

PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE



SATURDAY EVENING E-NEWSPAPER

Saturday 12 April 2025

DRAMA AT THE TOP



It's been another day of great drama across all four of our divisions.

In the Pitching In Southern League Premier South, leaders, Merthyr Town, lost at home to a Poole Town outfit who move out of the relegation zone. It means that their lead at the top is now down to just four points as AFC Totton came from behind to beat another team involved in the relegation battle, Tiverton Town, 2-1 thanks to a last-minute winner.

Third-placed Walton & Hersham lost 1-0 at Dorchester Town, who occupy the final play-off place, whilst sandwiched in between them, Gloucester City succumbed at Chertsey Town.

Over in the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central it was just as dramatic. Bedford Town came back from two goals down to triumph 3-2 at Lowestoft Town with the winner coming six minutes into stoppage time at the end. They lead the way from Kettering Town who won 2-0 at Bishop's Stortford, whilst AFC Telford United and Halesowen Town were held to goalless draws by Banbury United and Barwell respectively. Stratford Town and Stamford AFC also shared the spoils as they met in our Game of the Day.

In the Pitching In Southern League Division One South, there are new leaders as Yate Town saw their long-running run in pole position come to an end as they slipped to a late 2-1 defeat at Mousehole, whilst over at Westbury United, a last-minute goal gave Evesham United a dramatic 1-0 win to put them top on goal difference.

Just behind them, Bishops Cleeve overcame the challenge of Larkhall Athletic by three goals to one, whilst Malvern Town came from two goals down at Bristol Manor Farm to grab a point from a 2-2 draw with the equaliser coming late on. They hold the final play-off spot from Bemerton Heath Harlequins who lost 1-0 at Tavistock AFC.

We have our first Champions confirmed and it's congratulations to Real Bedford who claimed the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central title this afternoon. They beat Kings Langley 1-0 to secure their 30th League win of the campaign.

Behind them, Berkhamsted eventually overcame the challenge of North Leigh to pick up a 4-0 win, Flackwell Heath were held at home by Welwyn Garden City as Thame United move to fourth having battled out a 1-0 success at Leverstock Green. They go above Barton Rovers who conceded a late equaliser at Kidlington.

REPORTS FROM ALL GAMES | STATS | FEATURES



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PitchingInvolunteers.co.uk
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LEAGUES**
VOLUNTEER HUB
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PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

AFC Totton 2 Tiverton Town 1

The visitors broke the deadlock late in the opening period when Daniel Koita scored and they were to hold on to their lead until the final 15 minutes when Thomas Blair levelled the scores.

There was to be late drama as Scott Rendell fired the home team ahead in the closing stages and it ultimately proved to be the all-important goal as the promotion-hopefuls were made to work hard.

Bracknell Town 1 Winchester City 3

It was the home team who took the lead when Jordan Esprit was able to beat the 'keeper with 24 minutes gone.

A red card for George Knight saw the hosts go down to ten men early in the second half and George Britton went on to take advantage as he levelled for the visitors, who then went ahead through Jamie Barron.

Late on Tom Wright was in the right place, at the right time to make it 3-1 and seal the victory for his side.

Chertsey Town 1 Gloucester City 0

After an opening period in which neither side were able to make the breakthrough, Luke Robertson was able to give the home side an early lead after the break.

Try as they might, there was no way back for the visitors.

Dorchester Town 1 Walton & Hersham 0

A penalty from the ever-reliable Olaf Konzsela put the home side in front in the 60th minute and they were able to hold on to see this one out and claim a big three points against their play-off rivals.

Gosport Borough 3 Hanwell Town 0

Just past the quarter-hour mark, Charlie Wassmer set the hosts on their way with the opening goal and then on 32 minutes, Dan Wooden chipped away at the visiting defence to double the advantage.

A goal from Nnamdi Nwachuku on the hour put the home side firmly in the driving seat and they were able to see out a commanding victory.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

Marlow 1 Hungerford Town 2

This one was goalless at half-time but Curtis Angell was able to sprinkle some magic dust on proceedings early in the second period as he fired the visitors in front.

