2024/25 | Edition 4

PITCHING IN PARTNERS WITH SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

UP THE BEMMY!



BEMERTON HEATH HARLEQUINS FOOTBALL CLUB

VS

YATE TOWN BLUEBELLS FOOTBALL CLUB

FA TROPHY - 1ST QUALIFYING ROUND

SATURDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | 15:00 | THE A-CLASS ARENA



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2024/25 CLUB LINE-UP

Club President | Steve Slade
Chairman | Ricky Rogers
Vice-Chairman | Andy Stokes
Secretary | Matt McMahon
Treasurer | Andy Stokes
Press Officer I Lewis Brooks
Matchday Hospitality | Steve Brooks & Shirley Bailey
Executive Committee Members | Dave Heather & Steve Scriven
Bar Manager | Eve McTier
Bar Staff | Kelly Pickering & Evie Chick
Head of Catering | Amy Sanger

FIRST TEAM
Manager | Danny Young
Coaches | Graham Mills, Chris James & Rohan Sharma
Goalkeeper Coach | Niall Lalani
Sports Therapist | Ellie Millings
Analayst | Qasim Benamira-Dod

RESERVE TEAM
Manager | Jay Madden
Assistant Manager | Jack Slade
Coach | Adam Nash
Sports Therapist | Martin Higgins
Media Officer | George Milton

U23 TEAM
Manager | Alan Lucas
Coach | Adam Barker
Coach I Decklin Barrett
Goalkeeper Coach | Jimmy Richardson

LADIES TEAM
Manager | Jason Mussellwhite
Head Coach | Dan Horsman
Goalkeeper Coach | James Vincent
Physio | Kiera Roff
Lino | Mark Smith
Media Officer | Sarah Mussellwhite

YOUTH SECTION
Head of Youth | Simon Nelmes
Secretary | Matt McMahon
Vice-Secretary | Lewis Stafford
Welfare Officer | Sarah-Louise Jones

2024/25

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OUR HISTORY

Bemerton Heath Harlequins were established in May 1989 through the merger of three successful local clubs: Bemerton Athletic, Moon F.C., and Bemerton Boys. Each of these clubs had a strong track record—Bemerton Athletic clinched the Wiltshire League title three times, Moon F.C. regularly secured honors in the Salisbury and Andover Leagues, and Bemerton Boys garnered several trophies in the Mid-Wilts League.

By late 1988, Moon F.C. and Bemerton Athletic were seeking new challenges, leading to preliminary discussions about merging with the aim of entering the Wessex League. Given the proximity of their grounds and the fact that their players frequently represented both clubs, a merger seemed like a natural progression. The merger was successful, resulting in the formation of Bemerton Heath Harlequins, who now enjoy a splendid clubhouse built through collective effort.

Since the merger, the men's first team has consistently performed well in the Wessex League, with the 1992/93 season standing out as the most successful. During this season, the team finished third in the league, won the Wiltshire Senior Cup, achieved a Hat-Trick of Hospital Cup Final victories, and had notable runs in the F.A. Cup and F.A. Vase.

In the 1996/97 season, the 2nd XI were champions of the Wessex Combination League and runners-up in the Cup. The following season, the first XI finished 5th in the league and reached the final of the Wessex League Cup. The 1998/99 season saw the team advance to the last sixteen of the F.A. Vase for the first time and the Combination side finally won the Wessex Cup on their fourth attempt.

Recent seasons have been marked by ups and downs, culminating in the club's first relegation. The 2019/20 season saw new manager Ian Saunders take charge as the team faced the challenge of Division One. Despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely impacted global football, the club chose to rejuvenate its Youth Section to ensure a robust community project for all ages.

In December 2020, Shaun Hale succeeded Ian Saunders, who transitioned to Director of Football. Under Hale's leadership, the club secured the Wessex Division 1 championship on the final day of the 2021/22 season, marking their first title. The Harlequins followed this success with a second-place finish in the 2022/2023 season, achieving back-to-back promotions and reaching the Southern League for the first time.

As the 2024/25 season approached, Shaun Hale stepped down as first-team manager, ushering in a new era under James Ellis. However, Ellis departed after just five weeks, and Danny Young, with extensive Southern League experience, was appointed as Interim Manager.

