

That's Moore Like It

Deon on target as
Stones get first win

The Back Page

The Stones Vault

A stunning stoppage-time comeback from
the depths of the Kent League era

Holden the fort

Lenny steps in after Harness blow

The Back Page is a new, independent news resource covering Maidstone United.

The team is a mixture of professional journalists, experienced amateurs and aspiring newcomers.

We aim to offer previews, reports, features, rumours and more.

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Meet The Team



Picture of the week 4
The first of many?

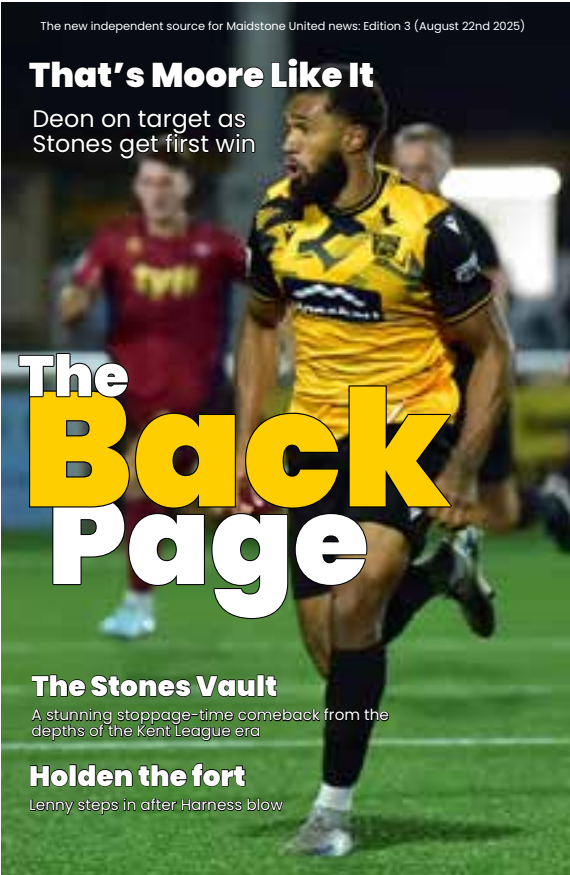
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Deon Moore's header on Tuesday night left George Elokobi wondering when Maidstone last had that kind of aerial threat. Signed to add a different dimension to our style of play, Moore has done just that during the opening three games, setting up two of our goals and scoring one. For more on Moore see Alex Del Valle's column on page 12.

Seen this one: can we rework the ending?



Lexus Beeden, who seemed to be in almost constant action in the second half, outjumps Ed Palmer

MAIDSTONE UNITED 1
Gilbert 7
TORQUAY UNITED 1
Young 90+5
Attendance: 2424 (238 away)

By Fred Atkins

Anyone else get the feeling that they'd seen this film before? The one where everything started well enough but it was badly let down by the ending?

For the second consecutive weekend we flushed two points in stoppage time and for the second consecutive weekend the equaliser looked like it was coming for some time before it actually did, but this time we seemed to fade slightly earlier than we had at Hemel.

Which was a pity as against the best-supported, if not necessarily the best resourced, team in the division we looked the better side for an hour and once again created enough chances to have put the game to bed, long before the unhappy conclusion.

As at Hemel there was evidence there's some real potential in this squad. As at Hemel there's evidence that depth might be a problem.

"The opener was a brilliant bit of football. The move took 11 seconds from start to finish and needed just seven touches."

For a team that's played only one competitive game together they gelled well and the opener was a brilliant bit of football.

With six minutes gone Fowler won a header on the edge of his own box and Sesay cleared it down field. Moore took one touch while holding off his marker and laid the ball off to Golding, who was charging down the right.

He put it on a plate for the unmarked Gilbert, who rolled it into the net. The move took 11 seconds from start to finish and needed just seven touches.



As Golding lays the ball off for the opener, the Torquay United fan immediately to his right seems to be doing an impression of the late Kenneth Williams

The first sign this might not be our afternoon, however, came on 14 minutes when Nathan Harness came to collect a long punt downfield only for Bramble to get there first.

His trailing leg boot hit Harness in the face and he went down for treatment, carrying on for a few minutes before deciding he couldn't continue, meaning Holden had to come on for the first time at JWW as an actual goalkeeper.

It didn't, initially at least, make a lot of difference. We were first to most balls and created a series of chances, the best of which was when Moore mugged the number four, sped past him to the byline and laid it off for Tanga.

The keeper just about kept his shot out and Dennis then got to the ball just before Bramble to knock it out for a corner. Or at least he appeared to: having watched this back half a dozen times it's difficult to tell if he got the ball first.

