

PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE



SATURDAY EVENING E-NEWSPAPER

Saturday 07 December 2024

FOUR- MIDABLE



There were only six games which survived Storm Darragh across our four divisions.

The story of the day came in the Pitching In Southern League Premier South where Michael Folivi scored all four goals as Sholing secured a 4-1 away win at Bracknell Town.

It was a result which moves them away from the lower reaches of the table.

The day's other game in the Premier South saw Dorchester Town come back from 2-1 down with ten men to beat Hungerford Town 4-2 and in doing so move into the top five.

A quickfire brace from Olaf Konzela helped them secure victory here and leave their opponents in the bottom four.

Just one game took place in the Pitching In Southern League Premier Central as Spalding United recovered from going a goal down early on to beat Barwell 2-1, a result which moves them out of the bottom four and puts them level on points with today's opponents.

Only one game took place in the Pitching In Southern League Division One South as Bashley and Malvern Town drew 1-1.

The visitors edged ahead from the penalty spot as Jack Watts converted, but the hosts levelled with a spot-kick of their own early in the second period as Lewis Ross fired home.

A red card for skipper, Luke Payne, left the away team with a man less for the final 20 minutes, but they were able to hold on to their point.

Two games took place in the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central as two second half strikes saw Beaconsfield Town win 2-0 at Enfield to move away from the lower reaches of the table.

It was level at Biggleswade FC as their opening goal on 66 minutes was cancelled out by a late leveller from Ware. Congratulations to Gosport Borough who progressed on penalties in the Isuzu FA Trophy as Alvechurch and Hadley both did themselves proud against higher-level hosts. Reports 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.

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PitchingInvolunteers.co.uk
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PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Bracknell Town 1 Sholing 4 (Premier South)

The visitors broke the deadlock in the 19th minute when Michael Folivi was able to find the net but that was cancelled out within a couple of minutes by Seb Bowerman.

Folivi notched his second, this time from the penalty spot, just before the half-hour mark to restore the away team's lead and then went on to complete his hat-trick as he finished off a neat move just past the hour-mark.

A fourth goal was just around the corner for Folivi as he simply blew the home side away on what was a good afternoon's work for the away team.

Dorchester Town 4 Hungerford Town 2 (Premier South)

It was first blood for the home side as Luke Pardoe opened the scoring just before the half-hour mark, but it wasn't long before the visitors got back in it when Oliver Haste was dismissed and Louis McGrory despatched from the penalty that followed.

Buoyed by the goal, the visitors then went ahead soon afterwards with a goal from Alefe Santos D'Abadia.

The second half was six minutes old when Corby Moore brought the sides back level again and then a quickfire double from Olaf Konzela put the hosts firmly into the driving seat.

It was to end in victory for the ten men in what was an entertaining encounter despite the conditions.

Spalding United 2 Barwell 1 (Premier Central)

It was the visitors who came out of the blocks the brightest and they were rewarded with a fourth minute opener from Riley Moloney.

The lead didn't last long as Bartosz Cybulski restored parity for the home side with nine minutes on the clock.

Midway through the first half and the hosts went in front courtesy of Nathan Fox and they were able to hold on to their lead despite pressure from the visitors in tough conditions.

Bashley 1 Malvern Town 1 (Division One South)

In the only Division One South fixture that survived the weather, a penalty on 24 minutes gave the visitors the lead as Jack Watts stayed cool to convert.

The opening exchanges of the second period saw the hosts draw level with a penalty of their own as Lewis Ross found the net.

As the game entered the final 20 minutes, the visitors were reduced to ten men when skipper, Luke Payne, saw red but they were able to see the game out as both teams shared the spoils.

Biggleswade FC 1 Ware 1 (Division One Central)

It took until the 66th minute to separate these teams as Temilola Akinbusoye gave the home side the advantage.

The equaliser arrived as the clock ticked down with Johnny Allotey getting his name on the scoresheet.

There were chances for both sides in the closing stages, but this one ended with honours even in the wind and rain.

Enfield 0 Beaconsfield Town 2 (Division One Central)

Having seen the opening period finish goalless, it took the visitors just seconds after the restart to get their noses in front through Manuchim Oke-William.

They doubled their advantage with quarter-of-an-hour to go as Eremide Lawal saw his effort beat the 'keeper.

There was to be no addition to the scoring after that as the visitors saw the game out well to take home a hard-earned three points.



ISUZU FA TROPHY THIRD ROUND PROPER

Boston United 1 Alvechurch 0

The Premier Central club gave a great of themselves against their higher-level hosts with very little to choose between the teams throughout.