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2024/25 FIXTURES

AUGUST
03: BROCK (H) - 15:00 (FAC EP)
06: BROCK (A) - 19:45 (FAC EPR)
10: WILLAND (A) - 15:00
13: WESTBURY (H) - 19:45
17: LAVERSTOCK (H) - 15:00 (FAC)
24: BISHOPS CLEEVE (A) - 15:00
26: DIDCOT (H) - 15:00

SEPTEMBER
07: YATE TOWN (H) - 15:00 (FATR)
14: EVESHAM (A) - 15:00
21: FA TROPHY 2Q
28: MALVERN TOWN (H) - 15:00

OCTOBER
01: SHAFTSBURY (A) - 19:45
05: TAVISTOCK (H) - 15:00
12: CINDEFORD (A) - 15:00
19: WILLAND (H) - 15:00
22: LARKHALL (H) - 19:45
26: MOUSEHOLE (A) - 15:00
29: BRISTOL MF (A) - 19:45

NOVEMBER
02: HELSTON (H) - 15:00
09: MELKSHAM (H) - 15:00
16: BIDEFORD (A) - 15:00
23: CRIBBS (A) - 15:00
30: THATCHAM (H) - 15:00

DECEMBER
07: EXMOUTH (A) - 15:00
14: YATE TOWN (H) - 15:00
21: FALMOUTH (A) - 15:00
26: BASHLEY (H) - 15:00
28: WESTBURY (A) - 15:00

JANUARY
01: DIDCOT (A) - 15:00
04: BISHOPS C (H) - 15:00
11: MALVERN (A) - 15:00
18: EVESHAM (H) - 15:00
25: LARKHALL (A) - 15:00

FEBRUARY
01: MOUSEHOLE (H) - 15:00
08: HELSTON (A) - 15:00
15: BRISTOL MF (H) - 15:00
22: MELKSHAM (A) - 15:00

MARCH
01: BIDEFORD (H) - 15:00
08: CRIBBS (H) - 15:00
15: THATCHAM (A) - 15:00
22: EXMOUTH (H) - 15:00
29: YATE (A) - 15:00

APRIL
05: FALMOUTH (H) - 15:00
12: TAVISTOCK (A) - 15:00
19: SHAFTESBURY (H) - 15:00
21: BASHLEY (A) - 15:00
26: CINDEFORD (H)

*All fixtures subject to change of time & date

FA Cup prelim dates: 03 & 17 Aug
FA Cup qualifying dates: 31 Aug & 14/28 Sep & 12 Oct
FA Trophy prelim dates: 24 Aug
FA Trophy qualifying dates: 07/21 Sep & 05 Oct

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THE LAST THREE

CURRENT FORM: LLD

Bemmy 1-3 Laverstock & Ford I 17 Aug 15:00 I A-Class Arena

HT: Bemerton 1-1 Laverstock & Ford
FT: Bemerton 1-3 Laverstock & Ford

Bishops Cleeve 1-0 Bemmy

81' Jay Malshanskyj (Bishops Cleeve 1-0 Bemerton)

HT: Bishops Cleeve 0-0 Bemerton
FT: Bishops Cleeve 0-1 Bemerton

Bemmy 1-1 Didcot Town

58' Freddie Bullard (Bemmy 1-0 Didcot Town)
75' Josh Davis (Bemmy 1-1 Didcot Town)

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SCAN ME











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PLAYER PROFILES

Paddy Creese (GK) | Paddy joined the club in Summer 2019 after spending his early years at Amesbury town. A local lad who has always impressed since becoming the clubs number 1 . A fantastic shot stopper and a favourite with the Bemmy fans.

Joseph Olawabusi (GK) | Joseph joined the club in 2023 and enjoyed a very successful season with the reserve side – winning both League and Cup competitions. With his advancement to the first team, he is excited for yet another fruitful campaign!

Luke Godwin (GK) | Luke is a new edition to the squad after spending a few seasons in the South East Counties league after coming out Dulwich Hamlet Academy.

Pascal Kpohomouh (DEF) | Pascal is an athletic ball playing defender who has impressed since joining the club at the start of our southern league debut campaign. Pascal previously signed a professional contract at Southampton and has been capped by England at U16,U17 and U18 level in the same age group as Foden and Saka. This signing shows how much the club has grown recently.

Charlie Rayfield (DEF) | Charlie is a right sided defender who is comfortable getting forward and delivering quality crosses. Char joined us in 2020 from Salisbury FC where he was a product of their development side before breaking into their first team. Doesn't score many but when he does they're normally goal of the season contenders. Current vice-captain.

Jim Ward (Def) | Jim joined from local side Lavvy in the summer 2023 but had previously developed at Salisbury in the same youth side as Burds, Rayfield and co. Another versatile hard working player who has already proven himself in multiple positions in his time at the club. Jimma is entering his second season with us and has been a great addition to the club.

Henry Lander (Def) | Henry is a commanding centre half with excellent leadership skills. He initially joined the club on 'loan' from Wimborne town in 2022 and made some impressive displays before returning to Wimborne. Signed permanently Summer 2023, Henry has been a fantastic addition to our team on and off the pitch.

Alec Timmins (Def) | Alec is a 19 year old centre-back that joined in the summer of 2024. Previously playing at Box Hill United in the Victoria Premier League 2 (Level 4 of the Australian pyramid). Alec offers us more depth in our defensive options.

