

PREVIEW MAG



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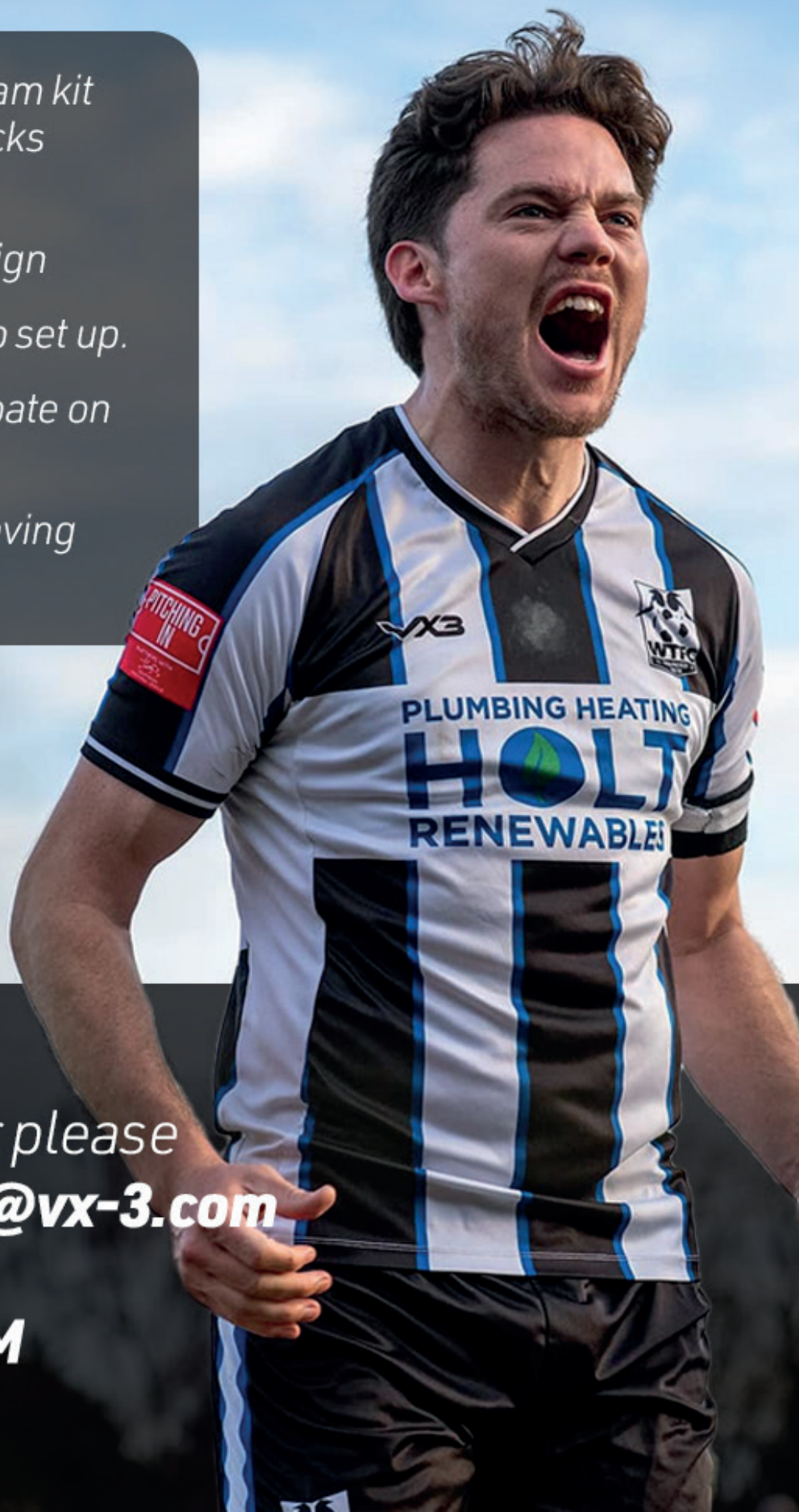


UNSUNG HEROES

YOUR FRIDAY GUIDE TO ALL
OF THE WEEKEND ACTION

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UNSUNG HEROES



Friday is International Volunteers Day 2025 as we show our appreciation to those who give up their time to help others across all sectors of society.

Here in the Southern League, volunteers play such a crucial role at clubs across all four of our divisions.