It wasn't long before the hosts conjured up a leveller thanks to Naheer Nawaf, who was able to add to his ever-expanding tally. On 77 minutes, Brandon Curtis was sent off for the home side and Joseph Marquez Espada proceeded to put the away team back in front.

A late red card for Mitchell Parker rounded off a disappointing day for the hosts as Ramarni Medford-Smith joined him in having an early bath as he was dismissed for the visitors.

Merthyr Town 1 Poole Town 2

An opening goal from Callum Ryan-Phillips just before the half-hour mark set the home side on their way only for them to be pegged back at the end of the opening period following an own goal from Keiran Evans.

The pendulum swung towards the visitors as Ezio Touray put them ahead for the first time and they were able to hold on to their lead to secure a massive three points in front of a crowd of over 2,000.

Plymouth Parkway 3 Sholing 1

The home side broke the deadlock with six minutes on the clock courtesy of Reece Thomson but it was cancelled out in first half stoppage time through the prolific Michael Folivi.

Tom Dean then restored the hosts' lead in the second half as Callum Hall rounded things off with a late third goal.

Swindon Supermarine 1 Frome Town 0

Nothing could separate these two teams as we entered the final few minutes as Harry Williams was able to grab the lead for the home team. It proved to be the only goal of the game as the hosts claimed a much-needed three points.

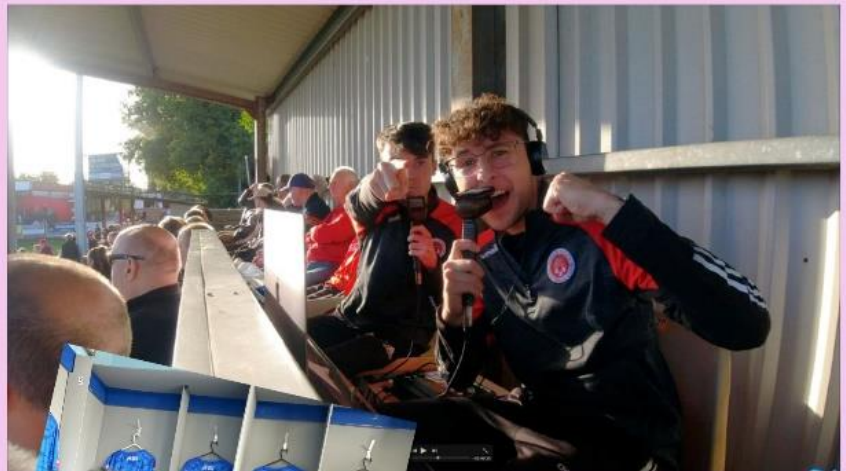
Taunton Town 1 Havant & Waterlooville 1

There were no goals in the first half, but the second period was only four minutes old when Owen Brain put the home team in front with an intelligent finish.

A leveller arrived in the 71st minute from Reuben Swann and that's how it remained as honours were even.

Wimborne Town 1 Basingstoke Town 0

With this game finely poised, Matt Burrows stayed cool to convert from the penalty spot for the home side with 78 minutes on the clock. It proved to be the only goal as the hosts secured the win.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

Banbury United 0 AFC Telford United 0

This one was locked at 0-0 when defender, Orrin Pendley, received his marching orders for the visiting team following a professional foul.

In the end, the hosts were unable to take advantage as it finished with the spoils shared.

Biggleswade Town 1 Redditch United 1

The hosts edged in front here with an early goal from Josh Steele but the visitors were able to get back onto level terms with just over 20 minutes left on the clock when Ryan Boothe equalised.

There was no further addition to the scores as it finished with a point apiece.

Bishop's Stortford 0 Kettering Town 2

Second half strikes from the evergreen Nile Ranger, midway through the half, and Terell Pennant towards the end, were enough to give the away team all three points here in their quest for promotion.