Billy Brackley (DEF) | Billy is dual registered with Eastleigh FC where he is part of their Elite Development Squad for 24/25. Billy has played since the age of 16 at Romsey Town FC where he amassed more than 70 First Team appearances. He is a versatile player playing in all positions predominately on the left and has played most of his senior football at left back. Specialist set piece taker he looks forward to continuing to add goals and assist in his first season at Step 4.

#UTB

PLAYER PROFILES

Maxwell Andrews (Def) | Maxwell joined the Harlequins three years ago and in that time, has become another of our pathway successes. Towards the latter stages of last season, Maxwell was promoted to the first team squad by former manager Shaun Hale, and made his first team debut away at Evesham United. Maxwell has also completed a scholarship at Sparsholt college

Callum Corbridge (Def) | Callum joined the club this summer from Steet FC in the Western Premier Division where he spent 3 seasons whilst picking up player of the season twice. Previous experience involved senior appearances in cup competitions at Weymouth as well as spending his youth at the Yeovil academy from ages 11 to 17.

Charlie Burden (MID) | Charlie is a versatile and reliable player who has become a key part of the team. Charlie progressed through the youth system at Salisbury FC before joining the club in December 2019. Burds commitment can't be questioned and he is well liked by the players, officials and supporters at the club.

George Higgins (MID) | Giggin's joined from Andover town in summer 2022 after some impressive displays against us. George is a hard working player who always delivers quality performances and can play in multiple positions. Winner of five awards across two presentation evenings since being at the club, George is a key member of our team.

Brandon Mundy (MID) | Brandon is a technically gifted energetic centre midfielder who brings real quality to the side. Brandon had a brief spell with us during the Covid Pandemic before signing for Corsham and helping them reach the FA Vase semis finals. Brandon is a fantastic signing

Max Spiller (MID) I Max played most of his youth football in the JPL with Wiltshire RTC before moving to Bemerton three seasons ago. Max has been our U23 captain since joining us before progressing into our men's reserves and now into our first team. Max is an exciting prospect and has a big future at the club.

Fabio Manuel (MID) | Fabio is a dynamic footballer known for his athletic versatility as an attacking winger and left back, excelling in driving up the field, creating assists and scoring goals. After a successful 4 year stint at Follands in the Wessex 1, he aims to make a mark in the Southern League, striving to elevate his new team to the highest league table position possible.

Marcus Smith (MID) | Marcus is an energetic and versatile midfielder who joined the club from Dorchester Town, helping our promotion push into southern league football. He enjoys playing high tempo attacking football, with free kicks being a party piece of his. After a year away we're thrilled to have Marcus back!

#UTB

PLAYER PROFILES

Danny Young (FWD) | Danny is a skillful winger who re-joined the club in 2020 after spells at Blackfield & Langley and Salisbury FC. Youngy initially made his debut for the club in 2010 and has now made 250+ appearances for the club over two spells. A valuable and experienced member of the team who loves to deliver assists for his team mates as well as chip in with goals, Danny has recently impressed at left back. Was appointed club captain after the departure of Jamie Henry and recently had become player/assistant manager.

Hayden Wells (FWD) | Hayden was brought to the club last season when he was just 15 by the then U18's manager Alan Lucas. Al knew Hayden from playing youth football in the JPL, firstly for Wiltshire RTC, where he then became part of the JPL's Rep Squad which involved being invited to Real Madrid's Alfredo Di Stefano training camp to play their acamdemy teams. Hayden then had spells with Southampton RTC and Andover FTC restrospectively before joining BHH. During a handful of pre-season games, Hayden has caught the eye of our new first team manager James Ellis and is now training and playing regularly within the first team squad.

Freddie Bullard (FWD) | Freddie is a player that can play in a number of attacking positions. After playing at Yeovil Academy U16's he had success with at Lymington FC in the Southern League scoring 21 goals in his first season. Following an horrendous injury which saw him have to bow out of the season early, Freddie is now fighting fit and looking forward to returning to goal success.

Brad Waters (FWD) | Brad is a creative, energetic forward who likes to press from the front and get on the ball to make things happen, Joining from Andover New Street whilst having experience with Wimborne Town, comes with bundles of excitement on and off the pitch

Ronan Clancy (FWD) | Ronan is an aggressive forward who always looks to press from the front. Ronan made his comeback for Bemmy and his debut in the Southern League in early 2024 after a horrific double leg break injury that kept him out for a year. Ronan is an important part of the side and a favourite with the Bemmy faithful. Everyone at the club is overjoyed to see him back playing and look forward to see him kick on in 2024/2025.

Karol Skcozen (FWD) | Karol is a hard working athletic striker who joined the club during pre-season 2023. Karol scored goals in the Wessex league for multiple clubs and has Southern League experience with Lymington Town. Karol offers something different to the team and is another good addition. Karol is entering his second season with the club and is looking to cement his place in the team.

