SOUTHERN LEAGUE

SATURDAY EVENING E-NEWSPAPER

Saturday 26 October 2024

WINNING FAREWELL



There was limited action in the top two divisions this afternoon due to the Isuzu FA Trophy.

In the Premier South, four second half goals kept up Merthyr Town's challenge at the top as they beat Frome Town 4-0. Meanwhile there was a much-needed third win of the season for Tiverton Town as they overcame the challenge of Poole Town by three goals to one.

The day's other game saw Basingstoke Town come from two goals down to earn a point from a 2-2 draw at Swindon Supermarine.

Only two games survived in the Premier Central as a late goal from Harvey Sayer gave Lowestoft Town a I-0 triumph over Harborough Town in manager, Jamie Godbold's final game at the helm before he moves into the FA Premier League with a role at Ipswich Town. The other game ended in stalemate as AFC Sudbury and St. Ives Town played out a goalless draw.

The Southern League's final undefeated record went at Helston Athletic as they lost 4-3 at home to Malvern Town in a dramatic encounter which saw the visitors go two goals up only for the Cornish outfit to hit back and lead before two late goals condemned them to defeat as Sam Clark bagged a hat-trick for The Hillsiders.

Elsewhere, Exmouth Town left it late to win 2-0 at Didcot Town and strengthen their challenge amongst the leading pack. It was a good day for Willand Rovers who went to high-flying Evesham United and secured a 4-0 away win. In the lower reaches of the table, Shaftesbury secured a much-needed 4-0 victory over Cinderford Town.

In Division One Central, the Game of the Day saw Real Bedford bring home a hard-earned I-0 win from fellow high-flyers, Flackwell Heath. It took a goal from Archie Jones to decide it.

There was late drama at Beaconsfield Town where three stoppage time goals saw them draw 2-2 with AFC Dunstable, whilst Enfield equalised in stoppage time in their 2-2 draw with Biggleswade FC who had gone two goals up.

Both Thame United and Welwyn Garden City had solid 4-0 home triumphs over Hertford Town and North Leigh respectively.

In the Isuzu FA Trophy first round proper, there was an away win for Royston Town at Cambridge City, Yate Town went to Hungerford Town and prospered 3-2 and Chertsey Town were commanding winners at Uxbridge. Full list of results inside.

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









PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH & CENTRAL

Merthyr Town 4 Frome Town 0

After going in at the break with a stalemate, it was the home side that came out of the blocks with purpose for the second half and they were rewarded when Lewys Twamley gave them the lead early on. With the momentum behind them, Kane Simpson was able to double the Welsh outfit's advantage on the hour-mark. A late Cole Jarvis goal sealed the victory for the hosts before Ricardo Rees added further gloss with a fourth at the death.

Swindon Supermarine 2 Basingstoke Town 2

Midway through the opening period and the home side got themselves in front through Harry Williams.

There was still time before the break for Lucas Vine to add a second goal for the hosts before Will Upton pulled one back for the visitors in first half stoppage time. As the clock ticked down, Jonathan Efedje pounced to level matters and that's how it finished with the spoils shared.

Tiverton Town 3 Poole Town I

It was first blood to the hosts as Joe Parker guided the ball home in the opening exchanges and then Tor Swann doubled the advantage on 19 minutes as he finished gracefully.

A good day's work was completed when Jevan Wright found the net late on to make it 3-0 and even though Dario Sesay-De Luca pulled one back late on, it proved to be too little, too late.

AFC Sudbury 0 St Ives Town 0

This was a game where defences were very much on top as neither side could make the breakthrough despite their best efforts.

Lowestoft Town I Harborough Town 0

There were 82 minutes on the clock when the deadlock was finally broken as Harvey Sayer continued his recent scoring run by giving the home side the lead in what is Jamie Godbold's final game in charge of the club. A late red card for Charlie Norman made it a tense finish for the hosts as they protected their slim advantage with ten men, but they managed to see it out to secure all three points.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Bideford AFC | Melksham Town 2

The visitors got themselves in front towards the end of the first half courtesy of a penalty that was coolly converted by lake Andrews.

The opening exchanges of the second period saw the away team reduced to ten men when Mark Cooper was dismissed but it only acted to galvanise them as Henry Sady doubled their lead following a defensive error.

Ryan Turner was able to pull a goal back for the hosts to set up a hard-fought final 20 minutes, but the visitors were able to see it out to get a hard-fought win.

Bishops Cleeve I Falmouth Town AFC 0

This hard-fought battle in the sunshine looked like it was heading for a stalemate until Ethan Dunbar popped up to put the go and it proved to be the difference between the two sides.