There are so many unsung heroes doing their bit behind-the-scenes week in, week out and as well as shining a light on them, we are also aware of the need to constantly find new volunteers to get involved at our member clubs.

That is where the Pitching In Volunteer Hub comes in. It runs across the Trident Leagues, in association with title sponsors Pitching In.

The Hub assists all member clubs in generating the much-needed support of volunteers, whether it's for day-to-day operations or just matchday roles.

You will be able to find any current vacancies that member clubs

have all in one place as well as who to contact for further information or to apply for the position.

The survival of non-League clubs is only made possible by the fantastic number of volunteers who devote their time and energy into helping out.

If you have that time, your local club would be most grateful, and we encourage you to get in contact with them to find out how you can support them.

To all of the volunteers who work tirelessly behind-the-scenes at our member clubs, we salute you and thank you most sincerely for all of your efforts.

Find volunteering opportunities at your local club via: pitchinginvolunteers.co.uk

It can be so rewarding, get involved today!



You can watch Trident Leagues on Clubber TV at:

clubbertv.co.uk

or on our iOS & Android apps, where you'll find the full list of games to be live streamed.

TRIDENT LEAGUES

LEAGUE STANDINGS

2025-26



Premier Division South

#	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Walton & Hersham	19	9	1	0	27	6	6	2	1	20	10	31	48
2	Gloucester City	19	8	1	1	25	13	4	3	2	19	13	18	40
3	Poole Town	19	5	4	1	21	11	5	1	3	17	15	12	35
4	Gosport Borough	19	6	1	2	26	18	4	3	3	17	15	10	34
5	Farnham Town	16	3	3	2	16	12	6	2	0	20	10	14	32
6	Sholing	19	5	3	1	24	13	3	5	2	9	8	12	32
7	Wimborne Town	17	6	3	0	23	10	2	3	3	7	6	14	30
8	Uxbridge	19	5	2	3	17	17	2	6	1	15	14	1	29
9	Chertsey Town	20	4	3	3	15	11	3	3	4	9	11	2	27
10	Berkhamsted	19	4	2	3	10	12	3	3	4	11	14	-5	26
11	Evesham United	20	4	3	3	17	10	2	3	5	13	21	-1	24
12	Yate Town	18	4	4	1	11	6	2	1	6	13	23	-5	23
13	Basingstoke Town	20	4	1	5	14	19	2	2	6	12	16	-9	21
14	Hanwell Town	17	3	2	3	9	10	2	2	5	11	13	-3	19
15	Taunton Town	18	2	3	5	12	16	3	1	4	15	15	-4	19
16	Hungerford Town	18	2	5	2	11	13	2	2	5	12	17	-7	19
17	Plymouth Parkway	18	4	2	3	10	12	0	4	5	12	19	-9	18
18	Bracknell Town	19	3	3	4	19	19	1	3	5	6	17	-11	18
19	Weymouth	20	2	4	4	11	14	2	2	6	11	24	-16	18
20	Dorchester Town	19	2	4	4	13	19	1	4	4	9	15	-12	17
21	Havant & Waterlooville	16	2	2	3	11	12	2	1	6	12	19	-8	15
22	Tiverton Town	17	1	1	5	6	10	1	1	8	13	33	-24	8

Premier Division Central

#	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Spalding United	20	5	1	1	19	6	8	3	2	33	17	29	43
2	Harborough Town	18	6	4	0	15	4	6	2	0	15	5	21	42
3	Needham Market	20	7	1	2	22	11	3	4	3	12	16	7	35
4	Quorn	20	4	2	4	16	13	6	2	2	25	15	13	34
5	Real Bedford	18	5	2	2	15	10	5	2	2	16	9	12	34
6	Redditch United	19	6	1	2	17	15	4	1	5	12	14	0	32
7	Halesowen Town	19	6	2	2	20	15	2	5	2	14	11	8	31
8	Leiston	20	4	4	2	19	13	4	3	3	14	13	7	31
9	Worcester City	20	4	4	3	15	12	4	2	3	17	7	13	30
10	Banbury United	19	5	2	3	18	16	3	1	5	15	15	2	27
11	Kettering Town	19	4	2	3	16	9	4	1	5	12	17	2	27
12	Stratford Town	19	4	3	2	15	13	3	2	5	11	17	-4	26
13	Bishop's Stortford	18	4	1	6	18	19	3	2	2	13	10	2	24
14	Barwell	19	3	2	4	13	13	3	4	3	16	15	1	24
15	St Ives Town	20	4	4	2	13	11	2	2	6	13	16	-1	24
16	Bromsgrove Sporting	20	5	1	5	17	20	2	2	5	10	18	-11	24
17	Alvechurch	19	4	0	5	12	12	3	2	5	6	8	-2	23
18	Bury Town	20	5	0	5	10	11	1	3	6	11	19	-9	21
19	AFC Sudbury	18	3	3	3	11	19	0	2	7	8	25	-25	14
20	Stourbridge	19	1	4	3	10	13	1	3	7	11	26	-18	13
21	Royston Town	20	1	5	4	13	20	1	2	7	6	22	-23	13
22	Stamford	18	1	3	6	6	20	1	1	6	5	15	-24	10