Lolot Ciprian: (FWD) - Chip is a talented footballer, his main quality is to dribble. Chip grew up at the best academy in Romania, Farul Constanta, after four years spent there came to England. Playing a season in step 3 for Plymouth Parkway decided to join Bemmy last season. Chip is an ambitious player who wants to build on his performances from last season.

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STAFF PROFILES

Graham Mills (COACH) | Graham is an experienced football coach having worked at AFC Bournemouth, Southampton and Fulham for over 13 years, focusing on youth development. He is currently a Youth Coach Developer at the FA, aiding the development of coaches at professional clubs and supporting them through their qualifications.

Chris James (COACH) | Chris joins the coaching staff with 17 years of coaching experience behind him and leaves AFC Bournemouth Academy after four years. During this time Chris was the Royal Navy under 23's Manager, then last season on promotion to the Royal Navy Men's Team managers role, competed in and won the UK Armed Forces Inter Services Tournament and Portsmouth Divisional Senior Cup. This is a role he will continue in whilst at BHH.

Rohan Sharma (COACH) | Rohan is a UEFA qualified coach and alongside his role at Bemerton is going into his fourth year coaching at Bath University, where he has coached both Men's and Women's football. Last season he also led the coaching for a Men's first team at Step 6 of non league, and was one of the youngest coaches on the pyramid.

Qasim Benamira-Dod (ANALYST) | Qasim is from Fremont, California. Working remotely as the 1st Team Analyst, Qasim works on data-led activity & supports the coaching team from a statistical and analytic perspective. He is entering his final year at Loughborough University. Last season he was working as an Academy Analyst at AFC Bournemouth.

Niall Lalani (GOALKEEPER COACH) | Niall has recently joined after being involved with local youth football. After playing in the local leagues for a number of years he has decided to move into coaching. Niall also runs his own goalkeeping coaching business in the surrounding local area.

Ellie Millings (SPORTS THERAPIST) | Ellie is a Level 5 Soft Tissue Therapist with extensive interest in techniques for injury prevention, rehabilitation, and performance enhancement. Ellie joined Bemerton Health FC in mid season 2023 with an interest to work on the pre and post massage treatment environment. She has also learned a great deal on working within a team, which she has enjoyed massively and looks forward to what this season brings.

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AROUND THE LEAGUES

Almost two years have passed since it emerged that the EFL were ready to offer three promotion places to the National League as part of the “New Deal for Football” — the proposed financial reset resulting in more Premier League funding for the lower leagues, which instead ended in deadlock, squabbling, self-interest and silence.

When Wrexham and Notts County were embroiled in their record-breaking battle for the National League title in 2022-23, a light was shone on the inequity of a structure that grants only two promotion places to the National League, but four to League Two.

And there are still faint hopes, perhaps, that the forthcoming independent regulator can force the hand of the EFL to right this wrong, but there’s no shying away from the fact that, in the fight for “three-up, three-down”, momentum has ground to a standstill.

And yet it has become a familiar sight at this time of year to witness the National League’s promoted clubs attacking League Two with the same sense of adventure that earned them a place in the Football League, despite the margins for error being gossamer-thin and narrower than pretty much any other league on the planet.

Chesterfield and Bromley’s starts to this season have been no different, with Paul Cook’s buccaneering Spireites side sweeping aside Crewe, last season’s League Two playoff finalists, with a 5-0 win at Gresty Road last weekend, and Bromley, thanks to the sharp-shooting Michael Cheek, winning the opening two games of their first-ever EFL campaign.

That the teams joining League Two are good enough has never been in doubt. In the past ten seasons, the median finish for the National League champions and playoff winners has been 11th and 14th and, as I’m sure you are aware, no promoted team has been immediately relegated since the system of re-election came to an end in 1987.

It’s not just fallen EFL giants like Bristol Rovers, Lincoln City, Tranmere Rovers, Wrexham, Notts County or Stockport who tend to hit the ground running, though: Harrogate Town and Sutton United thrived in their first season in League Two and, while gravity may pull them down eventually, to have won promotion from the National League you had to be a bloody good side.

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AROUND THE LEAGUES

This is the point. The status quo has shackled aspirational, dynamic clubs and rewarded mediocrity for far too long. For a change to be ratified, of course, there would need to be a vote of all 92 Premier League and EFL clubs, with 50% being the threshold for change. We've heard the line about "Turkeys voting for Christmas" enough already. Why should the National League be no more than a bargaining chip in money-hungry negotiations between the EFL and Premier League?

