier Central games so far, they are the lowest scorers in the division. But by the same token, their record of just 33 conceded is easily the best in the division.

Therefore, it must have come as something of a shock to those hardy fans who made the long trip to Lowestoft Town on Tuesday evening to witness a seven-goal thriller, with five of the goals being scored by their team, including a hat-trick from Connor Stanley.

"It was a really positive performance," the experienced George Forsyth told us. "We started brightly and had done our homework on them, which is credit to the management staff. The Gaffer is very thorough in his preparation and that's why we are so difficult to break down. "I was delighted for Connor to get a hat-trick; he's a dream to play alongside. His ability is there for all to see, but he also does so much hard work for the team that can go unnoticed. I am so happy that he was finally able to get off the mark and I think that for the team as a whole, we were due a big win like this.

"Our defensive record is something that we are very proud of, but we know only too well that we don't score enough goals to go alongside it, so to get five on our travels on Tuesday was fantastic and long overdue.

"There is a really strong team environment here and a lot of the credit for that should go to skipper, Yaw Ofosu. I arrived here in November and felt comfortable straight away. Everyone knows their roles and responsibilities within the team structure and there is such a strong desire to keep the ball out of our net. It also helps that we have the best keeper in the League!

"This is such a crazy League. Look at how close things still are throughout and we're now into the final month. It's fine margins in almost all games; if we had a 20+ goal striker it would have made such a massive difference for us.

"We know that we haven't taken the points we should have done against the teams in the lower half of the table. Our points return against the top six has been very good; we try to play good football and dominate the ball."

So, with five games to go, what are the aims and targets?

"We just want to finish as high up the table as we possibly can," replied Forsyth. "We're unbeaten in five now and playing with freedom and confidence. I see no reason why we can't go on to get another positive return from these final five games.

"I've played every minute since I arrived at the club in November. I have so much trust and belief in the squad and manager and hopefully I can maintain the levels that I have set in these remaining games.

"It certainly helps when you know that the role you play within the team is appreciated and recognised by those around you."

Another player who joined the club part-way through the season and has contributed greatly to their defensive strength is Alex Prosser:

"The back five are so well-drilled," he added. "It starts from Jack Harding in goal and as a unit we are all committed and organised.

"It provides the team with a great base to build from. The energy and work-rate is there throughout the team and we've had encouraging signs recently that we can be an attacking threat too.

"Stanno [Connor Stanley] has been excellent since he joined us and his hat-trick on Tuesday will do him the power of good. It was such a good feeling to score five, although as a defender I was disappointed that we conceded two.

"But to finally see us get the rewards for the chances we create was really pleasing. We made a fast start, but credit to our hosts because they managed to get back in it, however, once we got back in front, we could have gone on to win by a bigger margin.

"With a bit more rub of the green, there's no reason why we can't take this forward now and give us something positive to take into next season."

Another road trip, this time to Leiston, took place earlier today.

INFLUENCER

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

OSCAR MASSEY (MOUSEHOLE) > CRISTIANO RONALDO

The biggest influence and idol for me growing up was Cristiano Ronaldo, undoubtedly the best ever.

NORTHWOOD | BACKING THE BEARDS

There's a hard-fought battle going on at both ends of the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central table as we enter the final month of the campaign. At the bottom, the fight to avoid the drop is set to be a real close shave but Northwood have benefitted from bearded heroes, Jack Smith and Jon Jo Bates, stepping up from their playing roles to take the helm following the recent resignation of Gary Meakin. Their first game in charge saw them denied victory over play-off hopefuls, Barton Rovers, by an equaliser deep into stoppage time and then on Saturday they came away from a proverbial 'six-pointer' at Kidlington with a 5-2 success.

"Both myself and Jon Jo were asked to take the team and we took the role with open arms," Smith told us. "There was no hesitation whatsoever; we both care passionately about the club and we both agree that we shouldn't be struggling in the lower reaches of the table.

"We've got a strong squad here with plenty of ability and we've been able to keep them together whilst adding a few new faces here and there and it's been reflected with two great performances in our first couple of games.

"The boys have displayed a tremendous attitude and the team spirit is there for all to see. Four points and six goals scored from our first two games is very positive; all 16 players have played their part and given us everything so far.

"But it doesn't stop there and the nature of this stage of the season is that we have to be ready to go again, particularly after losing to Leverstock Green on Tuesday.

"We've only been in charge for just over a week but we've already learned a lot. Being in the dug-out is totally different to being a player; there is so much to do and think about, it's been a whirlwind, but both Jon Jo and I are up for this challenge.

"We're digging deep and the application of every single player has been top-drawer – we cannot fault their desire or efforts. There are six games to go and we need one big final push. It's about everyone working together on and off the pitch.

"This is such a competitive League with so many good teams and experienced players involved. I know from playing in it this season how tough every game is regardless of whether you are up against opponents from the top end of the table or those towards the bottom.

"Of course there is pressure, but that's why we play football. I'd also like to give a special shout-out to Mark, Rich and Saj, who have supported us with the warm ups. There are so many unsung heroes behind-the-scenes who also deserve recognition."