Weekend Action

Gloucester City
v Yate Town (playing Friday)

Berkhamsted
v Farnham Town

Chertsey Town
v Weymouth

Dorchester Town
v Hungerford Town

Gosport Borough
v Evesham United

Hanwell Town
v Plymouth Parkway

Havant & Waterlooville
v Poole Town

Taunton Town
v Bracknell Town

Tiverton Town
v Basingstoke Town

Uxbridge
v Walton & Hersham

Wimborne Town
v Sholing

Weekend Action

Alvechurch
v Real Bedford

Bishop's Stortford
v Harborough Town

Bromsgrove Sporting
v Stratford Town

Bury Town
v Barwell

Halesowen Town
v Kettering Town

Needham Market
v Quorn

Redditch United
v Banbury United

Spalding United
v Leiston

St Ives Town
v Worcester City

Stamford
v Royston Town

Stourbridge
v AFC Sudbury

Division One South

#	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Portishead Town	19	8	1	1	33	6	6	0	3	20	15	32	43
2	Frome Town	18	6	2	1	17	6	7	1	1	21	4	28	42
3	Winchester City	19	7	3	0	25	9	5	1	3	19	13	22	40
4	Shaftesbury	18	9	0	1	24	11	4	1	3	19	11	21	40
5	Malvern Town	19	7	0	3	23	18	6	1	2	19	12	12	40
6	Bishop's Cleeve	17	7	2	0	23	7	5	1	2	15	13	18	39
7	Westbury United	18	7	0	2	15	8	3	2	4	7	11	3	32
8	Exmouth Town	20	6	2	2	23	15	3	3	4	11	22	-3	32
9	Hartpury	18	6	1	2	33	12	2	1	6	12	14	19	26
10	Larkhall Athletic	19	6	2	2	24	17	2	0	7	11	17	1	26
11	Sporting Club Inkberrow	17	5	0	3	12	8	2	3	4	10	18	-4	24
12	Mousehole	19	3	2	5	12	14	3	3	3	17	15	0	23
13	Swindon Supermarine	18	4	0	5	17	17	2	3	4	9	10	-1	21
14	Bristol Manor Farm	19	4	2	3	12	13	2	1	7	15	26	-12	21
15	Bideford	20	3	3	4	11	14	2	2	6	7	20	-16	20
16	Falmouth Town	18	3	3	2	15	9	1	3	6	12	24	-6	18
17	Melksham Town	19	3	3	3	13	13	1	2	7	7	21	-14	17
18	Didcot Town	19	1	4	5	14	23	3	1	5	9	16	-16	17
19	Bashley	20	1	3	5	5	11	3	1	7	12	19	-13	16
20	Brixham	19	3	1	6	15	25	1	2	6	10	27	-27	15
21	Willand Rovers	18	2	2	5	9	13	1	3	5	10	25	-19	14
22	Tavistock	17	2	0	5	5	11	1	1	8	8	27	-25	10