Holden then made a double save at the other end but there was a hint of what was to follow at the end of the first half, when amid general chaos in the box, he was impeded at a corner. The referee blew his whistle long before the ball was put in the net, but it was a reminder that Torquay may not

have been great but they were still a threat.

The best chance of the second half came 11 minutes after the restart when Gilbert jinked into the box and picked out Moore, who laid the ball off to Golding.

He might have been put off by the

lurking presence of Lexus Beeden, but instead of aiming for the empty bottom corner at the near post he went for the far top one and missed by what would have been a comical margin if it hadn't added to the nagging feeling that we'd live to regret it.



"You need to sign for it mate." Gilbert celebrates making it 1-0



(Above) Sesay is booked for protesting after the penalty decision
(Below) Holden dives the wrong way

From then on we seemed to fade. Both sets of fans applauded during the 63rd minute in honour of Dave Freiter while the game continued and Dennis should have equalised on 66 when he ran into the box and skipped past Beeden before missing the back post by millimetres.

For all the chaos that ensued, that was as close as they came to scoring from open play. The problem was that by then our players were tiring, the subs didn't seem ready and the bench looked unusually rattled.

Last year it often felt that whoever was leading going into the closing stages was going to see out the result. I never had that feeling here.

The penalty, when it finally came, was both harsh and (tin hat on) probably correct. The ball bounced awkwardly, right on the edge of the area, in almost exactly the same position Bramble had tried to shoot from earlier. Agbontohoma was a yard from it but the height forced him into an awkward attempt at a volleyed clearance.

Young got there before him and Agbontohoma kicked the back of his calf instead of the ball. He was playing the ball but got the man.

Young himself took the penalty and went straight down the middle as Holden dived to his left. Torquay celebrated as if they'd won and given their record here,* you couldn't really blame them.

(*See The Vault: Edition 02)



Maidstone United: 1. Nathan Harness (13. Lenny Holden 23), 2. David Sesay, 5. George Fowler, 4. Lexus Beeden, 3. Leo Hamblin, 6. TJ Bramble (21. Malachi Mbogba 76), 8. Sam Corne, 10. John Gilbert (15. David Agbontohoma 90), 7. Jephthe Tanga, 20. Deon Moore (16. Jesse Nwabueze 79), 12. Dajon Golding (14. Josh Redfearn 86). **Subs not used:** 17. Riley Court, 18. Sam Oguntayo.

Torquay United: 1. James Hamon, 26. Jordan Thomas, 4. Jordan Dyer, 5. Sam Dreyer, 3. Jay Foulston, 18. Matt Worthington, 24. Sonny Blu Lo-Everton (6. Munashe Sundire 54), 11. Dylan Morgan (20. Dan Hayfield 67), 7. Louis Dennis (16. Ed Palmer 71), 8. Jordan Young, 9. Cody Cooke (27. Matt Jay 60). **Subs not used:** 13. Matt Wonnacott, 15. Jaydn Crosbie, 29. Aiden Edwards.



On the 63rd minute fans of both sides joined in a minute's applause for Dave Freiter, a Stones fan who passed away during the summer

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John Gilbert takes plaudits after his corner caused the own goal that made it 2-0

Now you're talking

By Fred Atkins

You might have seen Marc White's characteristically brutal post-match interview from Saturday, where he reacted to Dorking's 3-0 defeat by Hampton & Richmond by saying "shit" approximately six times in the opening ten seconds.

The implication was they'd lost because they were execrable rather than because of anything Hampton had done, but it was still an eyebrow-raising scoreline.

The Beavers (*really?*) are still thought of as one of the smaller clubs in the league, but they've been around a lot longer than Dorking and in 2023-24 managed to lose a sphincter-tightening £1.1 million, all of which bought them a ninth-placed finish. (For perspective: in the immediate area surrounding their ground, this might buy you shared-ownership of a shed.)

Last year they struggled to 18th but a side that wins 3-0 at Dorking can't be that bad and given the way we'd shipped two last-minute equalisers in our first two games, it was difficult to feel too confident, especially without a first-choice keeper.

George Elokobi, however, insisted that Lenny Holden was ready and so he proved. You could argue he wasn't tested anything like as often as he was against

MAIDSTONE UNITED 2
Moore 47, own goal 57
HAMPTON & RICHMOND 0
Attendance: 1881
(not segregated)

Torquay, but he looked in command of his box, helped by the presence of Lexus Beeden, who must have a forehead made of titanium given how many headers he's made over the first three games.

Hampton didn't offer a lot because we didn't let them and if you're looking to find fault with this performance, it should have been four or five nil.