Didcot Town 0 Exmouth Town 2

This one was heading for a goalless draw until the final minute when Tom Bath was able to give the visitors a dramatic lead from the penalty spot. With their heads down, Isaac McCue was able to add a second for the away team deep into stoppage time as he guided the ball home from close range.

Evesham United 0 Willand Rovers 4

There was a double blow for the hosts on the quarter-hour mark when Sam Bailey received his marching orders for a second yellow card as he conceded a penalty which Owen Howe converted, just as he did in their previous game.

The opening exchanges of the second period saw the visitors extend their lead as Howe notched his second goal of the afternoon.

A good away day was complete in the final minutes when Jacob Wellington booted the ball home to give the Devon outfit a three-goal advantage and Philip Da Silva Mendoca made it four.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Helston Athletic 3 Malvern Town 4

The visitors went ahead on eight minutes when Joe Tumelty played in Sam Clark who stayed cool to slot home.

The visitors doubled their advantage on 25 minutes when Alex Bell, who has been in a rich vein of scoring form, lashed the ball home.

Just before the break, the home side were given a lifeline when Reece Thomson pulled a goal back and then Jack Crago went on to level on 78 minutes.

Two minutes later and the hosts were in front for the first time when Jacob Smith found the net.

The visitors refused to lie down, though, and hit back with four minutes to go as Clark notched his second goal of the afternoon and then dramatically complete his hat-trick in the final minute to condemn the hosts to their first defeat of the season.

Larkhall Athletic 3 Thatcham Town 0

The deadlock was broken six minutes from the end of the first half when Alex Lambert fired home for the hosts.

Just past the hour-mark, Jake Hicks was able to double the home team's lead and the victory was sealed late on thanks to Ryan Beckinsale's goal.



Mousehole 3 Bemerton Heath Harlequins 2

The home side edged in front in the Cornish sunshine as Oliver Challinor found the net in the opening exchanges.

A goal from Torin Ntege gave the hosts a bit of breathing space as he made it 2-0 with just over 20 minutes to go and then Hayden Turner weighing in with a third.

A late strike from Joe Smith and then another goal with virtually the last kick of the game saw the visitors come so near yet so far away from getting something from the game.

Shaftesbury 4 Cinderford Town 0

This battle between two sides in the lower reaches of the table went the way of the hosts as Liam Farrugia put them ahead before Jack Hoey added a second. Satterly and Nixon added two more after the break.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Beaconsfield Town 2 AFC Dunstable 2

The deadlock was finally broken 67 minutes in when Jacques Kpohomouh found the net for the home side.

There was late drama as the visitors won a stoppage time penalty which Momodou allow stepped up and stayed cool to convert and level the scores.

However, the home side went straight down the other end and Kingston White-Glean put them back in front but that was not the end of it as Kyle Brooks levelled again in the 98th minute and that's how it finished.

Berkhamsted 2 Ware 0

After a goalless first half, the hosts wasted little time after the restart to forge ahead as Luke Andrews was able to open the scoring.

Enfield 2 Biggleswade FC 2

With half-time approaching, Daniel Bond was able to give the visitors the lead and he doubled the advantage four minutes into stoppage time at the end of the opening period, which had seen chances at either end.

The home side were able to pull a goal back with just over 20 minutes left on the clock when Dimitri Christou was in the right place at the right time to score.

Late drama saw George Edgeworth make it 2-2 in stoppage time at the end as it finished with honours even.

Flackwell Heath 0 Real Bedford I

This battle between two high-flying teams was a cagey affair and it took until 20 minutes from time for the deadlock to be broken when Archie lones gave the visitors the lead.

The visitors managed to hold on to secure a big win for them in what was a hard-fought and entertaining affair.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Leverstock Green 2 Leighton Town 2

It was the visitors who got their noses in front in the eighth minute courtesy of Charlie Pattison but that was cancelled out as the half-hour mark approached through Lewis Collins.

The visitors regained the lead in stoppage time at the end of the opening period when Jack Sayell found the net.

On 53 minutes, parity was restored once more when Luke Beckwith was able to convert from the penalty spot and that's how it ended.

Stotfold 0 Kings Langley 3

It was the visitors who took the lead just past the half-hour mark when James Towell cleaned up inside the area to apply the finish.

The home side's woe was compounded as they went down to ten men following Dempsey Thomas' red card and Jake Anthony took advantage when he added to the visitors' lead.

Just past the hour-mark and Brad Smith made it 3-0 to complete a commanding away triumph for his side.