Division One Central

#	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Leighton Town	20	8	2	0	27	7	6	3	1	22	13	29	47
2	Hertford Town	19	7	0	3	29	15	5	2	2	18	11	21	38
3	Hitchin Town	18	5	2	2	16	9	5	4	0	21	8	20	36
4	Biggleswade Town	19	4	4	2	22	13	6	1	2	26	11	24	35
5	Barton Rovers	19	6	2	1	22	10	4	3	3	14	14	12	35
6	Biggleswade	18	3	5	1	14	10	6	2	1	20	11	13	34
7	Stotfold	19	7	0	3	22	10	4	0	5	20	22	10	33
8	Welwyn Garden City	20	4	3	3	13	12	5	3	2	21	12	10	33
9	Ware	19	5	2	2	21	12	5	1	4	20	22	7	33
10	Beaconsfield Town	20	3	4	3	17	15	4	3	3	20	17	5	28
11	Hadley	18	4	2	3	22	21	3	4	2	13	11	3	27
12	Thame United	17	4	1	4	15	18	4	0	4	16	13	0	25
13	London Lions	20	5	1	4	21	23	2	1	7	14	20	-8	23
14	Milton Keynes Irish	19	3	1	5	19	25	4	1	5	15	19	-10	23
15	Flackwell Heath	16	3	2	4	16	13	3	2	2	10	6	7	22
16	Aylesbury United	19	1	4	4	9	14	4	1	5	17	22	-10	20
17	Marlow	18	4	1	3	18	16	2	1	7	10	25	-13	20
18	Leverstock Green	18	1	4	3	14	17	1	5	4	14	21	-10	15
19	Northwood	19	1	2	8	11	29	1	6	1	12	13	-19	14
20	AFC Dunstable	19	1	3	5	7	18	1	1	8	10	23	-24	10
21	Rayners Lane	18	1	0	8	5	21	2	1	6	9	30	-37	10
22	Enfield	18	1	1	7	11	24	1	1	7	10	27	-30	8

Weekend Action

Bideford AFC
v Hartpury

Bishops Cleeve
v Exmouth Town

Bristol Manor Farm
v Bashley

Brixham AFC
v Didcot Town

Falmouth Town
v Shaftesbury

Frome Town
v Sporting Club Inkberrow

Malvern Town
v Tavistock AFC

Melksham Town
v Mousehole

Portishead Town
v Larkhall Athletic

Swindon Supermarine
v Westbury United

Winchester City
v Willand Rovers

Weekend Action

AFC Dunstable
v Marlow

Barton Rovers
v Aylesbury United

Beaconsfield Town
v Biggleswade Town

Biggleswade FC
v Hadley

Flackwell Heath
v Ware

Hertford Town
v Leighton Town

London Lions
v Hitchin Town

Milton Keynes Irish
v Leverstock Green

Rayners Lane
v Enfield

Stotfold
v Welwyn Garden City

Thame United
v Northwood

Featured Match

GLOUCESTER CITY v YATE TOWN

The Southern League weekend action gets underway on Friday evening as Gloucester City play host to Yate Town in front of what is expected to be a larger than usual crowd at the KMM Energy Stadium.

There will be various activities taking place ahead of kick-off and food offerings available, as well as a special edition, 60-page Matchday Programme, for what the club has labelled as Friday Night Lights.

With the game falling on International Volunteers Day, we spoke to one of the many volunteers that helps to make the club tick.

As you arrive at the ground, one of the first faces that you see will be that of Craig Layhe, a lifelong supporter who has been volunteering for the past four seasons.

"I was inspired to get involved purely by seeing others being involved in helping on matchdays," he told us. "I respected their efforts and the pride that they had in being able to help the club in some way. so my involvement was all about the actions of others and I am so glad that I got involved here.

"I do various roles on matchdays, anything that the club needs to make the day run as smoothly as possible. The main roles include being on the gate, and being the first point of contact to help fans and answer any questions they may have. My main motivation is to be as welcoming as I possibly can because first impressions count!

"During the game I switch to being a steward and also unofficial ball boy when they are fired over the fence! I am also Secretary of the Supporters Trust on a voluntary basis; it blows my mind how much time and effort goes on behind-the-scenes not only on matchdays, but also throughout the week to raise funds to help contribute to the club.

"Personally I volunteer about 25-30 hours per month, but there are so many other who contribute more and I salute them.

"Enjoyment is paramount; helping fans, getting to chat football for five hours and also knowing that however small, it all helps the club function on matchdays and helps minimise costs, that's what makes it all worthwhile for me.

"Volunteers have such an important role to play, they ease the burden on the people who run the club, freeing up time for them to concentrate on other areas. They also save clubs time and money by doing such tasks as tidying up and running repairs."