Halesowen Town 0 Barwell 0

It proved to be a second successive goalless draw and a third draw in a row for the promotion-chasing home team here.

The visitors were resolute and determined, particularly in the second period when they came under increasing pressure.

Harborough Town 1 St Ives Town 2

The deadlock was broken by the visitors when Josh Allen found the net in the ninth minute and it was a lead that they held until Ben Stephens equalised with just under 20 minutes left on the clock.

However, home manager, Mitch Austin's 200th game at the helm ended in disappointing fashion for his team when Johnson Gyamfi hit a winner for the away team deep into stoppage time.

Hitchin Town 0 AFC Sudbury 1

A tight and cagey affair came to life early in the second half when Ben Bradley popped up to give the away team the lead.

The hosts were unable to find a way back into it as the visitors saw us a massive three points in their quest to avoid the drop.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

Lowestoft Town 2 Bedford Town 3

A goal on the stroke of half-time from Joao Soares Rangel set the hosts on their way here and it was added to in stoppage time at the end of the opening period when Harvey Sayer converted from the penalty spot.

The visitors were able to pull a goal back through Tarrelle Whittaker to set up an enthralling final 20 minutes or so.

An equaliser from Edward Gyamfi sparked a melee when ended with the goalscorer and the hosts' Travis Cole both sent off. There was still time for leading scorer, Leon Lobjoit, to fire the away team ahead for the first time in the final minute and secure the win in dramatic fashion.

Royston Town 2 Bromsgrove Sporting 1

It was the in-form Jack Newall who broke the deadlock here for the away team with around five minutes remaining in the first half.

The early exchanges of the second period saw Archie Locke open up the visitors' defence to equalise at a key time.

A goal from Harvey Beckett then turned the scoreline on its head as the home team went in front for the first time and they were able to hold on to the lead.

Spalding United 0 Alvechurch 0

This can be best described as a game of missed chances, particularly for the home side as they found the visiting defence, which has been amongst the best in this division throughout the season, in resolute mood. In the end both teams take a point and a clean sheet each.

Stourbridge 2 Leiston 0

Just before the half-hour mark and Ethan Freemantle opened the scoring for the home team and the day got worse for the visitors when goalkeeper, Billy Johnson, was dismissed at the very end of the first half for handling the ball outside his area.

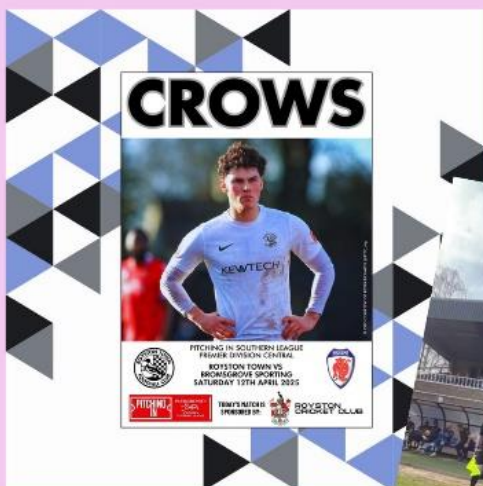
The home side added a second goal through Alex Bradley just before the hour-mark and that was enough to see them home and dry.

Stratford Town 1 Stamford 1

A penalty right at the end of the opening period gave the visitors the advantage as Joao Tavares Monteiro Varela found the net.

Our Game of the Day was levelled up early in the second half through Dan Lafferty as Connor Bartle saw red for the away team before Jack Duffy joined him in having an early bath.

There was no further addition to the scoreline as both teams had to be content with a point each.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Bashley 1 Cribbs 0

As the interval approached, the home side were dealt a blow when goalkeeper, Mack Allan, was sent off. With no 'keeper on the bench, the experienced Brett Williams donned the gloves.

With the clock ticking down into the final ten minutes, Jamie Power was able to give the hosts the lead and it proved to be the winning goal.