It might have been 1-0 as early as the seventh minute, but Golding was flagged offside after tapping in from around a foot.

It should have been 1-0 seven minutes later when Tanga was brought down by a challenge from Deadfield similar to the one Agbontohoma was penalised for against Torquay - he attempted to clear the ball and got Tanga's foot instead. But after a discussion between Moore and Gilbert the latter took a week penalty that the Hampton keeper saved easily and the rest of the half was slightly underwhelming.

Maidstone upped it significantly after half-time and were 1-0 up on 47 minutes when Hamblin sent in a cross that arced towards Moore at the back post. He still had a lot to do, but timed his jump perfectly and sent his header back across the keeper and just inside the far post. "Fantastic," was Elokobi's verdict. "It was superb. When was the last time we saw that at Maidstone?"

"Fantastic," was Elokobi's verdict. "It was superb. When was the last time we saw that at Maidstone?"

But we then missed two chances so clear you had to wonder if we'd live to regret them. Moore and Golding countered at speed and had a two-on-one, but the former tried to play in the latter and his pass found the trailing leg of the only defender between them.

Golding then played in Tanga for a one-on-one that he almost had too much time to think about and he hit the keeper's trailing leg.

The pressure eventually told, however, as on 57 minutes Gilbert took an awkward corner that was glanced in by Hampton's Davide Rodari for an own goal.

The second goal was the insurance



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policy needed against any repeat of the previous Saturdays and from then on it was as comfortable as a 2-0 lead can be.

The subs, collectively, looked more effective than they had in either of the first two games. There was a brief alarm when Holden went down and the academy scholar Chris Swift, signed on the day of the game, started warming up, but he was fit to continue and ended up with a deserved clean sheet.

"I couldn't have asked for much more," he told Ben Austen afterwards. "The first league start and the first clean sheet - hopefully it's the first of many to come. I can't put it into words how good the fans have been behind the goal, it really does give you that extra five percent."

George felt the side had overcomplicated things after the penalty miss and at half-time he'd stressed the need not to panic. "It could have been more in terms of the chances created," he admitted, but he said the performance was "outstanding" and it was difficult to disagree.

Maidstone United: 13. Lenny Holden, 2. David Sesay, 5. George Fowler, 4. Lexus Beeden (15. David Agbontohoma 84), 3. Leo Hamblin, 6. TJ Bramble (17. Riley Court 75), 8. Sam Corne, 10. John Gilbert, 7. Jephthe Tanga (18. Sam Oguntayo 89), 20. Deon Moore (14. Josh Redfearn 84), 12. Dajon Golding (16. Jesse Nwabueze 79). **Subs not used:** 19. Ruben Carvalho, 30. Chris Swift.

Hampton and Richmond Borough: 1. James Holden, 24. Alan Massey, 15. Harry Thomas, 12. Nathan Laval, 3. Jude Mason (11. Eddie Allsopp 83), 25. Harry Gardner, 2. Paul Field (20. Ollie Turner 79), 5. Ronan Silva (9. Craig Fassanmade 62), 8. Sam Deadfield (10. Stan Flaherty 62), 23. Charlie Sayers, 7. Davide Rodari (39. Reece Grego-Cox 62). **Subs not used:** 6. Luke Robertson, 14. Max Spence.



Lenny Holden gathers comfortably

What Moore could you possibly want?

By Alex Del-Valle

The number 9 shirt is probably the most widely discussed and debated jersey in all of football. It's been worn by icons – Ronaldo, Shearer, Lewandowski, Torres, Benzema, Haaland and the list goes on.

As the famous punditry line goes, "goals win games" and that's exactly the expectation of a number 9. It's the same reason why if a team isn't winning and scoring, the first criticism often goes to the player wearing that jersey.

It's an incredibly scrutinised position in football. If a number 9 is scoring, he's just doing his job. If he's not, then a replacement is inbound.

That's why when a new striker is signed at any level of the game, people are quick to judge said signing based on their previous proficiency in front of goal.

"From what I've seen of Deon in the opening three games, I do believe we have a proper striker on our hands."

Maidstone's new number 9, Deon Moore, was no stranger to this spotlight when it was announced that he'd signed terms for the 2025-26 season. Fans were quick to point out his "lack of" goalscoring in previous seasons amongst various clubs. I just think it's a rather flawed perspective of what a player actually offers on the pitch.

Now, that's not me suggesting goals aren't important for a striker (they definitely are). It's a stat that can give you an initial indication of their likely contribution but it's not the full story. Deon's story actually dates back to the 2016-17 season.