Thame United 4 Hertford Town 0

It didn't take Curtis Brown long to put the home side in front as he found the net within the opening minute.

The lead was doubled on 12 minutes when Tom McElroy got his name on the scoresheet and then Dan West added a third before 20 minutes had even been played.

As the clock ticked down, Jefferson Louis stepped up to add a fourth goal from the penalty spot and complete the victory.

Welwyn Garden City 4 North Leigh 0

The home team broke the deadlock with just three minutes on the clock as Bailey Stevenson was on hand to turn the ball home.

The lead was doubled just before the half-hour mark with Brad Wadkins applying the finish and then ten minutes from the break, Lewis Taaffe weighed in with a third goal.

A fourth goal eventually arrived in the closing stages from the boot of Matthew Whichelow to give his side three deserved points.



TO PANCAKE



ISUZU FA TROPHY FIRST ROUND PROPER

AFC Totton 1 Dorchester Town 0
Barton Rovers 0 Folkestone Invicta 3
Barwell 0 Sporting Khalsa 2
Biggleswade Town 2 Potters Bar Town 0
Bishop's Stortford 1 Felixstowe & Walton United 6



Bristol Manor Farm | Havant & Waterlooville | (Havant & Waterlooville win 4-2 on pens) Cambridge City I Royston Town 2 Gloucester City 2 Coleshill Town3 Gosport Borough 5 Taunton Town I Hadley 4 Hastings United 3 Halesowen Town 4 Congleton Town I Hanwell Town 5 Hendon 0 Hungerford Town 2 Yate Town 3 Mickleover I AFC Telford United 2 Plymouth Parkway 0 Chichester City 4 Stourbridge 0 Alvechurch I Tavistock AFC 0 Winchester City 4 Uxbridge 0 Chertsey Town 3

SATURDAY EVENING FEATURE

HOME FROM HOME

What's it like to be a young Southern League player living hundreds of miles from home? At Pitching In Southern League Division One South outfit, Mousehole, they have a number of players who are in a similar situation. We caught up with one of them, Ryan Barrett...

The former Newcastle United youngster is now back in action following an injury which halted his progress earlier in the season.

His football journey has taken him from the north-east giants, where he spent a decade from the age of 11 to the likes of Wrexham, where his dad, Paul, was a midfielder between 1998 and 2004, Inverness Caledonian Thistle, Blyth Spartans and into deepest Cornwall, racking up the miles along the way! When the call came from Mousehole Head Coach, Jake Ash, Barrett admits that he had to take a look at Google Maps to find out where the club was based.

"The Gaffer knew I was out of contract and didn't have a club at the time, so he made contact," recalled Barrett. "He was honest with me and told me about the way Mousehole play, the sort of plans and visions of the football club and a little bit about the town and being down here. "I looked on Google Maps, and thought; 'Wow, that's a long way'! But I was really impressed, to be honest, when I first come down, I didn't really know what the standard was going to be like in terms of players but I was really impressed. "There are a few lads here who have similar backgrounds in the game to mine and once I came down here and started training, things clicked straight away. It's clear that the club wants to progress and develop and that was important for me too."



MILES BETTER | Ryan Barrett is enjoying life in Cornwall

Barrett has now been at Mousehole for a little over a season, sharing a flat in Newlyn flat with a number of fellow exiles Ross Derham, Julio Fresneda and Mo Konte. It's cramped but games of Mario Kart keep them occupied between footballing sessions and spells in the kitchen.

Ryan describes himself as a competitive player who loves to win. It's something that spills over into his home life.

"You know, they're good lads," he added. "Obviously, we're from different parts of England as well, so I think it's the first time they've lived away from home too. I'm kind of acting as the older brother in a sense, but we get on well.

MOUSEHOLE | RYAN BARRETT



FLOWN THE NEST | Ryan Barrett spent a decade at Newcastle United

"We take turns cleaning, cooking and stuff which is important. But I'm the best cook - no question about it! Julio has got a few little Spanish tricks up his sleeve. He likes to put the chefs' hat on and take control every now and again. But I'm the best." As well as the fun of living together, Ryan feels the shared house succeeds because of shared ambitions.

"We all want to progress our careers forward so it's a good environment to be in where we can all work hard together - not only on the pitch but also off the pitch to support each other in reaching our goals."

So, despite being a nine-hour drive away from home, Ryan is starting to feel really settled here in a place he calls 'another part of the world'.





"I feel like down here in Mousehole, it's a great opportunity to develop at a good standard of football. I'm just looking forward to the future, to see what we can do this season, where we can go and how we're going to develop going forward.