Bishops Cleeve 3 Larkhall Athletic 1

After a goalless first half, it didn't take Ross Langworthy long after the restart to put the home side ahead.

By the hour, the hosts had a two-goal advantage when Ethan Dunbar added his name to the scoresheet.

A goal from Max Williams with just under 20 minutes to go gave the away team hope but that was distinguished at the death by a second goal from Dunbar.

Bristol Manor Farm 2 Malvern Town 2

The home side grabbed the lead just before the 20-minute mark courtesy of Evander Grubb and it wasn't long before George Dowling doubled the advantage.

The visitors were able to get themselves back into it just past the half-hour mark when Lewis Spurrier found the net.

An equaliser came on 86 minutes from leading scorer, Jack Watts, as it ended with honours even.

Cinderford Town 2 Bideford AFC 3

It was the perfect start for the hosts as Alex Bonthron fired them ahead within the opening minute.

The early action in the second half saw Noah Coates double the lead for the home team only for Josh Webber to put the away team back in it as he pulled one back midway through the second period.

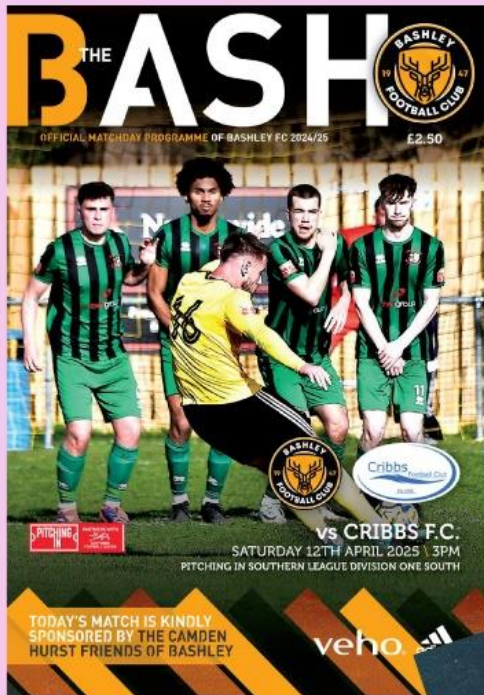
The away team went on to level the scores in the final ten minutes through Scott Robinson and then Webber snatched a dramatic late winner to turn the scoreline on its head.

Didcot Town 2 Melksham Town 1

First blood to the home side as Ewan Lynch gave them the lead with six minutes gone but parity was restored on the 20-minute mark courtesy of Henry Sady.

The home side lost the services of the experienced Adam Learoyd in the 24th minute to a red card but it soon became 10v10 when Nathan Davis picked up a second yellow card for the away team.

In stoppage time at the end, Lynch grabbed a dramatic winner for his team.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Exmouth Town 3 Falmouth Town AFC 0

It was lucky seven for the hosts as Tor Swann gracefully found the net to opening the scoring in the seventh minute. The second half was only three minutes old when Ben Steer added to the home team's lead and then Luke Steer got in on the act on the hour with a third goal to complete a comprehensive victory.

Mousehole 2 Yate Town 1

The home team took the lead just inside the opening ten minutes thanks to a goal from Tim Nixon but the visitors levelled matters through Lucas Tomlinson as the interval loomed. Our Game of the Day had a dramatic finale as Max Hill gave the home side the lead once more with 87 minutes on the clock and that proved to be the winning goal.

Shaftesbury 7 Helston Athletic 0

A goal from Luke Burbidge with 19 minutes on the clock put the hosts in command here and it was added to by Leighton Thomas as half-time approached. Thomas then added a third early in the second half to put the home side well in command. Just past the hour-mark and Thomas completed his hat-trick before Toby Holmes made it 5-0 and Gabriel Rogers netted a sixth with 20 minutes still remaining. As the clock ticked down at the end, Moss Collis got his name on the scoresheet with a seventh goal to complete a big win for his side.

