

# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE



## SATURDAY EVENING E-NEWSPAPER

Saturday 09 November 2024

# LEST WE FORGET



Football came together this afternoon to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice over the years to protect our freedoms. Throughout our four divisions we took time on this Remembrance Weekend to honour and show our respects to those brave service men and women.

Merthyr Town marched on at the top of the Pitching In Southern League Premier South table with a 5-1 victory over Havant & Waterlooville, as Ricardo Rees helped himself to another four goals.

Also hitting five goals were Plymouth Parkway who secured a 5-0 triumph over bottom of the table, Marlow. Over in the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central, it's quite fitting on this weekend that the Poppies should sit proudly at the top of the table as Kettering Town recorded a 3-1 victory over fellow high-flyers, Redditch United, in front of a crowd of almost 1,900.

A 3-1 come-from-behind win for Halesowen Town over AFC Sudbury has moved them up to second place in what is such a tight leading pack with only three points separating the top five.

In the Pitching In Southern League Division One South, Yate Town had to be patient to get the three points against ten-man Westbury United, who pushed them all of the way.

The victory was made even sweeter with the fact that despite leading twice, second-place Exmouth Town were held at home by Malvern Town.

In the lower reaches of the table, Shaftesbury hit five goals at Didcot Town in an entertaining game that ended in a 5-3 success for the visitors, whilst Cinderford Town won at Falmouth Town.

Over in the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central, leaders, Real Bedford, beat Biggleswade FC 6-2, whilst it was the same scoreline for third-place Hadley as they came home triumphant from North Leigh. Second-place Berkhamsted grabbed a last-minute leveller at Enfield as our Game of the Day in this division ended in a dramatic 2-2 draw.

A group of Aylesbury United fans walked to their game at Leighton Town in aid of charity, but their great efforts were not matched by their high-flying team who succumbed to a 2-0 defeat.

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.

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Please visit  
[PitchingInvolunteers.co.uk](http://PitchingInvolunteers.co.uk)  
to find out more



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

## **Gosport Borough A AFC Totton A (Friday night)**

This game was played on Friday evening and with the visitors two goals to the good with just 15 minutes on the clock, a power cut forced the game to be abandoned.

## **Basingstoke Town 1 Poole Town 3**

There was quarter-of-an-hour gone when Ezio Touray opened the scoring for the away team and then Joshua Staunton out them well in command with a second goal just before the half-hour.

As half-time approached, Toby Holmes weighed in with a third goal to make it an impressive opening period for the visiting team.

Charlie Barlow pulled on back for the hosts but it proved mere consolation as the visitors claimed the points.

## **Bracknell Town 1 Dorchester Town 1**

The home side went ahead in the 17th minute through Joel Rollinson but they had to play the final 20 minutes with a man less following the dismissal of George Knight. Their resistance was finally broken when Olaf Konzela put the scores level with just over ten minutes to go and that's how it remained.

## **Chertsey Town 3 Swindon Supermarine 4**

The deadlock was broken with nine minutes on the clock as the host went ahead through Simbarashe Kudyiwa.

Parity was restored just past the quarter-hour mark when Gabriel Reivers found the net and then a penalty from Michael Elias-Fernandes put the visitors ahead ten minutes from the break.

Harry Williams added another goal to his tally as he made it 3-1 to the visitors as the interval approached.

The start of the second half saw Jack Mazzone reduce the arrears for the hosts before going on to level things up before an hour had been played. Into the final ten minutes and Williams put the away team back ahead as they saw out the remainder of the game to claim the points.

## **Frome Town 0 Winchester City 1**

This cagey affair saw the visitors get their noses in front just past the hour through Ik Hill.

There were nervy moments for the away team towards the end when they went down to ten men following Oliver Griggs' red card, but they held on for a big win.



# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

## Hungerford Town 1 Walton & Hersham 1

The hosts opened the scoring on 56 minutes courtesy of Alefe Santos but it was cancelled out as the clock ticked down through Thomas Olyott and in the end both teams had to settle for a share of the spoils.

## Merthyr Town 5 Havant & Waterlooville 1

A goal from Ricardo Rees put the hosts ahead on 17 minutes but within a minute, the visitors hit back as Reuben Swann gracefully levelled the scores.

However, just a few minutes later the pendulum swung back in favour of the home team as Rees bagged his second of the game.

The second half was just four minutes old when Lewys Twamley extended the Welsh outfit's lead before Rees completed his hat-trick on 64 minutes.

Rees notched another with ten minutes to go to complete another high-scoring victory for his high-flying team.

## Plymouth Parkway 5 Marlow 0

First blood went to the home side as Shane White opening the scoring in the opening exchanges and then James Watts-Barciela doubled the advantage with just 15 minutes played.