If you're reading these pages, you probably know that this has been a war decades in the waging. When automatic promotion and relegation was finally introduced between the old Fourth Division — now known as League Two — and non-league's top tier in 1986-87, Scarborough were the first non-league side to earn the right to play in the Football League via promotion, while Lincoln City became the first team to be relegated from Division Four. The National League had to wait another 16 years for a second promotion place to open up to the winner of a playoff, and two decades later the division remains an outlier for no discernible reason.

I know all about the unique challenges of the National League. I played for Grimsby Town in two promotion chases in 2014-15 and 2015-16. The first year, we held onto the coat tails of Martin Allen's title-winning Barnet side until the death, before finishing third and losing on penalties to Bristol Rovers in the playoff final at Wembley. The next season we finished fourth, 21 points adrift of Gary Johnson's Cheltenham Town, whose 101-point haul made them deserving champions. This time in the playoff final we beat Forest Green Rovers, who had run Cheltenham closest, to secure a joyous promotion.

So I know that the margin between joy and despair adds to the drama and excitement of the league. I know, too, that the standard of football at the top end is far better than the lower end of League Two. You have to be woeful to be relegated from League Two; you have to be near-faultless to win automatic promotion from the National League.

Yet that disparity isn' healthy. It can't be right that teams like Gillingham, Colchester United and Stevenage have stunk out League Two in recent years, but were saved from relegation because of clubs like Oldham Athletic or Scunthorpe United withering under negligent regimes.

Broadening the promotion picture would not be diluting the excitement of the National League or the quality of League Two; on the contrary, it would improve the spectacle in non-league and standard of football in League Two — and reward success instead of failure.

#UTB

AROUND THE LEAGUES

Let's not forget how imbalanced the relationship between the leagues already is. Quite often, as the National League bids farewell to a successful, upwardly mobile club heading for League Two, it's inheriting a relegated side whose demise is the result of mismanagement that occurred while a member of the EFL.

And players like Cheek, who at 32 is embarking on his maiden League Two campaign, underline how fine the margins can be for players at this level of the game too. Cheek has scored bucket loads of goals in the National League for Chelmsford, Braintree, Dagenham & Redbridge, Ebbsfleet United and now Bromley. Last season he scored 26 times, including two in the playoff final against Solihull Moors, and a penalty in the all-important shootout victory.

Yet despite a promise from Andy Woodman that he would make Cheek a Football League player one day, he must surely have begun to think that his chances of appearing in the EFL were fading in the rear-view mirror.

After scoring Bromley's first-ever Football League goal in the 2-0 win at Harrogate on the opening day, however, Cheek scored another in the win against AFC Wimbledon last weekend to show that he and his teammates — like many more in the National League — deserve a fair chance step up and prove their worth at the next level.

By Gregor Robertson

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AROUND THE CLUB

Reserve Team

An update from the Manager Jay Madden:

Our start in the new league has been somewhat mixed as we work to settle in. With a quarter of the Wiltshire Senior League season behind us, we're fairly satisfied with our performance, especially given the challenges we've faced with player availability. As we head into the period between September and the Christmas break, we'll take a closer look at our progress and reassess our goals for the remainder of the season.

The Ladies

An update from the Manager Jason Mussellwhite:

'We kicked off our season last Sunday with an impressive start, netting 13 goals and maintaining a clean sheet! The entire squad has been putting in serious effort during training each week, focusing on the high-tempo, attacking football we aim to play this season. We've got some challenging league matches ahead before our FA Cup game against Sherborne Town Ladies, a team from a couple of leagues above us. It's been a great start, but there's still plenty more to come!'

Club Ownership

Bemerton Heath Harlequins FC are not owned by any individual or holding company, we are a PRIVATE MEMBERS CLUB, details of membership are available from the social club.

#UTB

AROUND THE CLUB

The Youth Section

This year, we're excited to welcome two new teams to the ever-growing youth section at BHH. First, we have the BHH U11 Typhoons, formerly known as Amesbury Typhoons. They play in the Testway Division 1 and had a successful season last year, winning the only competitive tournament in their age group. After a hard-fought final, they emerged victorious in the Jock McClorey Cup Tournament.

The second new team is the BHH U11 Reds, previously known as Harnham Hotspire. They joined the Testway league in the winter of 2024, starting in Division 6, and have already progressed to Division 5 for the upcoming season.

Over the bank holiday weekend, the youth section held its annual tournament at Sarum Academy. Across two days, we hosted 96 teams from U7 to U13, playing a total of 303 matches in both round-robin and knockout stages. Despite challenging weather, the children's spirits remained high, and we celebrated a fantastic weekend of football, with teams traveling from as far as Essex. Below, you'll find pictures of some of the winners and runners-up across the age groups. Our very own U11 Orange team earned runners-up trophies in the plate knockout. We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who participated, supported, sponsored, and provided services, making this tournament a great success.