Gloucester City go into the game in second place in the table. They came from two goals down to draw 2-2 at Wimborne Town last weekend as they look to keep on the coat-tails of leaders, Walton & Hersham.



There is Friday night action to Gloucester City this evening

"The main hope for the season is, obviously, promotion," added Layhe. "But beyond that I want to also see the club continue to develop and grow within the community, across all of our affiliated teams. Stability as a club in our operating model is vital, as is our connection with the fans."

It's a short trip for Yate Town who go into the game in the middle of the table having seen their game at Farnham Town fall victim of the wet weather last weekend.

They are on a run of three straight wins, unbeaten in their last five League outings as they get to grips with life at this level following promotion as champions of Division One South last term.

It promises to be a sparkling fixture under the Friday Night Lights.

THE REST OF THE ACTION



Image | @Simon_Carlton

Poole Town pushed leaders Walton & Hersham all the way on Tuesday evening

Leaders, Walton & Hersham, left it late to take a share of the spoils from their trip to Poole Town on Tuesday. They face another tricky away assignment on Saturday as they head to Uxbridge whose explosive start to the campaign has started to even out recently. For Poole Town, who go into the weekend action in third place, they head to Havant & Waterlooville who sit one place off the bottom.

It's a different story for Hampshire rivals, Gosport Borough who have had a solid campaign so far as they sit fourth. They welcome mid-table Evesham United, whilst making up the top five, Farnham Town will be hoping to get back into action having seen their last two games postponed as they head to Berkhamsted.

Two teams just outside the play-off places, Wimborne Town and Sholing, go head-to-head. The hosts let a two-goal lead slip to draw with Gloucester City last Saturday, whilst Sholing were running out commanding 3-0 victors over Evesham United.

At the foot of the table, Tiverton Town are back in home action as they face Basingstoke Town. Their scheduled home encounter was postponed last weekend. Also within the bottom four are Dorchester Town who host Hungerford Town having shared the spoils in their home encounter with Gosport Borough last weekend.

Dropping into the relegation zone after Bracknell Town picked up a point against Hungerford Town during the week are Weymouth who go to a Chertsey Town outfit who are looking to strengthen their place within the top half of the table. The aforementioned Bracknell Town head to Taunton Town, who are looking to kick-start their season.

The remaining action sees Hanwell Town welcome Plymouth Parkway to complete what is set to be another weekend of great action.

Featured Match

REDDITCH UNITED v BANBURY UNITED

Banbury United recently launched *Our Club, Our Town*, a fascinating 45-minute independent film, which was filmed over the past 12 months and captures the stories of multi-generational custodians of the fan-owned club.

Directed by Glyn McGuire and with support from local media students, it's an emotive film that delves into the hard-work and sacrifice made by a whole host of volunteers to ensure the club

survives amidst rising business costs, whilst balancing their club commitments with their own full-time jobs and family life.

Our Club, Our Town asks how much Banbury United matters to the community that owns it and whether town and club have the appetite to rally together behind a potentially ambitious future.

"Besides the specific obstacles faced by Banbury United, many of the themes highlighted in 'Our Club, Our Town' are common to the hundreds of England's non-League, volunteer-driven football clubs that have delivered unrivalled local sporting entertainment and strong human connections within their communities, week-in week-out, for decades," said the film's director, Glyn McGuire. "The local football club provides an important, embedded culture that, as our characters argue, deserves protection and investment."

Lifelong supporter, Tommy Upstone, added: "In North Oxfordshire, we are surrounded by stately homes, which are safeguarded, yet we are fighting for our football club. Who is to say that Blenheim Palace or Upton House are more important to the communities that live here than Banbury United? It's the same as our fight to keep vital services at our local hospital. The community has to fight for everything we've got."

"We believe that Banbury is the largest town in England without a 4G pitch. Yet we have the potential to be a massive non-League football club."

Club Secretary, Claire Dumbreck, concurs: "The lack of suitable playing surfaces in North Oxfordshire is pitiful. This does not just affect Banbury United's ability to progress up the football pyramid due to a lack of first team training facilities, it severely hampers grassroots football and player pathways for all clubs in the region, as well as leisure and well-being for adults and children in Banbury's growing population."

A powerful thread throughout *Our Club, Our Town* is how volunteering and spectating at Banbury United has benefitted locals' mental health, and how the football club has enabled people from all walks of life to form diverse new friendship groups and a sense of togetherness.