Midway through the second half and Dylan Jones found the net with a third goal for the home team and Mitchel Beardmore made it 4-0 late on.

A good afternoon's work for the Devon side was complete as Jones hit a fifth goal late on.

## Sholing 1 Gloucester City 1

The opening goal came in the opening exchanges of the second period as Brandon Smalley put the visitors in front, but it didn't take long for Joseph Rabbetts to level matters as he hopped in to score.

This proved to be an entertaining encounter between two attack-minded and ever-willing sides and it ended with the spoils shared.

## Tiverton Town 1 Hanwell Town 2

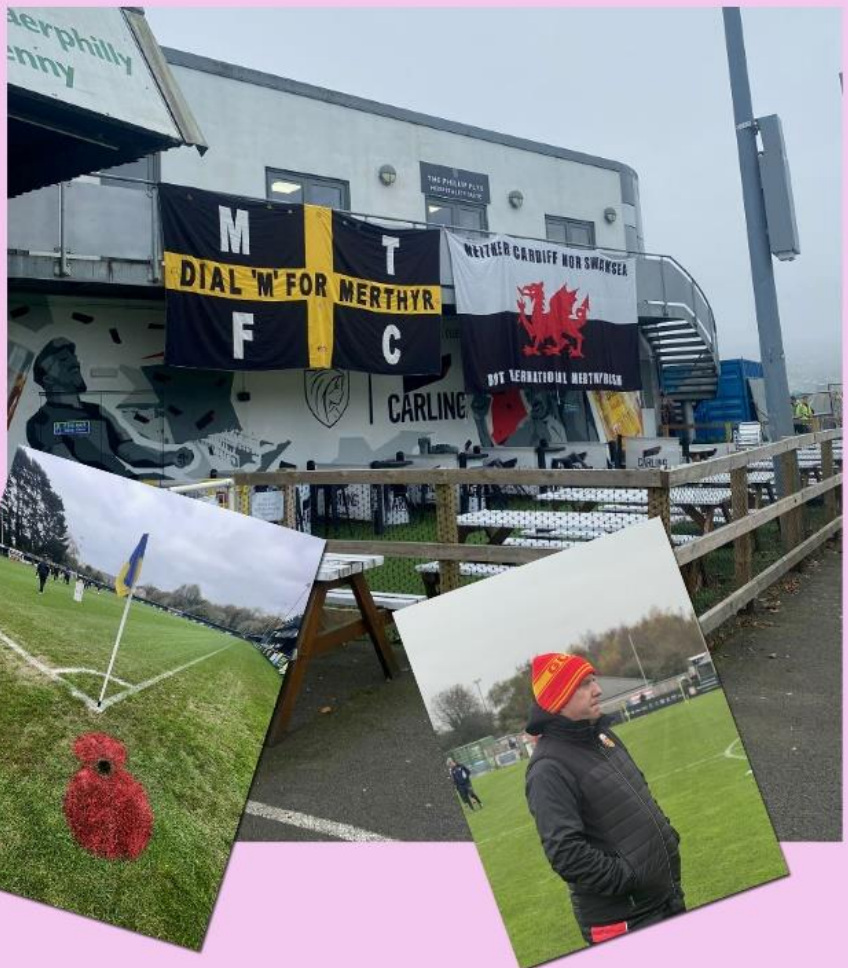
With the scoreline locked at 0-0 going into the second period, the away team wasted little time in edging in front after the restart courtesy of Jordan Edwards.

The lead didn't last long, though, as Joe Parker soon brought the sides level once more but with the clock ticking down, Dan Carr drove home what proved to be the winner for the visitors.

## Wimborne Town 3 Taunton Town 0

The deadlock was broken on 32 minutes when Matthew Burrows scored for the home team and the same player doubled the advantage early in the second half.

A third goal soon came from the boot of Will Fletcher as the hosts put themselves firmly into the driving seat and they saw out the rest of the game to secure the points.



# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

## **Barwell 5 Alvechurch 3**

The away team went ahead here as Charlie Wragg found the net with just seven minutes played but Leroy Lita levelled things up from the penalty spot 20 minutes later.

Another experienced campaigner, Tyrone Barnett, was able to get his name on the scoresheet as he put the visitors back ahead right on half-time.

It became 2-2 just before the hour-mark thanks to a goal from Tyrell Skeen-Hamilton and then Oliver Brown-Hill put the hosts back in front.

A fourth goal for the hosts came via Riley Moloney as they really started to turn the screw and then Deen Master hit a fifth.

Late on, Daniele Reka grabbed a consolation effort for the visitors.

## **Bedford Town 0 St Ives Town 3**

Recent arrival, Will Glennon, was on hand to put the away team ahead as the clock ticked down at the end of the first half.