YATE TOWN | STEARN FOCUS

With five games to go and their lead at the top of the Pitching In Southern League Division One South table now cut down to just one point, nothing is going to distract Ross Stearn from the task in hand.

The Yate Town front-man, who joined the club during the summer, recently chalked up his 600 senior appearance from a career that has seen him give sterling service to the likes of Weston super Mare, Bath City, Sutton United, Eastleigh, Chippenham Town and Taunton Town over the past decade.

"Not many players reach 600 games, so I am proud of the achievement," he said. "But right now my focus is firmly fixed on getting the job done and securing the title here at Yate.

"When the dust settles on the season, sure, it's something I will look back upon with great pride but for now there is work to be done and with just five games to go we're down to the nitty-gritty of the season.

"We've been at the top of the table for a long time and when that's the case, everyone is out to beat you and rightly so.

"We've earned that tag and now we've got to make sure that we get it over the line. Things are still very much in our hands, so it's down to us to go out there and win these remaining games.

"We've had winning runs throughout the season and there's no reason why we can't go on another one now.

"It's fine margins. Whilst we've only won one of our last six games, on the flip-side we've only lost one of those games too. There have been too many draws and we know that this has to improve, particularly with a number of clubs just below us finding good form.

"We have to be able to find a way to get to where we want to be. We've worked hard to rectify the areas that we've not done so well at recently and we're excited and ready for the challenge that lies ahead during the month of April.

"Each game becomes bigger than the last. I'm fortunate to have two title-winning seasons under my belt and I am desperate for a third. I'll be doing everything I can to ensure that this is the case and we can achieve what we set out to at the very start of the season."

Stearn and his team-mates headed to relegation-threatened Helston Athletic earlier today before a successive Saturday in Cornwall sees them take on Mousehole. They return to home action on Good Friday with the visit of Cinderford Town before ending the campaign with an away trip to neighbours, Bristol Manor Farm and a home encounter with Didcot Town.

PST SPORT CLUB OF THE MONTH AWARDS | MARCH 2025

The PST Sport Club of the Month Awards for March 2025 have been announced.

In the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central, the honour goes to Halesowen Town. They were made to work hard for their victory on the opening day of the month as Alex Cameron's last-minute strike gave them a 1-0 win at bottom of the table, Biggleswade Town. Another 1-0 success followed, this time at home to Banbury United as Kieren Donnelly netted the all-important goal early in the second period.

Donnelly was also amongst the scores in their next outing as they triumphed 2-1 at Hitchin Town. A goal from Conor Tee set them on their way at the start of the second half and it was soon followed by Donnelly's effort. Their hosts pulled a goal back in stoppage time, but it was too little, too late.

Back on home soil and a 3-1 victory over Lowestoft Town followed. It wasn't all plain-sailing, though, as the visitors snatched an early lead only for Ryan Wynter to level matters on the half-hour mark and then Alex Cameron turn the scoreline on its head soon afterwards. McKauley Manning weighed in with a third goal just before the break.

The month came to a close with a 1-1 draw at fellow high-flyers, Harborough Town. Conor Tee put the Yeltz ahead two minutes into the second half but it was cancelled out with just a few minutes left on the clock.

The Pitching In Southern League Premier South winners are Merthyr Town.

The Welsh outfit faced a top of the table clash to start the month as they shared the spoils at second-placed AFC Totton. Ricardo Rees put them ahead only for a late equaliser from the home side see honours end even.

A 2-1 home victory over Swindon Supermarine came next as two goals in the opening 13 minutes, from Ricardo Rees and Keiran Evans, did the damage. The visitors went on to pull a goal back but the hosts saw it out.

An away win at Gosport Borough came next where they had to come from behind to achieve it. They trailed for less than ten minutes as Ricardo Rees equalised with 34 minutes on the clock before Keiran Evans put them in front early in the second period. A second goal for Rees with quarter-of-an-hour to go sealed the win.

It was the same scoreline in their next outing and again they had to come from behind to achieve it. Visitors Chertsey Town scored an early opener and this time it took until ten minutes into the second half for the equaliser to arrive courtesy of Callum Ryan-Phillips. The goal galvanised them as Tom Handley went on to bag a brace.

The month ended as they made it a hat-trick of 3-1 successes, this time at Winchester City where Ricardo Rees was quick off the mark with a goal after just two minutes and Lee Lucas doubling the advantage just before the 20-minute mark. Cawley Cox gave them a three-goal advantage on the stroke of half-time and although the home side pulled one back after the break, the managed the remainder of the game well.

Into the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central and a fantastic run of form by Leighton Town has seen them as worthy winners.

Two quickfire goals early in the second half, from Kyal Williams and Godlove Oppong gave them a winning start to the month as they beat Hertford Town 2-0.

A late Charlie Pattison effort was enough to see off the challenge of AFC Dunstable in the next game before Kyal Williams and Godlove Oppong were both on the scoresheet once more in a 2-1 victory over Kidlington.

Oppong bagged the winner in their next outing at Kings Langley and it was followed by another clean sheet and a 2-0 triumph over Welwyn Garden City. An early own goal set them on their way as Kyal Williams notched a second goal just past the half-hour mark.