Tavistock AFC 1 Bemerton Heath Harlequins 0

This one was starting to look as though it would end goalless before Tyler Elliott popped up to put the hosts in front. It proved to be the decisive goal to give his side maximum points against their play-off chasing opponents.

Westbury United 0 Evesham United 1

There was drama here when what looked like ending in a goalless draw with the spoils shared suddenly went in favour of the visitors as Mekhai Bessasa-Grant scored the for the promotion-chasing visitors. This proved to be a hard-earned triumph for the team from Worcestershire as they headed home happy.

Willand Rovers 3 Thatcham Town 1

An early goal from Brandon Bak gave the home team the advantage and the same player wasted little time in adding a second goal. It was a lively opening to proceedings as Andrew Matthews quickly pulled a goal back for the visitors. Midway through the first half and Bailey Kempster made it 3-1 to the hosts and that was it for the scoring as the hosts claimed all three points.



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Berkhamsted 4 North Leigh 0

On 38 minutes, Connor Tomlinson finally put the home side ahead as he was to breach what had been a stubborn visiting back-line up to that point.

In first half stoppage time Matty Bateman was able to double the advantage and then right at the start of the second half, Max Rosner weighed in with a third goal. As the hosts turned the screw, Louie Collier made it 4-0 and that completed a routine triumph in the end.

Biggleswade FC 1 Beaconsfield Town 0

There was a slight delay to the kick-off here, but the hosts wasted little time in stamping their authority on the game as Temilola Akinbusoye gave them an early lead.

It was to prove to be the only goal of the game as the hosts made a welcome return to winning ways.

Enfield 1 AFC Dunstable 5

On the quarter-hour mark, Sean Duodu opened the scoring for the away team and it wasn't long before Joel Anker added to the lead as it looked plain-sailing for the visitors at this stage.

However, with ten minutes to go until the interval, George Thompson, reduced the arrears.

The opening exchanges of the second period saw Duodu notch his second goal of the afternoon to give the visitors a 3-1 lead and then Charlie Davis added another shortly afterwards.

A last minute goal from Simone Troso rounded off a five-star away day for the visitors.

Flackwell Heath 0 Welwyn Garden City 0

The hosts were not at their bests on this occasion, but credit must go to the visitors who came with a game plan and played it out well.

In the end, both sides had to settle for a share of the spoils with neither side able to make the breakthrough.

Hadley 2 Stotfold 0

There were 11 minutes on the clock when Caoilan McGettigan gave the home side an early lead.

The second goal didn't arrive until late on when Jesse Effa sealed the points for the hosts



PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION ONE CENTRAL

Kidlington 1 Barton Rovers 1

With ten minutes to go until the interval there was a big moment when Charlie Milton was dismissed for the visitors. The visitors finally made the breakthrough on the hour when Alfie Warman fired them ahead only for John Dennis to level things up with an 88th minute goal and that's how it remained.

Leverstock Green 0 Thame United 1

The breakthrough finally came here when Lewis Thorne gave the visitors the lead with just under 20 minutes to go. Despite their best efforts, the home side were unable to get back into this game as the visitors saw it out to take home a big three points as they look to secure their place in the play-off zone.

Northwood 3 Leighton Town 0

The hosts were straight out of the blocks as Troy Perez-Duah fired them in front within the opening minute. A goal from Samuel Folarin on the hour-mark gave the home team some breathing space before Josh Williams sealed the win.

Real Bedford 1 Kings Langley 0

The deadlock was finally broken on 41 minutes as Joey Evans added to his impressive tally for the hosts. It proved to be the only goal of the game as the home side secured the League title. Congratulations to all involved in this fantastic achievement.

Ware 6 Aylesbury United 2

The hosts went in front just past the half-hour mark thanks to a goal from Gucci Soulya-Osekanongo, but parity was restored early in the second half when Songona-Mory Kone hit an equaliser.

The goal only acted to prompt the home side back into life as Samuel Kifwasima soon put them back in front and then Gabriel Chapps added a third goal.