The opening exchanges of the second period saw Johnson Gyamfi double the advantage for the visitors and then recent signing, Coree Wilson added a third goal in stoppage time to complete an impressive away day.



## **Biggleswade Town 1 Hitchin Town 1**

This local derby saw the home side get their noses in front when Cyrus Babaie- Gumbs opened the scoring in the 36th minute.

There was drama towards the end when Ciaren Jones levelled in the 85th minute and in the end both sides had to settle for a point apiece.

## **Bishop's Stortford 1 Banbury United 1**

The home side went ahead early on thanks to a James Collins goal on his debut only for the visitors to draw level through Yaw Nantwi-Ofosu and that is how it stayed as the points were shared between two evenly-matched teams.

## **Halesowen Town 3 AFC Sudbury 1**

Leading scorer, Joe Neal, gave the away team the lead in the tenth minute but the hosts managed to get themselves back level with just under ten minutes of the opening period remaining when Jordan Ponticelli got his name on the scoresheet.

The home side lost the services of McKauley Manning to a second yellow card on the hour but went ahead through Kieren Donnelly in the 82nd minute.

Ponticelli made the points safe for the hosts in stoppage time at the end.



# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

## Harborough Town 1 Royston Town 1

The early action saw the home side take the lead thanks to Ben Stephens but that was cancelled out on the half-hour by Adam Murray and that's how the scoreline stayed.

New signing, Sandro, was not involved for the home side.

## Kettering Town 3 Redditch United 1

It was the home side who opened the scoring here as Jonny Edwards found the net on the quarter-hour mark.

The visitors hit back on 33 minutes through Marvellous Onabirekhanlen who levelled the scores.

A penalty coolly converted by Nile Ranger put the advantage back with the hosts ten minutes into the second half and then Edwards added his second to give them a two-goal cushion as they went on to get the win in front of a crowd of just under 1,900.

## Leiston 0 Bromsgrove Sporting 0

This was a classic game of two halves as the visitors, who are managerless following the resignation of Paul Smith this week, had the better of the opening period and the home side edged things after the break, but neither side was ultimately able to make the breakthrough.

## Stamford 1 AFC Telford United 3

The home side took the initiative after 20 minutes thanks to a goal from Richard Gregory but James Armson was on hand to equalise ten minutes later.

On 55 minutes, Matt Stenson was on hand to give the away team the lead and then he rounded things off with his second goal of the game to give the visitors all three points.

## Stourbridge 4 Lowestoft Town 0

With 25 minutes on the clock, Dom Lewis was able to give the advantage to the home side and Alex Bradley then made it 2-0 with five minutes to go until the break.

The midway point on the second half saw Jessy Bavanganga find the net to really put the hosts in the driving seat.

The scoring was complete late on when Jack Fletcher hit a fourth goal.

## Stratford Town 0 Spalding United 1

This was a hard-fought affair with little in it until Joseph Nyahwema put the away team in front with just a quarter-of-an-hour left to play.

They were able to see the game out to secure an impressive win and clean sheet on the road.



# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

## **Bashley 3 Bideford AFC 2**

The visitors took the lead on the 15-minute mark as Finn Roberts was able to find the net but the lead lasted only a couple of minutes before Luke Delaney levelled matters.

The experienced Brett Williams put the hosts ahead for the first time on 27 minutes but a penalty from Billy Tucker with 15 minutes to go saw things return to level pegging.

On 78 minutes, Scott Bungay put the advantage back with the home side and they were able to hold on for the victory.

## **Bemerton Heath Harlequins 2 Melksham Town 2**

It was first blood to the visitors as Sam Hendy found the net in the second minute but they were reduced to ten men ten minutes from the interval when Nathan Davis was dismissed.

The early action in the second period saw Joe Smith continue his scoring run with the equaliser only for Jacob Brown to regain the lead for the away team.

It was back level when Ionel Lolot beat the 'keeper and that was to be the end of the scoring as this one finished all square.



## **Didcot Town 3 Shaftesbury 5**

Cameron Beard was on hand to put the away team one goal to the good on 20 minutes, however, the lead lasted barely three minutes before Connor Barrett equalised.

It wasn't long until the hosts went ahead through Adam Learoyd as the scoreline quickly turned on its head.

But the visitors refused to let their heads drop and Beard soon made it 2-2 before Ben Satterley put them back ahead for the fifth goal of this game in the 32nd minute.

The action continued as Conor McGrath put into his own net to further extend the away team's lead with just under ten minutes to go until the break.

With just under 20 minutes left on the clock, Jenson Wright pulled a goal back for the hosts to set up an exciting finale.

Any hopes of a comeback were distinguished when Remus Nixon grabbed a fifth goal for the away team as they enjoyed a winning away day.