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OUR VISITORS

YATE TOWN FC

Club History:

Early history:

Yate Town's earliest history began in 1906 as Yate Rovers but the team disbanded after the First World war and then reformed as Yate YMCA. An early legend was Frank Boulton, one of four brothers and he eventually went on to play for Arsenal. After the Second World War Yate competed in the Bristol and District League and the Avon Premier Combination and were amongst the founding members of the Gloucester County League. In 1959 the YMCA was dropped in favour of Town and home matches were played at Yate Aerodrome (1954-1960) and Sunnyside Lane (1960-1984). In 1983 Yate joined the Hellenic League and the first step of the National League System and promotion the following season. This resulted in a need to improve the playing facilities and in 1984 Yate Town relocated to their current ground at Lodge Road. The first section of covered accommodation was erected in 1987 and floodlighting the following year. Seasons 1987/88 and again the following season saw Yate Town win the Hellenic League Premier Division and season 1989/90 saw them playing in the Southern League for the first time, in the Southern Division.

The 1990s: By season 1993/94 Yate Town were competing in the Midland Division of the Southern League and relegation was narrowly avoided. The League restructuring for 1994/95 saw Yate moved back to the Southern Division but after a poor start long serving manager Peter Jackson handed over to former Bristol Rovers favourites Ian Alexander and Phil Purnell. A creditable sixteenth finish in the table followed by runners-up in the Senior Cup and atop half finish was achieved the following season. The club celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1996/97 and not long after appointed John Freegard as manager for season 1997/98. His tenure was short lived and with just two victories from seventeen games he resigned and was replaced by Martin Durnell assisted by Club Captain Danny Iddles. Despite these changes the club still finished in a relegation place but the drop was avoided due to a restructuring of the Southern League and the following season Yate struggled again finishing in 20 th place. Due to another reorganisation Yate moved to the Midland Division but relegation did follow the following season and manager Martin Durell resigned and was replaced by former players Gary Hewlett and Richard Thompson (Director of Football) as Yate returned to the Hellenic League.

The Noughties: Season 2000/01 saw Yate enjoy a long run of victories that saw them finish in third place in the Hellenic League and they finished in a similar position again the following season and were runners-up in 2002/03 but when champions North Leigh declined promotion Yate Town were offered their place in the Southern League which they accepted. Back in the higher division Yate finished sixteenth and the following season were runners up in Division One West and gained promotion to the to the Premier Division for the first time. Yate also won the Senior Challenge Cup for the first time in their history beating Bristol Rovers 2-0 in the final. Yate finished sixth in the League and retained the Senior Challenge Cup beating Cheltenham Town in the final. The following two seasons saw Yate finish in mid-table positions in the League but during season 2008/09 and with the club in a relegation place, Richard Thompson departed in February 2009 to be replaced by Dave Mogg, the former Bath City and Cheltenham Town goalkeeper, who had previously been assistant manager at both Taunton and Weston-super-Mare, but the change was too late and the club was relegated to the South and West Division of the Southern League. Season 2009/10 saw a young squad finish in mid-table and more experienced players were added the following season but there was little improvement in results and Dave Mogg was replaced by Rob Cousins, who had vast playing experience with Bath City and Yeovil Town. He secured a mid-table position and Yate once again won the GFA Senior Challenge Cup.

#UTB

OUR VISITORS
YATE TOWN FC

Recent history:

2011/12 saw a bottom half finish but the highlight of the season were decent runs in both the FA Cup and the FA Trophy. Season 2012/13 was until recently, one of the most memorable in the club's history reaching the First Round Proper of the FA Cup beating Newport County over two games. Newport recovered from 3-1 down in the first game to draw level at Lodge Road and in the replay, Yate came from 1-0 down to win in extra time. In the First Round Proper Yate lost 3-0 at Cheltenham Town.

Season 2013/14 saw another mid-table finish but after a poor run the following season Rob Cousins and his assistant Michael Meaker departed to be replaced by Craig Laird and Rob Boyd. Despite several high-profile signings season 2015/16 ended disappointingly and another change of manager saw Paul Britton come in assisted by John Lester. Their third season in charge saw Yate finish in third place in 2019 and strong performances in the play-offs with home victories over Moneyfields and Cinderford Town, in the final, secured promotion to the Premier Division of the Southern League for the second time in the club's history. Season 2019/20 was a challenging return to the higher level but just as a run of strong performances began COVID forced a premature end to the season in March and Paul Britton resigned as manager in the summer of 2020. Paul Michael was appointed as his successor and once again COVID prematurely ended season 2020/21 in November.