A further goal from Theo Ofori made it 4-1 late on before an own goal gave the visitors a consolation.

With time running out, Gucci Soulya-Osekanongo and Timothy Okwusogu added further gloss to the scoreline for the hosts.



NEWS ROUND-UP

BARWELL | BIG MONTH FOR BRADY

There is plenty going on for Brady Hickey during the month of April.

The first assignment for the experienced front-runner is to ensure that Barwell secure their status in the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central and then the day after the curtain comes down on the regular season, he will take centre stage for a well-deserved testimonial to mark a decade of loyal service for the Leicestershire club.

He has certainly made the best possible start to his big month with a hat-trick last weekend to secure a 3-1 victory over Biggleswade Town and three precious points to leave his side amongst a group of clubs just above the relegation zone.

"The overall performance on Saturday was average, if I'm being totally honest, but in the situation we find ourselves in it's all about getting the three points by whatever means," Hickey told us. "To score a hat-trick is always nice; it was my first of the season, the previous one came in a 4-4 draw at Alvechurch on a Tuesday night last season, so it was overdue!

"As a team we've been very hit-and-miss this season. There have been good spells along the way, but we've been far too inconsistent and that's why we find ourselves in this position with four games to go.

"This League is as competitive as it's ever been. Things are going to go right down to the wire at both ends of the table and we have to be ready for the fight.

"These remaining games are going to be huge. We know that we're going to need more points this year to survive and so our focus is firmly fixed on getting the results that will see us to safety.

"Obviously with this being my testimonial season, I want it to end on a high. To spend ten years at a club is becoming increasing rare in the modern game, so I am proud of my achievement.

"This club has been brilliant with me and everyone around the place are top people who just want what's best for Barwell FC. There are so many unsung heroes here who deserve recognition too because without them, the club would not be able to function."

Hickey's testimonial will see a team made up of Barwell FC past and present players take on a Brady Hickey XI, made up of players he has played alongside over the years.

"It should be a great day," he added. "It will be a nice occasion to celebrate my ten years at the club and hopefully it will be a double celebration too with the team having achieved its objective to secure Step 3 status for another year.

"To have fans, current and ex-players, former team-mates, family and friends all in one place will be really special for me and it will be a chance to reflect on the past decade as well as looking forward to what the future holds in store.

"My passion for the game hasn't changed since I was a kid. I am still as hungry as ever to achieve things both personally and collectively."

The testimonial will take place on Sunday, April 27th with a 2pm kick-off at the Crown Skip Hire Stadium, home of Barwell FC. There will be free admission and entertainment from DJ Peps. All are welcome to attend.

Meanwhile before that, Hickey and his team-mates were at high-flying Halesowen Town today before an Easter double-header at home to Stourbridge and away at Harborough Town. The campaign comes to an end at home to Spalding United.

HANWELL TOWN | PERFECT DAY

Sometimes a day just goes perfectly to plan and beyond expectations. That was the case at Hanwell Town last Saturday where the sun shone on a 2-1 victory over leaders, Merthyr Town, thus ending a 32-match unbeaten League run for the visitors that stretched back to August.

It was a win that moved the Geordies into eighth place in the table and what's more, the game also marked the 70th anniversary of Chairman, Bob Fisher's involvement with the Pitching In Southern League Premier South club as family and friends gathered to celebrate a remarkable achievement for the man they call Mr. Hanwell Town.

"To become the first side to beat Merthyr Town in the League since August tells you everything you need to know about the group we have here," manager, Chris Moore, told us proudly. "I was ever so proud of everyone connected to the club on Saturday, it was a special day for us... and it was the first time that I've ever been clapped out of the bar at the end!

"That win was for Bob Fisher; 70 years associated with the club, what a fantastic record, there can't be many around who can boast such long service with one club.

"I have a great relationship with Bob and nothing pleases me more than seeing his big beaming smile following a win and that was certainly the case at the weekend!