## **Exmouth Town 2 Malvern Town 2**

There was a familiar name on the scoresheet as Tom Bath kept his recent run going to put the home team ahead on the half-hour.

The visitors were soon back level as Jack Watts fired home an equaliser from the penalty spot, but the hosts regained the lead in first half stoppage time through Chukwuka Iseguan.

On 50 minutes the scores were back level again when Ibrahim Olateju found the net and that's how it remained.

## **Falmouth Town AFC 0 Cinderford Town 1**

The deadlock was finally broken here with around ten minutes left on the clock as Alex Bonthron popped up with another important goal to give his side an away win.



# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

## Helston Athletic 2 Bishops Cleeve 1

After a goalless first half, it didn't take Reece Thomson long after the restart to put the home team in front but the visitors hit back to restore parity through Aaron Evans-Harriott.

There was just over 15 minutes left when Jacob Smith was able to restore the lead for the Cornish club and they saw it out to secure all three points.

## Larkhall Athletic 1 Evesham United 1

Just before the half-hour mark the away side were able to get their noses in front thanks to Toby Raison.

That goal was cancelled out in the hour-mark through Ryan Beckinsale as both sides claimed a point each.

## Mousehole 3 Bristol Manor Farm 0

As it started to look like this one would finish all square, Tim Nixon popped up to put the hosts ahead and Ross Derham was on hand to double the lead soon afterwards.

Jamie Adams saw red for the visitors at the death and then Max Hill hit a third for the hosts deep into stoppage time to make it a day to forget for the visitors.

## Tavistock AFC 0 Willand Rovers 1

This Devon derby edged the way of the visitors when Ashton Hewitt opened the scoring on the hour and that was to prove to be the only goal of the game.

## Thatcham Town A Cribbs A

A medical emergency meant that this game was abandoned.

## Yate Town 1 Westbury United 0

The visitors' cause was not helped when Aaron Witchell was sent off just before the hour-mark and they succumbed to a goal from James Byrne in the 88th minute, which proved to be the winner for the home side.





# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

## Beaconsfield Town 0 Barton Rovers 3

It was the away team that grabbed the lead through Taylor Rhiney with 20 minutes played and then John Shamalo added a second goal just before the interval. Shamalo went on to get another midway through the second period to really put his side in command and confirm the three points.

## Enfield 2 Berkhamsted 2

An early goal from Benjamin Wyss set the hosts on their way but it was cancelled out by Daniel Newton just before the 30-minute mark.

With 20 minutes to go, Dimitri Christou pout the home team back in front but an equaliser two minutes from time from Adam Watkins saw these two teams share the spoils.

## Flackwell Heath 2 Ware 2

It was the visitors who edged in front early on courtesy of Johnny Allotey and then Jon Clements weighed in with a second goal just five minutes into the second half. Wiktor Makowski gave the hosts hope when he pulled one back in the 61st minute and he went on to level the scores late on as honours ended even here.

## Kings Langley 1 AFC Dunstable 1

The deadlock was broken on the half-hour through Kyle Lynch for the visitors but Brad Smith went on to grab an equaliser with 61 minutes on the clock.

Despite their best efforts, neither side could go on and get the all-important goal and so it ended with the points shared.

## Leighton Town 2 Aylesbury United 0

Congratulations to those Aylesbury United fans who took part in a sponsored walk to this game in aid of Youth Concern.

On the pitch, the action came to life at the start of the second half when visiting 'keeper, Jack Hopwood, was sent off and the hosts took full advantage soon afterwards when Emmanuel Dahie headed them in front. Sam King settled matters late on with a second goal for the hosts as they secured the win.



# PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

## North Leigh 2 Hadley 6

It was lucky seventh minute for the away team as Caoilan McGettigan fired them in front but Louis Mathias hit back for the hosts to level things up ten minutes from half-time.

The visitors regained the lead at the very start of the second half when Isaac Stones added to his scoring tally and another was to come his way as the contest entered the final quarter-of-an-hour.

McGettigan went on to get another to make it 4-1 before Jesse Effa added another to the tally for the away team.

There was still time at the death for McGettigan to complete his hat-trick and Kyle Chester to hit a second for the hosts.

## Real Bedford 6 Biggleswade FC 2

The hosts made a purposeful start and Archie Jones had them ahead within the opening five minutes.

A penalty from Tom Hitchcock doubled the home team's lead midway through the opening period and then Ben Stevens made it 3-0 ten minutes from the break.

The second period was just over ten minutes old when Jones further extended the home teams lead and Drew Richardson made it five with around 20 minutes to go. Late consolation goals for the visitors came from Daniel Bond and Temilola Akinbusoye before Stevens hit a sixth for the hosts.