Season 2021/22 was a highly successful season for Yate and will be remembered for the club reaching the FA Cup First Round Proper for the second time. Two games against National League Dover Athletic, a 1-1 draw in Kent followed by a famous 1-0 win at Lodge Road in the replay had fans buzzing. Sadly, progress in the competition was halted by Yeovil Town, also at the time also a National League side, and the team from Somerset won 5-0 at Lodge Road in front of 1600 fans. In the League Yate finished just outside the play-offs and also won the GFA Senior Challenge Cup. At the end of the season Paul Michael left the club to manage Merthyr Town and Yate appointed the vastly experienced Peter Beadle as their new manager. Sadly, this bold move failed to pay off and Beadle departed in in October 2022 and the club appointed John Rendell, who had previously managed Paulton Rovers for the past six seasons. Despite a brave attempt, relegation could not be avoided and the last game of the season confirmed that they would go down to the Southern League Division One South for season 2023/24 with John Rendell and his assistant Paul Tovey in charge.

However, after a poor start to the season John Rendell was replaced by player-coach Darren Mullings who turned things around and after a slow start to his tenure the results improved significantly, with new forward Nick McCootie scoring 14 goals following his arrival just after Christmas and with other new additions, the side finished in 8th position.

Welcome to The A-Class Arena, Yate Town.

#UTB

PLAYER PROFILES

YATE TOWN FC

Aaron Sainsbury (goalkeeper) The 23-year-old stopper joined the Bluebells in the summer of 2023. Sainsbury is an ex-Bristol City Pro having signed a contract in 2019 after being in the Bristol City Academy since a young age. He is currently still employed by the Championship outfit as a goalkeeping coach which involves him in coaching the Juniors all the way up to helping out with the First Team. Aaron currently holds a UEFA B Coaching License. Aaron was the only ever present in the League last season.

Billy Pullin (goalkeeper) Billy is part of the Under 18 set up and is gaining experience by training with the first team squad.

James Taylor (defender) Since joining the Bluebells on loan from Truro City in early January 2024, James made 18 full appearances scoring 4 goals and was voted the "Players Player of the Season" at the Presentation Evening at the end of last season. He was also included in the Southern League Division One South team of the season. The 22-year-old has had previous experience with Bristol City, Bath City (on loan) and Cheltenham Town then moved to National League South Truro City early last season before joining the Bluebells.

Will Christoper (defender) Wil signed for Yate Town in June 2024 from Cirencester Town. Will (25) was a youngster at Swindon until he was 18, then he had his first spell at Cirencester before spending some time at Melksham and then returning to Cirencester a couple of years ago.

Ewan Macmillan (defender) Ewan (23) joined Yate from Cadbury Heath in the summer of 2023 where he had been since September 2020 having previously played for Longwell Green and Chipping Sodbury.

Will Sage (midfield) came through the ranks at Bristol City's academy having featured predominantly for their under-18 side. Since being released at the end of the 2021/22 season he has been working closely with Marvin Brown for fitness and getting match sharpness at Keynsham Town, where he made 34 appearances and scored 4 goals. Will, now 23, signed for Yate in March 2023 but he missed most of last season through injury.

James Byrne (midfield) All-action midfielder Byrne is a 29-year-old who joined Yate in November 2022. He had re-joined Paulton Rovers in September 2021 from rivals Larkhall Athletic having been with the Larks since the summer of 2020 after joining from Mangotsfield United. He joined the Mangos in 2019 where he had two spells and has also turned out for Bridgwater Town and Bishops Lydeard.

Lewis Hall (midfield) 29-year-old Lewis Hall signed in March 2022, moving from Swindon Supermarine. He had signed for `Marine in June 2021 from Weston-Super-Mare having been with the Seagulls since March 2020 after arriving from Taunton Town. Lewis had signed for the Peacocks in October 2018 from Vanarama National League North side Hereford. A versatile left-sided player, he is a product of the Bristol City academy and played for Gloucester City for three-and-a-half years before joining Hereford in the summer of 2018.

#UTB

PLAYER PROFILES

YATE TOWN FC

Joe Guest (midfield) Club captain, Joe (27), is in his second spell with the club having rejoined in January from Taunton Town, where he helped them win the Southern League Premier South in 2022 and then spent one a half seasons playing National League South football. Joe started his career at Cadbury Heath moving on to Chipping Sodbury, Paulton Rovers before his first spell at Yate Town followed by a move to Taunton Town. Joe is a real leader on the pitch and brings a wealth of experience to the club. Joe was also included in the Southern League Division One South team of the season.

Dan Dempsey (midfield) is another local lad, who joined from Paulton Rovers and has also had experience of the Southern League having had a spell at Melksham Town previously. Dan (24) came through the ranks at our near neighbours Chipping Sodbury. He is a local lad and has close links with the club, where his dad also represented the club over several years. Dan has all the attributes including a great attitude and we are delighted to be able to work with him again here at Yate Town. He is a versatile player who can play in defence or in midfield.