"Even when we lose, Bob is never too low and always has a positive outlook. He is always praising others and the work they do to get the club where it is, but the truth is that without Bob's dedication and hard work over all of those years, Hanwell Town would not be where it is today.

"Full credit to him and it was so special to see him surrounded by family and friends at the weekend enjoying his day at a place that means so much to him and has been such a massive part of his life."

We asked Bob about how his association with the club first began all those years ago.

"In 1955 I had left school and had started my first job and was looking to join a football club," he began. "At the time, I was playing cricket at Ealing Cricket Club, a club that was quite closely aligned to Ealing Association Football Club for whom some of my cricketing mates played.

"However, at the time my sister was courting a guy who played for Hanwell Town and she persuaded me to make contact with that club, which I did.

"I called their secretary, Ron Walker, a Hanwell Town legend, and asked to join and he invited me over to his house to sign the necessary forms. Noting that I had cycled over, he asked if I would deliver, on his behalf, to various houses in the vicinity where the other players lived, a card stating the arrangements for that coming Saturday's game.

"I agreed to the request and this became a regular habit that I enjoyed. It should be noted that in those days it was not unusual for homes to be without a telephone line, so this was the only way to make contact. Ron's total dedication to the club certainly rubbed off on me!

"As would be expected, I am intensely proud of all that the club has achieved over the years but am very aware of the many challenges that lie ahead. Our costs go up annually as we try to keep pace with inflation and the other escalating costs of running a football club at the level we are currently playing at.

"Surviving year on year is only possible due to all those who give up their time and effort to keep the club afloat. They are all fantastic people who contribute so much behind-the-scenes and are the lifeblood of the club.

"To see the team currently sitting eighth at Step 3 is a tremendous achievement by all involved for a club of our size. It's been a very positive season and hopefully we can end it strongly in these final few games."

Hanwell Town were at Gosport Borough today before an Easter double-header at home to Taunton Town and away at Chertsey Town before the season is concluded with a home encounter against Plymouth Parkway.



INFLUENCER

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

OLLIE TAYLOR (REDDITCH UNITED) > MAIK TAYLOR

My dad, Maik Taylor, has always been the biggest inspiration and influence growing up. Watching him play as a kid gave me the love for the game to this day.

BISHOPS CLEEVE | BIGGEST AND BEST

Bishops Cleeve have moved up into third place in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South table after their long Tuesday evening trip down to Falmouth Town yielded a 1-0 victory, their biggest and best win of the season according to goalkeeper, Lewis Clayton.

"Of course, we had the Emirates FA Cup victory over Torquay United earlier in the season that will be talked about for years to come, but in the context of the season and all of the aspects surrounding it, Tuesday's result was our biggest and best of the season so far," Clayton told us. "To go down there on a Tuesday evening and battle out a 1-0 win at this stage of what has been a busy season, is fantastic.

"We defended with real purpose and played the conditions of the pitch well. The lads in front of me were immense; I didn't have all that much to do over the course of the game and that was credit to the way in which we defended from the front.

"There was a save towards the end where I managed to tip a header over the crossbar, which I was pleased about, but the work-rate and determination of my team-mates was there for all to see and it was a nice goal to win it too.

"That's a big three points for us to take us up to third place, but it's still so close with just four games to go and I can see plenty of twists and turns ahead for all of the teams that are involved.

"Our run-in isn't easy and we can't afford to allow ourselves to get too carried away. It's a well-used cliché but it's a case of one game at a time and see where it takes us.

"It's been a great season for us, though. As I say, we had that Emirates FA Cup adventure and since then we've been in and around the leading pack. We've really found our true self as a team this season; we know what works and what doesn't and we're in a good place going into the final straight.

"The competitiveness of this division means that it's a tricky League. There's also the added difficulties such as having to travel down to Cornwall on a Tuesday and all of the logistical issues that come with it. These games should be rearranged for Saturdays because we all work full-time and it is difficult, but we have to get on with it."