## Stotfold 3 Kidlington 2

Haroon Meriai gave the home side the lead here with just over half-an-hour on the clock only for Charlie Bacon to bring home the equaliser for the visitors in the opening exchanges of the second period.

A penalty from Joseph Sellers-West put the hosts back ahead just past the hour-mark and then Meriai notched his second of the afternoon to give the hosts a bit of a cushion going into the closing stages.

However, Bacon cooked up another goal late on to set up a tasty finish to this one as the hosts held on for the victory.

## Thame United 2 Northwood 1

The home side wasted little time in getting ahead as Brayden Daniel added to his recent scoring tally with a goal within the opening two minutes.

A goal from Curtis Brown extended the hosts' lead at the midway point of the first half.

The visitors got a lifeline early in the second period when Alex Cathline pulled a goal back but it ended in victory for the hosts.

## Welwyn Garden City 0 Hertford Town 1

Opening the scoring was the visiting team as Adeniyi Gbolahan was able to turn the ball home and they were able to hold on to their lead to secure an impressive away win and clean sheet.



# POWER RANGER

There are a number of players with top-flight experience who are now plying their trade in the Pitching In Southern League. Nile Ranger is one of them and he has been making headlines for all the right reasons...

The 33 year-old returned to football after 20 months out of the game in September when he signed for Premier Central club, Kettering Town, and it's fair to say that he hasn't looked back since.

With four League goals to his name as the Poppies sit at the top of the table, he has also made his mark in the Emirates FA Cup, culminating in him bagging the winning goal at Northampton Town last weekend to set up a second round home tie with Doncaster Rovers at the end of this month.

But for all of his undoubted talent and ability on the pitch, his career has also been blighted by controversy. His early years in the game came with a 'bad boy' reputation that followed him as he moved from club to club.

Having made the breakthrough at Newcastle United, for whom he made over half-a-century of senior appearances, he then had spells at the likes of Swindon Town, Blackpool, Southend United, Spalding United and Boreham Wood, as well as being capped by England at U19 level, but the general feeling is that he could have achieved so much more.

It's something that Ranger himself accepts, but whilst he admits that he can't change the past, he is now doing all he can to be a positive role model for his son and those youngsters who look up to him.

"I've done things the hard way," he admitted. "I've had more lives than a cat but there has always been someone willing to give me another chance and looking back now, I am so grateful for that and I want to use my experiences to help youngsters in similar situations to what I was in back then.



**BACK IN THE GROOVE | Nile Ranger is enjoying his football again**

"Since becoming a parent my mind set has changed massively, it's in a totally different place now. I am more committed these days; I understand my responsibilities and think more about my actions.

"I can't change the past, but it's what I do now that counts.

"At the start of my career I found it difficult to adjust. I was from a different background with no guidance and then all of a sudden I am thrown in at the deep end at Newcastle United.

"I was living life in the fast lane and not looking after myself properly. That has all changed now; at my age I need to take care of myself because the aches and pains take longer to heal after games these days.

"I am a fighter, that's the way I play, so when I come off the pitch I have bumps and bruises, but I just love playing football.

# KETTERING TOWN | NILE RANGER

“When I left Boreham Wood at the start of 2023 I'd lost my love for football but despite this, I still played with my mates every Wednesday evening and it was they who eventually said to me that I still had something to offer the game and encouraged me to give it one last roll of the dice.

“I'm so glad that I decided to give it one more blast because since joining Kettering Town in September, I've got that passion back again and it's been so much fun.

“We've got some good lads at the club who have also played at the top level and that experience is invaluable to the younger lads who are showing what talent they have with our performances since I have been here. The togetherness has been key and it continues to push us through.

“There is such a connection amongst the group and it's great that I have been able to come in and play my part. There's a good vibe throughout the whole club, from the owner through to the Gaffer, my teammates and the supporters. The celebrations after the Northampton Town game were really special; the changing room was bouncing. I can tell you!

“We've been playing very well recently and went there with a feeling that we could get a winning result, just through the sheer belief that we have in ourselves. We went into the game with all guns blazing and intent on giving it everything we've got and that's what we'll do in the next round when we welcome Doncaster Rovers.



**SPOT ON | Nile Ranger has been a regular on the scoresheet**

***“I've always believed that it's not how you start; it's how you finish. This line can be used to describe our season and also in the context of my career...”***

“Before that we've got important League games coming up which we will be focussed on as we look to strengthen our position at the top of the table.

“I've always believed that it's not how you start; it's how you finish. This line can be used to describe our season and also in the context of my career. There have been ups and downs in my career; in those early days I was

forever messing around and doing silly things. Advice went in one ear and out of the other.

“I gave the media ammunition, but now I want to get the coverage for the right reasons by what I do on the pitch and what I am able to do off-the-field to help youngsters get on the right path and make the most of the talent they have.