Young fan, Lewis Aston, talks of how "we all like being around each other" at matches, while Phil Coles, a fan for over 60 years, observes; "Non-league football is a family. We care for each other."



Some of the characters who appear in the film are former players, Tony Foster and Tony Jacques. Now in their seventies and living away from Banbury 'the two Tonys' played together in Banbury United's heyday in the 1970s, including a run to the first round proper of the FA Cup.

Meanwhile, 22 year-old Lewis Aston has attended over 300 consecutive Banbury United matches, whilst Mark Allitt is a renowned local retailer and former commercial director of the club, and Lisa Dixon is a current Board Director, whose great grandad and uncle both played for the club.

Legendary goalkeeper, Jack Harding, who has been with the club since 2009 and has over 400 appearances between the posts, is also involved with the project, as is Claire Dumbreck, local mum who discovered Banbury United during Covid and never left. She is now Club Secretary.

There's also input from Chairman, Wayne Farrell, Community Coach, Ryan Jones and super fan, Phil Coles who travels from North Wales to each home game and has supported the club for over 60 years.

Our Club, Our Town was made entirely voluntarily by Cheshire-based film-maker Glyn McGuire, following a chance meeting with one of Banbury United's board directors in early 2024.

Over 200 local dignitaries, present and former players and directors, staff, volunteers, supporters and cast members, attended a red carpet film premiere at the end of November and it's well worth a watch on YouTube via: youtu.be/a8Bu4Q9rb4o

Banbury United hit the top ten following last weekend's 2-0 victory over struggling Stamford AFC. They have won eight and lost eight of their 18 League games so far this season and travel to face a Redditch United outfit still reeling from a 7-0 home hammering at the hands of Spalding United last weekend.

It's safe to say that Reds' manager, Mike Fowler, will be seeking a response from his side who currently sit sixth.

THE REST OF THE ACTION



There's a new man at the Alvechurch helm as Kyle Storer was appointed permanent manager this week

Following their emphatic 7-0 away win at Redditch United last weekend, Spalding United regained top spot and they will be looking to keep hold of it as they start a run of home games with the visit of Leiston on Saturday. They are a point ahead of Harborough Town who saw a late equaliser deny them victory at Barwell in their last encounter. Harborough travel to take on a Bishop's Stortford outfit who also drew last weekend, as they let a 4-1 lead slip in the closing ten minutes to draw 4-4 at Halesowen Town.

In third place are Needham Market, who battled out a single-goal victory over Alvechurch last time out and now prepare for a similarly stern test as they host Quorn, who are just one place and one point below them. This is sure to be a hard-fought battle with three big points up for grabs for the eventual winner.

Making up the top five are Real Bedford, who will be eager to respond in the right way having slipped to a 1-0 defeat at Leiston. They go to Alvechurch who appointed Kyle Storer as permanent

successor to Tim Flowers on Wednesday. He will be assisted by the vastly experienced Mark Yates as they look to get the club moving up the table again.

The bottom two meet at Stamford AFC as they entertain Royston Town, whilst the two teams directly above them, Stourbridge and AFC Sudbury also go head-to-head at the War Memorial Athletic Ground, so there are some big battles going on within the bottom four this weekend.

Sitting just above the relegation places, Bury Town face Barwell who are only three points better off than them, whilst Bromsgrove Sporting take on Stratford Town where only two points are the difference going into the encounter.

The other action sees Halesowen Town host a Kettering Town side buoyed by their 5-0 romp against Stourbridge last weekend, whilst St. Ives Town will be looking to make home advantage count as they take on Worcester City.

Featured Match

PORTISHEAD TOWN v LARKHALL ATHLETIC

They are the lifeblood of non-League clubs across the land. Volunteers play such a key role behind-the-scenes and Larkhall Athletic are blessed to have a number of them who work tirelessly to keep things running smoothly.

One such is Football Secretary and Director, Professor Tracey Hill. She has supported the Division One South club for almost two decades, of which 15 years have been spent volunteering.

"I've always loved football, been a people person and had good attention to detail," she told us. "So it was only natural that I would become more involved behind-the-scenes at the club.

"I first visited in 2007, having been encouraged to do so by Gerald Rich, who runs the Larkhall greengrocers and has been involved with the club for decades.