There were chances at either end before Marriott grabbed what proved to be the winner for the home side with just 12 minutes on the clock.

Despite their best efforts, there was no way back for Tim Flowers' side as they found their opponents in stubborn mood.

Oxford City 2 Hadley 1

The Division One Central high-flyers were looking to claim another scalp. Their cause was not helped by conceding a goal within the opening minute.

However, they refused to let their heads drop and got themselves back into proceedings with Isaac Stones in particular going close in the opening period.

The second half was just four minutes old when Jordan Edwards won a penalty which Luke Alfano converted to bring the scores level.

The conditions were making life tough for both teams but it was the hosts who snatched what proved to be the decisive goal with just under ten minutes to go.

Worthing 1 Gosport Borough 1 (Gosport Borough won 3-2 on pens)

There was a giant-killing act here as the Premier South outfit made it through having come from behind to win on penalties.

It was first blood to the home side as they went ahead on 24 minutes but Gosport responded by going on to create the best of the chances as the time went on with the hosts' 'keeper in inspired form to keep them at bay.

With chances coming and going, it looked like the tie was going the way of the home team until Dan Wooden fired home a leveller in the fourth minute of stoppage time.

Going into the penalty shoot-out full of belief, our boys secured a 3-2 victory to progress into the fourth round.



NEWS ROUND-UP

STOURBRIDGE | HIGH INTENSITY

There was plenty of drama at last weekend's local derby between Stourbridge and Halesowen Town as the two Pitching In Southern League Premier Central heavyweights went head-to-head at the War Memorial Ground.

Whilst ground issues meant that the capacity had to be limited, there was still a crowd of just under 2,000 in attendance to watch a game that ebbed and flowed throughout.

The visitors, who sit second in the table, took the initiative with the opening goal but the home side hit back and two goals within the final ten minutes looked like giving them the bragging rights as they turned the scoreline around.

That was until the fourth minute of stoppage time when the scores were levelled and both sides had to settle for a share of the spoils.

For a number of players on the Stourbridge team, it was their first taste of what is known locally as the 'Number 9' derby, a reference to the bus route that links the two Black Country towns. "Local derbies always bring that extra level of intensity, but last weekend's game was certainly intense," Dom Lewis, one of a whole host of summer signings, told us. "The atmosphere was fantastic and the game went one way and then the other.

"It was everything you want and expect from a local derby between two teams who have started the season well. It's just a pity that having got ourselves in front late on, we couldn't hold on to it.

"These are exactly the type of games that you want to be involved in as a player and I enjoyed it out there.

"It's been a positive start so far for myself and the team. I wasn't playing as much as I would have liked at the start of the season, but I have managed to establish myself as the games have gone on and I feel that I'm getting into a good rhythm now at this level.

"Each game I feel that I am learning more and contributing to the team. As we enter the month of December, we're sitting in a good position.

"It's very challenging and a definite step up from what I have previously been used to, but I went into the season with my eyes wide open and expected it to be just as demanding and competitive as it has proven to be so far.

"For me it's a case of consistently improving my skills to ensure that I keep contributing to the team. My aim is to be a reliable and regular performer who gets his job done for the team.

"We are a focussed group of players; we know what we want to achieve and we'll continue doing all we can on and off the pitch to be able to get to where we want to be. We're also fortunate to have such a fantastic fan base to help drive us on."

EXMOUTH TOWN | STRAIGHT DOWN THE LINE

Exmouth Town manager, Kevin Hill, has been involved in the game for three decades and in that time he has seen a lot. But even he didn't expect to be running the line in his 250th League game in charge of the Devon club last weekend.

The situation arose in their Pitching In Southern League Division One South clash at Bristol Manor Farm when, with one match official short, the home club put out an appeal to find a replacement as the clock ticked down towards kick-off time.

"Various avenues were explored to find someone qualified to step in, quite literally, at the last minute," Hill told us. "With the prospect of the game being postponed if no-one could be found, I said that if the worst came to the worst, I would do it as long as everyone was in agreement.

"I know their Gaffer well and he was happy as were the other two match officials. I had my co-manager, Dave Pearse, alongside me so I knew that the team would be in safe hands with him looking after them, so I took the flag and got kitted out.

"I made it clear that I would keep it simple; just flag for throw-ins, corners and offside, I wouldn't get involved in any other stuff. By the same token, it was made clear that I wouldn't be able to do any coaching from my position, so that was all left to the guys in the dug-out.

"I have to admit that it was strange seeing my team right in front of me yet not being able to shout instructions to them!

"There was an offside I gave against my player after ten minutes, but it was the right decision and he accepted it. To be honest, there were no problems at all throughout the game, it was played in the right spirit and the players appreciated the situation.