“I want to be a hero for my son.”

Kettering Town returned to Premier Central action earlier today with a mouth-watering encounter with a Redditch United side who also find themselves in amongst the leading pack.

IMAGES (KTFC): Peter Short

# NEWS ROUND-UP

## EXMOUTH TOWN | BATH IN FULL FLOW

The goals have certainly been flowing for Tom Bath at Exmouth Town recently.

A run of four wins from five games for the Pitching In Southern League Division One South club has included six goals from the in-form Bath, who weighed in with a hat-trick in the recent 4-0 triumph at Bashley.

It leaves the Devon outfit sitting second in the table with just three defeats from their opening 14 League games of the season.

"The team has started fantastically well this season," Bath told us. "The key to it has been working hard for each other and collectively contributing to the wins.

"On a personal note, I feel I have been playing well and now finally contributing with goals and assists, so hopefully that can continue.

"Obviously last season was a season of two halves for us where it was tough at the beginning but we finished the season strongly and pulled ourselves away from relegation.

"We've taken that into the start of the current campaign and with a couple of new additions to the squad, it has only benefitted us.

"Every game is tough in this League. The travel, the midweeks and the constant games can be difficult, but we're just trying to compete with every team and staying in amongst that leading pack.

"As a group we're keeping our feet on the ground and taking it game-by-game. We are close as a group and hopefully we can keep grinding out results and the aim is to finish as high as possible.

"To be honest, to finish anywhere higher than last year is a bonus. Staying in this League is a must for this club first and foremost, but with the players we have, we've set ourselves goals and targets and reaching the play-offs is one of them.

"Personally I just try and contribute as best as possible and see where I end up. As long as I am playing well and working hard, I'm sure the goals and assists will continue to come."

This afternoon, Exmouth Town played host to a Malvern Town side whose seven-game unbeaten run came to an end on Tuesday evening with a home defeat at the hands of Melksham Town.



## HARBOROUGH TOWN | SANDRO ARRIVES IN THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Harborough Town have brought former Brazil international and FA Premier League player, Sandro, to the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central.

The Leicestershire outfit are competing at Step 3 for the first-ever time this season and are also on a record-breaking run in the Emirates FA Cup where they have an away tie at Reading to look forward to in the second round at the end of this month.

"This is an unbelievable signing for the club," beamed manager, Mitch Austin. "It's hard to put into words how I am feeling! It all came about following a chance conversation I had with Sandro a couple of weeks ago.

"We got talking about football and I told him all about Harborough Town and the journey that the club is on. We have been messaging ever since, but to actually get this signing over the line... well, I am gobsmacked to be honest!

"These sort of signings don't happen every day but when you get the chance to sign an ex-professional who has played at the highest levels of the game, you just can't turn it down.

"Being a Spurs fan myself, I knew all about Sandro, but it's when you look back at the photos of him lined up alongside the likes of Neymar Jr., Ronaldinho, Thiago Silva, Dani Alves and Marcelo, it just hits home at the levels he has played, and now here he is at Harborough Town.

"He retired just over a year ago but has kept himself really fit and is such a down-to-earth guy, very genuine and humble. You could sense that there was a real desire on his part to get the signing done and for him to get back out there playing football.

"We are delighted to have him here; the players and staff can learn so much from him. His professionalism will give an understanding of what is needed to progress and play at the highest possible level of the game."

Sandro spoke to talkSPORT about the move this week. "I want to go there and enjoy my football again. I have been doing work in the gym and running, but I miss football and I miss being part of a team.

"This is my last chance to join a team as a player and enjoy it. I have just done my UEFA B Licence and I am looking forward to feeling the buzz of the dressing room again.

"I love football and stories like Harborough's FA Cup run are what make it so special!"

## INFLUENCER

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

### BRIAN GARZON (HERTFORD TOWN) > ANDRES INIESTA

The player I looked up to was Andrés Iniesta because he was very relaxed on the ball and loved to create goals for team-mates or himself.



## CRIBBS | CROUCH LOOKING TO CREATE A BUZZ

There has been a change in the hot-seat at Cribbs with former player, Ryan Crouch, handed his first managerial role.

It came after previous manager, Ashley Bennett, who took over at the helm during the summer, announced his decision to step down due to added work commitments following the 2-1 home defeat at the hands of Larkhall Athletic last weekend.

It was a result which leaves the Bristol-based club just above the relegation places in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South having made the play-offs last term, their first at this level.

Crouch spent seven successful years as no-nonsense and reliable centre half before becoming one of a large number of players to leave the club at the end of last season as he followed former manager, Richard Luffman, to Taunton Town.