"It's good to be back in action and whilst it's been a decent start to the season, we know that there is still a lot more to come from us as we look to get ourselves into the leading pack and push for the play-offs like last season."

Mousehole played host to an in-form Bemerton Heath Harlequins earlier today.

*With thanks to Kevin Bishop for his assistance with this feature.

NEWS ROUND-UP

WINCHESTER CITY | PITCH PERFECT

Pitching In Southern League Premier South outfit, Winchester City, have this week officially opened their new facilities at their Charters Community Stadium home.

The 3G surface and other upgrades has been funded by a grant from the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation of £1,132,214; Winchester City Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £300,000; and £16,000 from Winchester City FC.

As well as being used by the club and all of its affiliated teams, it is also available for wider local community activity sessions and private hire, including use by schools, colleges and other clubs. Robert Sullivan, Chief Executive of The Football Foundation, said: "The Football Foundation is working closely with our partners – the Premier League, The FA and Government – to transform the quality of grassroots facilities in England by delivering projects like this across the country. "Good quality playing facilities have a transformative impact on physical and mental health and play an important role in bringing people together and strengthening local communities.

"We're delighted that the local community in Winchester will now be able to enjoy all these benefits thanks to the new 3G pitch at Winchester City FC."

Winchester City Council's Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement Cllr Kathleen Becker added: "We're very pleased to celebrate the official opening of this fantastic new surface which cements existing opportunities for community sport.

"It opens up exciting new ones too, including increased opportunities for female coaches and players in the district.

"Already being well used by the local community, we also look forward to seeing this pitch benefit schools and other clubs for sessions, holiday activity and private hire."

Winchester City FC Chairman, Ken Raisbeck, commented: "The completion of the stadium development represents a significant moment in the history of the football club but also an opportunity for the community of Winchester. "Football is a great vehicle to bring people together as well as encourage health and wellbeing. This facility creates a home for the club and from five-year-olds through to the first team, we now have an asset that can be used by everyone. "I am delighted that the council supported the vision and through the football club we were able to bring investment to the city to provide this fantastic facility; it's an exciting moment in the development of the club and our community partners."

Winchester City started a run of three successive away games today as they headed to Tavistock AFC in the Isuzu FA Trophy.

BEMERTON HEATH HARLEQUINS | SWITCHED ON

It was a good night for Bemerton Heath Harlequins on Tuesday as their 5-2 victory over Larkhall Athletic made it three wins in a row and moved them up into the top ten in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South table.

Weighing in with four of the five goals was Leighton Thomas who put in a sparkling display under the floodlights.

"It was a great feeling to get four goals," he told us. "It came as a surprise as I've not scored that many in a game before, but the main thing was that we got the win to extend our winning run.

"This is a good team that works hard for each and we all push each other on. I've settled in well here and our results have really picked up in recent weeks.

"I know how competitive this League can be; there's no resting on our laurels because things can change quickly, we have to be switched on at all time.

"Different teams have their own way of playing and it's about learning how to cope with each challenge that comes our way.

"The new Gaffer has come in with high expectations and we are starting to meet those. This is only the start of the journey, though, and we have to be able to do it over a prolonged period of time.

"If we can do that then there is no reason why we can't aim for the play-offs. "Scoring four goals has given me plenty of confidence and hopefully more goals will follow."

A trip down to Mousehole was on the agenda today for Bemerton Heath Harlequins.



INFLUENCER

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

CHEYCE GRANT (KIDLINGTON) > JERMAIN DEFOE

When I was a kid, I was a striker and always quite short compared to everyone else, so I used to watch Defoe closely in the way he handled himself against big defenders and his finishing.

NEWS ROUND-UP

CINDERFORD TOWN | GOAL-DEN

Goals are the name of the game for Alex Bonthron. After winning the JD Cymru South Golden Boot in 2022/23, he was once more amongst the top scorers last term for Cwmbran Celtic.

Earlier this month, the former Merthyr Town man was persuaded to move into the Pitching In Southern League Division One South with newly-promoted, Cinderford Town, who were finding the early going tough, and four goals from the last two games show exactly what a key signing this is for The Foresters.

Last weekend, his second half hat-trick earned his side a 3-1 come-from-behind victory at Cribbs, a feat made even better by the fact that they did it with ten men following the dismissal of Lewis Powell.

"I am buzzing with the win first and foremost," he told us. "To do it with ten men made it even more hard-earned; the boys worked their socks off to get a deserved three points.

"I may get the headlines because I scored a hattrick, but this was absolutely a team effort with everyone playing their part.

"I've settled in well here. It's a friendly club with a top drawer group of lads and the management are super supportive of me, which fills me with bags of confidence.