There was just one goal in it as they travelled to Aylesbury United and came home with a 1-0 win thanks to an 18th minute effort from Toluwalope Ikuyinminu.

A commanding 3-0 away win at bottom of the table, North Leigh, brought the month to a close and saw them with a perfect record from their seven games. Lynton Goss set them on their way before Kyal Williams added two more goals to his ever-increasing tally.

Finally, in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South, the accolade goes to Evesham United.

The month started with an away trip to struggling Helston Athletic where they were somewhat fortunate to emerge with a point as Reegan Messenger delivered a late equaliser to grab a share of the spoils.

Messenger was amongst the scorers in the next game as they secured a good 2-1 victory over leaders, Yate Town. It was the visitors who struck first on 15 minutes, only for Messenger to make his mark as the interval loomed. The second period was less than ten minutes old when Andre Wright stepped up to notch the winner.

Another home encounter followed, this time against Bideford AFC, where Levi Steele hit a first half brace, which had a goal from the visitors sandwiched in between. Any nerves were settled when Amer Awadh stepped up to make it 3-1 early in the second half and that's how it stayed.

A quickfire double from Levi Steele proved to be the difference as he made the long trip down to Falmouth Town. The hosts pulled a goal back late in the first half but Evesham were able to hold out to secure the victory.

There was a different name on the scoresheet in the 2-0 victory over Cribbs as central defender, Toby Raison, helped himself to both of the goals. The month ended with a hard-earned 1-0 away triumph at Tavistock AFC as Andre Wright won it with 76 minutes on the clock to end a productive month as they closed the gap on leaders, Yate Town, to just a single point.

We congratulate the four winners:

Premier Central – Halesowen Town (2.600ppg) | Premier South – Merthyr Town (2.600ppg) | Division One Central – Leighton Town (3.000ppg) | Division One South – Evesham United (2.667ppg)

Please note that each club needs to have played at least three games in a qualifying competition (League, Emirates FA Cup or Isuzu FA Trophy) during the course of the month to be eligible for the award. Goal difference is considered for League matches only.

ABOUT THE PST SPORT CLUB OF THE MONTH AWARDS

In each division, the club with the best average points per game is declared the winner. Clubs must have played a minimum of three games during the month in either a league, League Cup, FA Cup or FA Trophy match to be considered. Should more than one club have the same best average points per game, then the winner shall be declared as the club with the best goal difference (in League matches) and if that is equal the club scoring the most goals.

PST Sport are the sponsors of the Southern Football League's club of the month awards for the four divisions. Each winner receives an engraved glass memento along with a voucher for use with the company. PST Sport design and build state-of-the-art artificial grass pitches, from full-size pitches to training areas, that stand up to the challenges of all sporting codes.

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FIXTURES | THE WEEK AHEAD

Pitching In Southern League Premier South

TUESDAY 08 APR 25

Taunton Town v AFC Totton

SATURDAY 12 APR 25

AFC Totton v Tiverton Town

Bracknell Town v Winchester City

Chertsey Town v Gloucester City

Dorchester Town v Walton & Hersham

Gosport Borough v Hanwell Town

Marlow v Hungerford Town

Merthyr Town v Poole Town

Plymouth Parkway v Sholing

Swindon Supermarine v Frome Town

Taunton Town v Havant & Waterlooville

Wimborne Town v Basingstoke Town

Pitching In Southern League Premier Central

SATURDAY 12 APR 25

Banbury United v AFC Telford United

Biggleswade Town v Redditch United

Bishop's Stortford v Kettering Town

Halesowen Town v Barwell

Harborough Town v St Ives Town

Hitchin Town v AFC Sudbury

Lowestoft Town v Bedford Town

Royston Town v Bromsgrove Sporting

Spalding United v Alvechurch

Stourbridge v Leiston

Stratford Town v Stamford

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

SHOW 11

Pitching In Southern League Division One South

TUESDAY 08 APR 25

Falmouth Town AFC v Bishops Cleeve

WEDNESDAY 09 APR 25

Exmouth Town v Bemerton Heath Harlequins

SATURDAY 12 APR 25

Bashley v Cribbs

Bishops Cleeve v Larkhall Athletic

Bristol Manor Farm v Malvern Town

Cinderford Town v Bideford AFC

Didcot Town v Melksham Town

Exmouth Town v Falmouth Town AFC

Mousehole v Yate Town

Shaftesbury v Helston Athletic

Tavistock AFC v Bemerton Heath Harlequins

Westbury United v Evesham United

Willand Rovers v Thatcham Town

Pitching In Southern League Division One Central

TUESDAY 08 APR 25

Kings Langley v Biggleswade FC

Northwood v Thame United

SATURDAY 12 APR 25

Berkhamsted v North Leigh

Biggleswade FC v Beaconsfield Town

Enfield v AFC Dunstable

Flackwell Heath v Welwyn Garden City

Hadley v Stotfold

Kidlington v Barton Rovers

Leverstock Green v Thame United

Northwood v Leighton Town

Real Bedford v Kings Langley

Ware 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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