The former Bristol City academy product found game time limited with the Peacocks compared to what he has been used to and departed the club in search of more game time before landing this new role and his first step on the managerial ladder.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for me," said Crouch. "Getting into management is something that I wanted to do, so to be able to do it at a club that means so much to me is perfect.

"I'd like to thank Ash [Bennett] for all the hard work he has done to get this team together from what he had in the summer to now. It gives me a base to work from and the boys have been brilliant so far and given me everything.

"I am looking forward to the challenge ahead and creating a buzz around the place. This is an opportunity that I will be looking to grab with both hands."

Chairman, Nick Veale, added: "It's clear that we have now formed a very tight-knit group of players who want to be at this club thanks to the efforts of Ash and the previous managerial team.

"Crouchy's interest in management is something that I have always been aware of, so it was no surprise when he chucked his hat into the ring after Ash decided to step down at the weekend.

"He is a deep thinker about the game and after discussions with my Vice Chairman, Simon Hartley, along with the rest of the Committee, we unanimously feel Ryan meets our requirements, both now and as we progress forward.

"I have much enjoyed working with Ash over the last six months. The club was in a period of transition when Ash came in and he has worked tirelessly to improve our squad during this period."

A trip to Thatcham Town was on the agenda for Cribbs today.

## AYLESBURY UNITED | SOLID FOUNDATIONS

With just six goals conceded from their opening 13 Pitching In Southern League Division One Central games, Aylesbury United are building from an extremely solid foundation so far this season.

The Ducks sit third in the table and are currently on a run of four wins from their last five outings, which has included four clean sheets.

Last weekend saw them secure a commanding 3-0 triumph at North Leigh, a victory which included a goal for Ben Stallard with his left foot.

"I've been working on striking the ball with my left foot," he admitted to us. "So it was nice to see it pay off in a game situation and match my goals tally from last season already!

"It's always nice to get your name on the scoresheet, but the most important thing here was that we were able to get another win on the board and keep another clean sheet.

"The season is going really well for us so far; we know that there are still areas that we need to improve on if we are to get to where we want to be, but it's been positive and something for us to build upon.

"I am really enjoying my football as part of this group. There's a great atmosphere between us all and a real connection with the fans too, so it's a good place to be and long may it continue!

"All of the hard work that we put in during pre-season is paying off. Going into the season we knew that our fitness levels would be key as well as our willingness to out-work any of our opponents.

"A lot of credit must go to the back four and goalkeeper, Jack Hopwood, who have been outstanding and given us a solid platform. When you're not conceding many goals, it gives the rest of the team so much confidence and this added to the undoubted quality we have has been a good mix.

"This is a strong League, though, with some very good teams and you can't afford to take any game for granted. If you drop your standards even slightly, you will be quickly punished. It has happened to us a couple of times already but we have learned from it.

"There's still a long way to go, of course, nothing is decided in November, but we are all working hard to prepare ourselves for what is a busy time coming up.

"We know our quality as a group but we are taking it one game at a time. As a team we are going for promotion; we want to continue to win as many games of football as possible and we'll see where we are come the end of the season.

"Personally I want to score and assist in more goals and continue to help the team to win in any way possible. A few more goals direct from a corner-kick would be nice!"

Stallard and his team-mates were at Leighton Town earlier today looking to secure another shut-out and three points.



# PST SPORT CLUB OF THE MONTH AWARDS | OCTOBER 2024

## The PST Sport Club of the Month Awards for October 2024 have been announced.

In the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central, the winners are Halesowen Town.

A rousing 3-0 away win at Redditch United in the Isuzu FA Trophy got the month underway on the perfect note and it was followed up by a hard-earned 2-1 triumph at Bishop's Stortford as Kieren Donnelly helped himself to both goals, with the winner coming two minutes from time.

Another convincing Isuzu FA Trophy success followed, this time 4-1 at home to Congleton Town, to round the month off.

The Pitching In Southern League Premier South accolade has gone to AFC Totton.

They too started the month with Isuzu FA Trophy victory, as a single-goal was enough to see them overcome the challenge of Merthyr Town.

Back into League action and Hanwell Town were beaten 2-0 thanks to a goal in either half from Charlie Austin and Ashley Clarke.

A Tony Lee brace helped to secure a 2-1 away win at Plymouth Parkway before Ethan Taylor's equaliser earned a point against fellow high-flyers, Gloucester City. Taylor then helped himself to a brace in the 5-1 victory over Taunton Town that followed as Tony Lee, Sam Magri and Ashley Clarke also got their names on the scoresheet.

The month ended as it had begun; with a 1-0 Isuzu FA Trophy victory, this time against Dorchester Town.

In the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central, it's Real Bedford who have taken the award.