"I'm enjoying this League; it's a decent standard and it's nice to be playing in new surroundings at some lovely grounds. It's a change from the Welsh League and a new challenge for me, which is what I needed

"The team were finding goals hard to come by after moving up a level at the end of last season, so hopefully I can bring that to the table as well as extra energy.

"Saturday's victory saw us begin to climb up the table, so hopefully this can continue and we can finish as high as possible. I want to score as many as I can; the golden boot would be nice but I've only played two games, so I don't want to get too far ahead of myself!"

Cinderford Town headed to Shaftesbury this afternoon in what is a big game for both clubs.





NORTHWOOD | SUN SHINES ON SMITH

There was joy for Northwood last Saturday as they picked up their first win in the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central, at the tenth time of asking. The 2-1 victory at a sun-kissed Beaconsfield Town was made even more impressive by the fact that they found themselves a goal down after just 45 seconds.

At that point, the team could have been forgiven for thinking; 'here we go again', but they were able to turn the scoreline around before half-time thanks to goals from Godlove Oppong and Adeniyi Gbolahan and then saw the game out after the break. "We've been really unlucky in recent weeks, so we knew that the first win was coming," said skipper, Jack Smith., who put in an impressive display. "We're buzzing to get the three points; the boys showed such great determination to respond to going behind so early in the game.

"I was pleased to have provided the assist for our equaliser and then we went on to get a second goal with virtually the last kick of the first half, and that was crucial. "It meant that we went in at the interval on a high and with something to hold on to. "We need to take this, and the feeling we got at the final whistle, on now into the run of games ahead.

"This is only my fourth or fifth game at the club and in each of those we've been unlucky. It's not as if we're being well beaten. We have a strong squad, which is quite young, so we've been able to add a bit more quality and know-how over recent weeks.

"The new management team has also made a difference and just generally there has been a bit more of a buzz around the place recently.

"This is such a competitive division to be part of. It's all very much still to play for. There are a couple of teams at the top who are flying, but the rest are pretty evenly-matched and a few more wins would see us climb the table pretty rapidly, where, in my opinion, we deserve to be.

"I feel that we can definitely break into the top half of the table before Christmas and then look to have a strong second half of the campaign. A few more assists from me like on Saturday and some goals wouldn't go amiss either!"

Northwood slipped to a 4-2 defeat at Hertford Town on Tuesday evening with the home side grabbing two goals in the final ten minutes to take the points, after Adeniyi Gbolahan had bagged a brace to twice put them back on level terms.

They are without a game today and return to action next weekend as they head to Ware.

IMAGE: James Brown

FIXTURES | THE WEEK AHEAD

Pitching In Southern League Premier South

TUESDAY 29 OCT 24
Plymouth Parkway v Wimborne Town

SATURDAY 02 NOV 24

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

Pitching In Southern League Premier Central

SATURDAY 02 NOV 24
AFC Sudbury v Alvechurch
AFC Telford United v Bishop's Stortford
Banbury United v Hitchin Town
Bromsgrove Sporting v Bedford Town
Halesowen Town v Spalding United
Leiston v Stamford
Royston Town v Stratford Town
St Ives Town v Redditch United
Stourbridge v Biggleswade Town

Pitching In Southern League Division One South

TUESDAY 29 OCT 24
Bashley v Exmouth Town
Bideford AFC v Cribbs
Bishops Cleeve v Cinderford Town
Evesham United v Malvern Town
Helston Athletic v Falmouth Town AFC
Mousehole v Tavistock AFC
Shaftesbury v Willand Rovers
Yate Town v Thatcham Town

SATURDAY 02 NOV 24

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

Pitching In Southern League Division One South

TUESDAY 29 OCT 24
Aylesbury United v Kings Langley
Barton Rovers v Berkhamsted
Beaconsfield Town v North Leigh
Leverstock Green v Ware
Stotfold v Hertford Town
Thame United v AFC Dunstable
Welwyn Garden City v Biggleswade FC

WEDNESDAY 30 OCT 24
Enfield v Real Bedford
Kidlington v Leighton Town
SATURDAY 02 NOV 24
AFC Dunstable v Berkhamsted
Biggleswade FC v Thame United
Flackwell Heath v Barton Rovers
Hadley v Leverstock Green
Hertford Town v Beaconsfield Town
Kings Langley v Welwyn Garden City
Leighton Town v Stotfold
North Leigh v Aylesbury United
Real Bedford v Kidlington
Ware v Northwood

Next Saturdaty is also Emirates FA Cup first round proper day with some of our member clubs involved.

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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