"It was certainly a new situation for me and I actually quite enjoyed it! Like most managers, I have criticised assistant referees over the years and had banter with them during games, so it was good to be able to step up and actually give it a go to be able to see things from their perspective and put myself in their shoes as it were.

"There are so many tasks to do on matchdays and so much to think about, it was nice to step out of the stress of the dug-out for a little while!

"It wasn't how I expected my 250th game in charge to go and we also had the disappointment of losing to a last-minute goal, but I had some positive comments from both sides about my performance, so that was nice.

"There was even one point when I out-paced the winger and full-back as they chased a ball down the wing, so there could be no complaints about me not being able to keep up with play!

"Seriously, I am full of respect for the job that all match officials do and now I can say that I have given it a go too."



INFLUENCER

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

JOSHUA COLDICOTT-STEVENS (ROYSTON TOWN) > CESC FABREGAS

I'm an Arsenal fan so watching him every week growing up and seeing how he made football look so effortless was a real inspiration.

PST SPORT CLUB OF THE MONTH AWARDS | NOVEMBER 2024

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

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

The month started in the most glorious way for the Poppies as they came from behind to beat Football League neighbours, Northampton Town, 2-1 after extra-time in front of the live television cameras in the Emirates FA Cup.

With a spring in their step, they won their next game 3-1 against Redditch United thanks to a brace from Jonny Edwards and a further strike from Nile Ranger.

A good 3-1 away triumph at AFC Telford United was next on the agenda as Jonny Edwards once more grabbed two goals in between an effort from Tyree Wilson as they beat another opponent from within the leading pack.

They had to settle for a share of the spoils in a 2-2 home draw with Bedford Town.

Isiah Noel-Williams cancelled out an opener from the visitors before Andi Thanoj put them ahead with just under 15 minutes to go. There was a sting in the tail as the visitors levelled matters in the final minute.

The month ended with a last-gasp goal of their own giving them a hard-earned 2-1 victory over in-form Leiston. Jonny Edwards was on hand to give them an early lead, which was subsequently cancelled out with ten minutes left on the clock. However, Isiah Noel-Williams stepped up with an 89th minute winner.

The Pitching In Southern League Premier South accolade has gone to AFC Totton, who win for the second month in a row.

A Tony Lee brace gave them a winning start to the month as they came home from Marlow with a 2-0 success. They were also leading by the same scoreline when their next game, at Gosport Borough, was abandoned due to floodlight failure.

Having made progress in the Isuzu FA Trophy courtesy of a 2-0 win at Lewes, they brought the month to a close with a good 2-1 triumph over Swindon Supermarine with early goals from Charlie Austin and Tom Blair putting them in a commanding position against in-form opponents.

In the Pitching In Southern League Division One Central, it is Berkhamsted who are celebrating.

They got the month underway with a 3-1 victory at AFC Dunstable as first half strikes from Tom Newman, who bagged a quickfire brace within the opening ten minutes, and Lewis Thorpe set them on their way to a good away day win.

It was the same scoreline in their next game as they returned to home soil with victory over Kings Langley. This time, though, they had to come from behind and scored all three goals in the second half with JJ Lacey setting them on their way from the penalty spot and an own goal putting them in front. Louie Collier rounded things off with the decisive third goal.

A late strike earned them a share of the spoils from a 2-2 draw at Enfield. Dan Newton cancelled out an early opener from their hosts before Adam Watkins grabbed a late equaliser after their opponents had regained the lead with 20 minutes to go.

Those battling qualities came to the fore once more in the next game as they overcame the stubborn challenge of Leverstock Green with Louie Collier grabbing the all-important goal midway through the second period.

A trip to fellow high-flyers, Flackwell Heath, produced an entertaining game which they won 4-2. JJ Lacey put them ahead only for the scoreline to be turned on its head before the half-hour mark. However, the pendulum swung back in their favour when an own goal put them back on level terms and soon afterwards, Louie Collier regained their lead. A late strike from skipper, Matt Bateman, sealed a big three points.

The month ended with Bateman on the scoresheet again to open the scoring against Biggleswade FC. Dan Newton completed a deserved 2-0 win after the break to maintain their position at the top of the table.

Taking the Pitching In Southern League Division One South honour is Evesham United.

They got the month off to an impressive start by going to fellow high-flyers, Melksham Town, and recording a hard-earned 1-0 victory with Josh Barlow getting the vital goal.