The month started with Isuzu FA Trophy defeat at Bowers &

Pitsea, but they responded in the right way by hitting seven past Thame United in their next outing as they won 7-2. Josh Setchell led the way with a hat-trick, there were also goals for Jack Morrell, Joe Evans, Ben Stevens and an own goal.

A commanding 3-0 away triumph at Hertford Town followed with Jack Morrell joined on the scoresheet by Josh Setchell and Harrison Knight with a late strike. It took just one goal to see off the challenge of fellow high-flyers, Flackwell Heath, as Archie Jones gave them a good 1-0 away success.

The month came to a close with them recovering from going a goal down early on to win 3-1 at Enfield as Joe Evans and Ben Stevens got the goals alongside an own goal from the hosts.

Over in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South, it is Yate Town who take the crown.

They opened the month with a 2-0 win at Cinderford Town thanks to second half goals from Joe Guest and Ollie Dewsbury. It was followed up with Isuzu FA Trophy progress at the expense of Melksham Town thanks to a 3-0 triumph.

A hard-earned 1-0 success at Didcot Town saw Jerry Lawrence get the all-important goal before an Ollie Dewsbury brace saw them home in the next game as they beat Tavistock AFC 2-0.

An equaliser deep into stoppage time from Lucas Tomlinson earned them a share of the spoils at in-form Malvern Town before they went to higher level Hungerford Town in the Isuzu FA Trophy and won 3-2.

The month ended with three points from a 2-0 victory over Thatcham Town as an own goal and Lucas Tomlinson strike made it a winning end to October.

We congratulate the four winners:

**Premier Central – Halesowen Town (3.000ppg) | Premier South – AFC Totton (2.667ppg) | Division One Central – Real Bedford (2.400ppg) | Division One South – Yate Town (2.714ppg)**

*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.

With over 13 years' experience working with some of the biggest names in sport, they deliver exceptional sports facilities for clubs, schools, universities and local authorities across Ireland and the UK. PST Sport set up with the view to building world-class artificial grass pitches, providing the highest levels of customer service while staying true to their values: integrity, transparency, and quality. Each artificial grass pitch installation is custom-tailored to the individual project requirements and is designed to give optimal playing conditions all year round, regardless of weather conditions.



# FIXTURES | THE WEEK AHEAD

## Pitching In Southern League Premier South

**TUESDAY 12 NOV 24**

Chertsey Town v Basingstoke Town

**WEDNESDAY 13 NOV 24**

Gosport Borough v Dorchester Town

**SATURDAY 16 NOV 24**

Dorchester Town v Merthyr Town

Gloucester City v Bracknell Town

Marlow v Wimborne Town

Poole Town v Hungerford Town

Swindon Supermarine v Plymouth Parkway

Walton & Hersham v Sholing

## Pitching In Southern League Premier Central

**TUESDAY 12 NOV 24**

AFC Telford United v Kettering Town

Harborough Town v Bishop's Stortford

Leiston v Alvechurch

**SATURDAY 16 NOV 24**

AFC Sudbury v Stratford Town

Banbury United v Stourbridge

Bromsgrove Sporting v Barwell

Hitchin Town v Harborough Town

Kettering Town v Bedford Town

Redditch United v Stamford

Spalding United v Bishop's Stortford

St Ives Town v Leiston

*Next weekend sees some of our member clubs involved in the Isuzu FA Trophy.*



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.



## Pitching In Southern League Division One South

**TUESDAY 12 NOV 24**

Bristol Manor Farm v Westbury United

Didcot Town v Falmouth Town AFC

Yate Town v Mousehole

**SATURDAY 16 NOV 24**

Bideford AFC v Bemerton Heath Harlequins

Bishops Cleeve v Mousehole

Bristol Manor Farm v Bashley

Cinderford Town v Larkhall Athletic

Cribbs v Falmouth Town AFC

Evesham United v Helston Athletic

Malvern Town v Tavistock AFC

Melksham Town v Thatcham Town

Westbury United v Exmouth Town

Willand Rovers v Didcot Town

## Pitching In Southern League Division One Central

**TUESDAY 12 NOV 24**

Real Bedford v Leighton Town

Stotfold v Hadley

Welwyn Garden City v Flackwell Heath

**SATURDAY 16 NOV 24**

AFC Dunstable v Welwyn Garden City

Aylesbury United v Beaconsfield Town

Barton Rovers v Kings Langley

Berkhamsted v Leverstock Green

Biggleswade FC v Flackwell Heath

Hertford Town v Leighton Town

Kidlington v Enfield

Northwood v Stotfold

Ware v North Leigh

*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](https://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](mailto:news@southern-football-league.co.uk)

Enjoy the rest of your weekend...

Andy Poole (Editor)

[southern-football-league.co.uk](https://southern-football-league.co.uk)



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