"I quickly got more involved, starting with helping behind the bar and then progressing to fundraising. By 2014 I was Football Secretary and then became a Director too.



Professor Tracey Hill loves her role as volunteer at Larkhall Athletic.

"My role at the club is a world away from my 'day job' researching 16th and 17th century London.

"Volunteers are undoubtedly the lifeblood of non-League football. We simply couldn't function without their commitment and willingness to turn their hands to anything that needs doing.

"On any given matchday we have volunteers behind the bar and in the Snack Shack, in the pay box, selling merchandise, running hospitality, and, in my case, dashing about with pieces of paper! I think it's only right here that I give a shout-out to my fellow secretaries, who work so hard, often without getting full credit for what they do.

"I've been doing this for a long time and it's a lot of work for one person. Getting a new player signed on in the nick of time, as does happen, is stressful but gives me a sense of achievement. I do like getting to know the players. I also take some pride in the Matchday Programme, which I copy-edit and produce much of the content for, including choosing the cover photo. Fundamentally, I love football and never tire of watching the Larks."

Having struggled in the lower reaches of the table last term, they currently find themselves just inside the top ten, looking up the table rather than nervously over their shoulder.

"Yes, things are going better than last season," said Professor Hill with a smile. "Last season was tricky to say the least. We're doing okay now, though. Home form is good, including some incredible comebacks, such as scoring three goals in eight minutes to draw 3-3 against Falmouth Town in our last game.

"We're playing some great football a lot of the time. Winning 3-1 away at Frome Town was a particular highlight and showed that we can compete against the best at this level, something that we will need to show on Saturday as we head to another top team in Portishead Town.

"Division One South is very competitive this year. Every week there are some eye-catching results. That said, the top five or six are starting to pull away as we head towards the middle of the season. It'll be interesting to see if they can maintain this lead."

One of the key components of allowing the club to develop and grow both on and off the pitch was the installation of a new 3G surface at their Plain Ham home.

"Having the 3G pitch has helped us enormously,"

she added. "It has strengthened the links between the senior and youth sections of the club and is now the hub of everything Larkhall Athletic.

"The kids love playing at Plain Ham with all its facilities. The club has never been busier, which is great, even if it puts more of a burden on our volunteers!

"Our first team management have also recruited a number of skilful young players who thrive on the surface. And having no postponements is a massive bonus, of course.

"Hopefully we can continue to build on our successes and our links with the youth section and the local community more widely.

"A top ten finish for the first team and promotion into Step 6 for our Development side would count as a successful season, I think."

It's been a solid start to life at this level for Portishead Town following promotion at the end of last season.

They currently sit top of the table, but will be eager to bounce back from only a fourth League defeat of the campaign in their last outing at Shaftesbury, where they fell by four goals to two.

THE REST OF THE ACTION



Having hit Tavistock AFC for six on Tuesday, Hartpury has now scored 50 goals in all competitions so far this season

Hot on the heels of leaders, Portishead Town, are the winners of the PST Sport Club of the Month award for November 2025, Frome Town. They sit just one point below them as they welcome Sporting Club Inkberrow at the weekend. Their opponents were two levels below them last season, but have enjoyed an exciting journey that is showing no signs of coming to an end any time soon.

There's a battle for vital points at both ends of the table as Winchester City, who go into the weekend in third place, take on a Willand Rovers side who find themselves one place off the foot of the table. Willand suffered a disappointing home loss at the hands of Bideford AFC last weekend, whilst Winchester saw their game at Tavistock AFC postponed.

Things are going to plan for the much-fancied Shaftesbury who are fourth and face a long trip down to Falmouth Town, whose recent form has started to pick up. Making up the rest of the top five are Malvern Town, who chalked up a good 4-2 away win at Exmouth Town in their last outing and now host bottom of the

table Tavistock AFC, who are still reeling from their heavy 6-1 midweek loss at Hartpury.

Also losing during the week were Bishops Cleeve as they sit just outside the top five following their 3-1 reverse at Westbury United on Tuesday. Their opponents now move to just one place below them following the victory. For Bishops Cleeve it's a home game against Exmouth Town to look forward to, whilst Westbury go to Swindon Supermarine.

Making up a trio of Devon clubs in the bottom four are Brixham AFC who welcome Didcot Town on Saturday. Meanwhile Bashley, who are also in the relegation places currently, go to Bristol Manor Farm who sit five points above them. Benefitting from new manager 'bounce', Melksham Town host a Mousehole AFC side whose away form has been better than that on home soil so far this term.