A 1-1 draw earned them a point from their trip to Larkhall Athletic, with Toby Raison on the mark. It was followed by a 3-2 triumph over Helston Athletic as they got back into home action. Defender, Toby Raison, scored for the second game in a row to put them ahead only for the visitors to hit back. Reegan Messenger put them back ahead early in the second half and after that too was cancelled out, Messenger delivered the winner with just over ten minutes to go.

After going down to a narrow 1-0 loss at leaders, Yate Town, they bounced back to end the month with a commanding 4-0 victory over Falmouth Town as Levi Steele helped himself to two of the goals with Amer Awadh and an own goal also on the scoresheet.

We congratulate the four winners:

Premier Central – Kettering Town (2.600ppg) | Premier South – AFC Totton (3.000ppg) | Division One Central – Berkhamsted (2.667ppg) | Division One South – Evesham United (2.000ppg – win on goal difference with a number of clubs tied)

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.



MY CLUB, MY SHIRT



The Southern Football League will be participating in its very first My Club, My Shirt campaign during the month of December, which aims to promote equality and inclusivity at our clubs.

Our volunteers and supporters are the lifeblood of our clubs, and we know that you all do a remarkable job in making your clubs inclusive environments that allows anyone and everyone the opportunity to enjoy football.

This campaign is a simple one! We believe that visual representation is a powerful tool in bringing people together and that football is the perfect conduit to making that happen. Fusing football and photography together, promotes equality in the most picturesque way! We would like each club to reach out to their volunteers and supporters and find a representative who is willing to share a photo of themselves in their club shirt.

As this is an equality campaign, we want the imagery to show that regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, that your club is welcoming, inclusive and a place for absolutely everyone.

The photographs should contain a natural pose, be of only the individual participant, in an environment they are comfortable in, wearing their Southern Football League club shirt. All photographs should be submitted to our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Director Stephen Hyde, no later than the 31st December 2024, via: sfl.diversity@gmail.com

The best photographs selected to be displayed in a joint FA and Southern Football League equality event in 2025, as well as on the Southern Football League website and media channels.

All photographs should come with a small paragraph detailing the name of the person who is pictured, the club whose shirt they are wearing, and why they feel proud to wear the shirt they have on.

FIXTURES | THE WEEK AHEAD

Pitching In Southern League Premier South

TUESDAY 10 DEC 24

Taunton Town v Merthyr Town

WEDNESDAY 11 DEC 24

Gosport Borough v AFC Totton

SATURDAY 14 DEC 24

Basingstoke Town v Wimborne Town

Frome Town v Swindon Supermarine

Gloucester City v Chertsey Town

Hanwell Town v Gosport Borough

Havant & Waterlooville v Taunton Town

Hungerford Town v Marlow

Poole Town v Merthyr Town

Sholing v Plymouth Parkway

Tiverton Town v AFC Totton

Walton & Hersham v Dorchester Town

Winchester City v Bracknell Town

Pitching In Southern League Premier Central

MONDAY 09 DEC 24

Barwell v Kettering Town

TUESDAY 10 DEC 24

Royston Town v Halesowen Town

SATURDAY 14 DEC 24

AFC Sudbury v Hitchin Town

AFC Telford United v Banbury United

Alvechurch v Spalding United

Barwell v Halesowen Town

Bedford Town v Lowestoft Town

Bromsgrove Sporting v Royston Town

Kettering Town v Bishop's Stortford

Leiston v Stourbridge

Redditch United v Biggleswade Town

St Ives Town v Harborough Town

Stamford v Stratford Town

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 10 DEC 24

Cribbs v Bemerton Heath Harlequins

Mousehole v Westbury United

Shaftesbury v Yate Town

SATURDAY 14 DEC 24

Bemerton Heath Harlequins v Yate Town

Bideford AFC v Shaftesbury

Bishops Cleeve v Exmouth Town

Bristol Manor Farm v Didcot Town

Evesham United v Tavistock AFC

Helston Athletic v Thatcham Town

Malvern Town v Larkhall Athletic

Melksham Town v Falmouth Town AFC

Mousehole v Willand Rovers

Westbury United v Cribbs

Pitching In Southern League Division One Central

TUESDAY 10 DEC 24

North Leigh v Berkhamsted

WEDNESDAY 11 DEC 24

Kidlington v Leverstock Green

SATURDAY 14 DEC 24

Aylesbury United v Welwyn Garden City

Barton Rovers v Thame United

Beaconsfield Town v Real Bedford

Hadley v Biggleswade FC

Hertford Town v Kings Langley

Leighton Town v North Leigh

Leverstock Green v Flackwell Heath

Northwood v Kidlington

Stotfold v Enfield

Ware v AFC Dunstable

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)

southern-football-league.co.uk



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