A home clash with Larkhall Athletic took place this afternoon and then over Easter it's a trip to Thatcham Town followed by a mouth-watering home encounter with fellow promotion hopefuls, Evesham United, on Bank Holiday Monday. The season ends at Cribbs.



FLACKWELL HEATH | MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING

What an afternoon it proved to be at Hertford Town last Saturday as they played out a ten-goal thriller with Flackwell Heath.

With the sun shining brightly, a crowd of over 1,000 gathered after the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central club offered free admission to celebrate long-serving volunteer, John Staines' 93rd Birthday.

Those present were treated to a pulsating game that burst into life straight away as the visitors took the lead within the opening minute only to find themselves 3-1 down before a quarter-of-an-hour had even been played.

The hosts led 4-3 at the interval, but it was after the break that the high-flying visitors started to turn the screw to secure a 6-4 triumph which strengthened their grip on third place.

"Saturday was always going to be tough," admitted Jack Shakespeare, who weighed in with two of Flackwell Heath's six goals. "Going away in front of so many fans and on such a big occasion for our hosts was always going to be tricky, but we made a dream start with my goal within the opening minute.

"Before we knew it, though, we found ourselves 3-1 behind to three well-worked goals and we knew at that point that we really had to dig in to ensure that the game didn't get too far away from us.

"We managed to go in at the break just a goal behind and then turned it around with an impressive second half performance, in which we displayed plenty of character and determination.

"The season has gone really well for us. I don't think we would have believed you had you told us we would be third going into the final month of this season following our promotion at the end of last term.

"We've achieved it with some top performances and hard work. We're where we are for a reason but at the same time we recognise that there is still a long way to go and plenty of football to be played.

"From a personal point of view, to be on 11 goals and ten assists from midfield in my first season at Step 4 is good going, but I'm not satisfied and want more!

"The run-in to the end of the season is going to be so exciting to be involved in. These forthcoming games are all about grating through to get the right results. With the quality we have here and the togetherness within the group, I have no doubt we'll have a strong finish to the season.

"This is a tough League with so many strong sides involved. Our goal going into the season was to push for the play-offs, so we're delighted with the position we're in and now we have a chance to create more memories and history for the club.

"As I say, we deserve to be here but we can't afford to get too carried away and look too far ahead; it's one game at a time.

"This is a long old season and we've had to work hard to get where we are, so we're determined that it doesn't all go to waste."

They hosted Welwyn Garden City earlier today, whilst over Easter they travel to Thame United and then host Beaconsfield Town. The regular season ends at Stotfold.



FIXTURES | THE WEEK AHEAD

Pitching In Southern League Premier South

FRIDAY 18 APR 25

Basingstoke Town v AFC Totton
Frome Town v Dorchester Town
Gloucester City v Marlow
Hungerford Town v Wimborne Town
Poole Town v Swindon Supermarine
Sholing v Merthyr Town

SATURDAY 19 APR 25

Hanwell Town v Taunton Town
Havant & Waterlooville v Bracknell Town
Tiverton Town v Gosport Borough
Walton & Hersham v Plymouth Parkway
Winchester City v Chertsey Town

Pitching In Southern League Premier Central

FRIDAY 18 APR 25

AFC Telford United v Lowestoft Town
Alvechurch v Hitchin Town
Barwell v Stourbridge
Bromsgrove Sporting v Biggleswade Town
Redditch United v Harborough Town

SATURDAY 19 APR 25

AFC Sudbury v Spalding United
Bedford Town v Stratford Town
Kettering Town v Royston Town
Leiston v Halesowen Town
St Ives Town v Bishop's Stortford
Stamford v Banbury United

Pitching In Southern League Division One South

FRIDAY 18 APR 25

Yate Town v Cinderford Town

SATURDAY 19 APR 25

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

Pitching In Southern League Division One Central

FRIDAY 18 APR 25

Hertford Town v Leverstock Green
Kings Langley v Berkhamsted

SATURDAY 19 APR 25

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

Fixtures are subject to change. Compiled in association with Atos

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.



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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