The remaining action sees Bideford AFC look to continue their recent winning run as they welcome Hartpury in what is going to be another action-packed weekend in Division One South.

Featured Match

LONDON LIONS
v HITCHIN TOWN

Hitchin Town made a big statement of their intentions last weekend as they dismantled Division One Central leaders, Leighton Town, to inflict their first defeat of the season after 20 games.

What made the victory even more impressive was that it came by five goals to nil to make it just two defeats from 18 and strengthen their position amongst the front-runners.

"The performance was definitely the best this season, there's no doubt about that," said Ciaren Jones, who weighed in with the fourth goal. "I think every player, subs included, had a very good game and when a team of 11+ players are all having a good game, it's hard to compete against.

"We didn't change any of our tactics or style of play for them, we just moved the ball really well, took our chances when they came and got goals at the right time.

"In my view, the result does and doesn't send out a statement. Leighton Town are a good team and have done extremely well so far this season, but so have we. Yes, we are a few points behind them with a few games in hand, but it's a long old season. Two years ago we were sitting amongst the front-runners in the league above before we got relegated then reprieved, so it can

change very quickly.

"The season so far has gone to plan, as we expected it to. There are a few results where we should've won instead of getting a draw or where we should have taken a point, but lost. Having said that, overall we're progressing in each game and building up a bit of an unbeaten run now.

"This League has definitely surprised me this year. I definitely under-estimated the level of football. The Premier Central is a very difficult League with big physical lads, who certainly let you know that they are there! Thankfully, there's not as much of that in Division One Central, it still happens, but just not as often!

"There's a good balance to this League where everyone is capable of beating each other. We've seen some crazy results where teams near the bottom have beaten those flying high and it just shows the importance of never under-estimating your opponent.

"Our aim and target for the rest of the season is promotion. Whether that be by winning the League or play-offs, that's our end goal and it has been since day one.

"I think as a group, anything less is a failure. But our season is defined now because we beat Leighton Town 5-0; we must have the same mentality for when we face teams towards the bottom



It was a five-star show from the Canaries last weekend

of the table, because that's what makes winners. "As long as we keep hitting our monthly point targets we set out, we should be a good position come May."

Saturday's latest challenge sees them head to London Lions. Two divisions separated these teams last season, but here they are battling it out with the hosts sat just below half-way but eight points ahead of the bottom four.

They are in upbeat mood having secured a fantastic 3-0 victory over third-place Barton Rovers last weekend and now they have Hitchin Town in their sights as they look to build on what they have done so far this term with seven wins from their 20 League games. It promises to be a fascinating battle between two sides full of belief.

THE REST OF THE ACTION



It's a mouth-watering game at Hertford Town as they host wounded leaders, Leighton Town

Saturday will be Leighton Town's first test of how they respond to defeat and it couldn't be a more difficult challenge that stands before them as they go to second-place Hertford Town in what will be a mouth-watering encounter. The hosts are nine points adrift of the leaders, so they will be determined to narrow that gap against opponents who are determined to bounce back from last weekend's 5-0 reverse at Hitchin Town in the right way.

Barton Rovers are also a wounded animal after they lost 3-0 at London Lions on Saturday and they will be seeking a return to winning ways as they host Aylesbury United. Also making up the rest of the top five are November's PST Sport Club of the Month, Biggleswade Town, who go to Beaconsfield Town having overcome the challenge of AFC Dunstable without too many problems on Tuesday evening.

Just outside the play-off places, Biggleswade FC host a Hadley outfit who also have their sights set on pushing on for a place in the top five. Likewise, Stotfold and Welwyn Garden City have been in good form and they meet with both sides level on points.

The bottom two meet as Enfield go to Rayners Lane. It's been a tough season so far for both clubs, so they will be looking for a spark here and three valuable points. Just above them, AFC Dunstable host Marlow, who shared the spoils with Leverstock Green in a 2-2 draw on Tuesday, whilst Northwood go to a Thame United outfit who are sat in the middle of the table.

The rest of the action sees Flackwell Heath play host to Ware, whilst MK Irish will be looking to make home advantage count as they take on Leverstock Green, who sit just above the drop zone.

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