Lucas Tomlinson (midfield / forward) (23) signed from Welsh League Barry Town United after spending season 2023/24 there. Tomlinson was a product of the Bristol Rovers academy, which he joined at the age of 10 and signed a professional contract with the “Gas” in 2019 and then had loan spells at Bath City and Torquay United before signing for Vanarama National League North side Gloucester City. He joined Salisbury at the start of season 2022/2023 and moved to Yate Town in March 2023, making 7 appearances and scoring three goals.

Lloyd James (midfield) The experienced midfielder, who has played over 350 Football League games signed for Yate Town in the summer of 2024. The 36-year-old and former Welsh Under 21 international left Taunton Town at the end of last season after helping them gain promotion from the Southern League Premier South, whilst on loan from Bath City and then spending the next 2 seasons there playing in the National League South for the Somerset club, playing 43 times last season and scoring one goal. Lloyd was part of Southampton youth set up and played in the FA Youth Cup Final in 2005 losing to Ipswich Town over two legs and also made his debut for the Welsh Under 17 side in the same year and went on to play for the Under 19s and Under 21s representing his country a total of 22 times. In five seasons, between 2007 and 2012, he made 71 appearances for the Saints scoring two goals before moving on the play for Colchester United (making 51 appearances and scoring once), Leyton Orient (spending 4 seasons with the east London club making 108 appearances and scoring 8 times), Exeter City (spending 2 seasons there making 83 appearances and scoring 3 goals) and Forest Green Rovers where he made 35 appearances. Lloyd signed for Bath City in February 2020, just before Covid struck and his opportunities were limited and he signed for Taunton Town on loan in December 2021.

Dylan Lewis (forward) A former Bristol City academy player signing back in November 2022.The quick and direct winger was released by the Robins after completing a year’s Scholarship at the Championship outfit. He went on to spend a short time at Slimbridge before signing for Yate. On-loan at Corsham currently.

PLAYER PROFILES

YATE TOWN FC

Ross Stearn (midfield) Ross (33) signed for Yate in June 2024 having played most of his career in the National League South and National League over more than a decade scoring goals regularly for Weston-Super-Mare (in two spells), Bath City (in two spells) Sutton United (in two spells), Eastleigh, Chippenham Town (in two spells) and Taunton Town. He was at Bristol City as a youngster and was briefly at Forest Green Rovers, Weston-Super-Mare and Chippenham before establishing himself as a regular at Weston when Bath City noticed his potential and in 2 seasons at Twerton Park he scored 28 goals. He then joined Sutton United in the summer of 2015 and helped then win promotion from the National League South to the National League. Ross then signed for National League Eastleigh in November 2016 but returned to Sutton United a year later before returning to Bath on loan then signing permanently for them in 2018. He joined Chippenham in the summer of 2020 before moving to Taunton Town in November 2021. He then left Taunton Town in the summer, along with a number of players. Ross has been a regular goal scorer at all his clubs and has scored some spectacular goals from free-kicks and long shots.

Ryan Lewis-Hillier (forward). Released as a young pro by Newport County last summer, played in the Welsh league and trained with Yate during the end of the 22/23 season. Last season Ryan played much of the first half of the season then had a loan spell at Cinderford Town. Ryan is a centre forward with a good eye for goal.

Stan Wyatt (forward) 18-year-old Stan joined the club in July 2024 following his time at Thornbury Town last season. He comes from a footballing background with his father Mike having played for both Bristol City and Bristol Rovers.

Marlon Jackson (forward) Marlon Jackson signed for Yate in June 2024 having been at Weston-Super-Mare last season. The 6ft 2 in striker started his career at Bristol City in 2009 and made five appearances for the Robins over the next 3 years whilst being sent on loan to five clubs – Hereford, Aldershot, Northampton, Cheltenham and Telford before being released Bristol City. Signed for Hereford United scoring 9 goals in 25 appearances before appearing for a number of clubs during the next few years – Bury, Halifax, Lincoln, Oxford City and Tranmere Rovers - on one year or short-term deals before spending 2 seasons at Newport County from 2016. He returned to Hereford United for a short time before signing for Weston-Super-Mare in season 2018/19 scoring 9 goals in 24 appearances. He then signed for Gloucester City, had a brief spell at Chippenham before a second spell at Weston, signing for the seaside club in November 2021 and during his time there, he was a regular goal scorer netting on average one goal in every other game.

Ross Staley (midfield) recently joined Yate Town from Frome Town. The 30-year-brings a wealth of experience and quality to the midfield, having started in the Bristol Rovers Academy before playing for Gloucester City, Hereford, Taunton, Frome and previously with Yate.

Will Larvin (defender) The 18-year-old was released by Bristol Rovers in the summer and had numerous suitors for his signature. Played on loan with Yate Town last season and was always on Darren Mullings radar once he became available. A classy football playing defender who could go far.



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