A then 17-year-old in the Peterborough youth set-up, he got a call up to the first team to make his debut in the EFL Trophy – replacing Shaq Coulthirst (name ring a bell?) as a substitute. From there, he's had various spells at non-league sides including Bath City, Dulwich Hamlet, Lewes and more recently, Welling United.

From what I've seen of Deon in the opening three games, I do believe we have a proper striker on our hands.



(Above) Deon Moore opens the scoring against Hampton
(Below) Leading a second-half counter

Three starts, one assist and one goal. And what a goal that was! A great header across goal against Hampton and Richmond in midweek. And while he has directly contributed to two of Maidstone's four goals, you can't forget his input into the goal Vs. Torquay at the weekend.

Excellent hold-up play allowed him to play in Golding and open up the Torquay defence. It's a part of Deon's game we've all

started to admire early on and realise the value it has. He'll do well this season (20+ G/A well) and is already becoming one of my favourite players (and not just because I sponsor him!).

A willing runner and hard worker who's contributed to 75% of Maidstone's goals so far this season. So, I ask the number 9 critics: What Moore could you want?



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15

The Heart of Darkness: (aka South London)

This week's trip to The Vault recalls an all-time classic finish from the wilderness years, when the Stones were 2-1 down three minutes into injury time, to our rivals in a two-horse race for the title

BECKENHAM TOWN 2
Martin 38, 83
MAIDSTONE UNITED 3
Tydeman 78, Rowland 93, 95
Attendance: 490

Remember the scene in *Apocalypse Now* where Martin Sheen is greeted with the words: "You're in the arsehole of the world, captain?" This was how I used to feel in the early 2000s every time I ventured inside the M25.

What's now called the SCEFL was then known as The Kent League. This was pithier but less geographically precise and if you were following Maidstone home and away, there were at least half a dozen trips into London a season; more if you were unlucky enough to draw them in one of the cups.

"In South East London even paying customers were about as welcome as scabies so you can imagine what trying to get in with a press card was like..."

The half-dozen South East London clubs in the "Kent League" mustered barely 200 fans between them and it wasn't hard to see why. Their gate men (and they were *all* men) made the Kray twins look like Michael Palin's "crucifixion?" character from *The Life Of Brian*.

Even paying customers were about as welcome as scabies so you can imagine what trying to get in with a press card was like. Slade Green was nice but Thamesmead was bad, Erith was

worse, Greenwich were run by an arsehole and Cray was, well, Cray.

Beckenham was perhaps the second nicest, but the bar was lower than the Mariana Trench.

On one side Eden Park Avenue resembled Dorking's new ground, as it backed on to a row of houses, generally occupied by the kind of people who regarded football as an irritation.

This was reflected in the level of support it drew from the local community, with gates struggling to reach three figures.

Palace was (and still is) just down the road and if you were a non-league badger Bromley, then pulling crowds of 600, were a couple of miles away.

Kent League gates in that era were regarded with suspicion but the crowd for this top-of-the-table "showdown" was listed as 490, which seemed astonishingly large at the time.

It's difficult to explain the general hopelessness of that era to someone who didn't live through it, but by 2005 we were already wondering if the ground we'd been given planning permission for a year earlier would ever get built.

Every now and again however, we'd get a game that would temporarily distract us from the homelessness and in 2005-06 we witnessed a game of maybe the highest standard we'd seen since reforming.

It was clear from the first two weeks of the season that the title was going to be between ourselves and Beckenham. Both squads featured players who had either played at or would go on to play at higher levels, although it's at this point that we need to address the 50-tonne elephant in the room: the presence of Mario Celaire in our starting line-up.

Celaire had played against us for Beckenham the previous season, after which one of our officials had blatantly tapped him up. He became the subject of what the tabloids would call a "bidding war" before the season began, with Town eventually putting out a statement saying "every club has a ceiling and let's just say that Maidstone's ceiling is more Victorian than ours." The word was that he was playing at

BECKENHAM

Rob Tolfrey
Ali Kyezu
Jake Daniels
Peter Adeniyi
Errison Ahwan
Tony Sinclair
Joshua Smith,
(sub Daniel Morris 67)
Gavin Rose
Paul Vines
Junior Kadi
Ryan Martin
(sub Carlton Price 87).

STONES

Pat Mullin
Aaron Lacy
Craig Roser
Nathan Paul
(sub Jason Barton 71)
Mario Celaire
Ryan Royston
Jimmy Strouts
Sam Tydeman
Mo Takaloo
Lyndon Rowland
Nick Hegley
(sub Simon Austin 90+5)

that level because he "had form" but what we didn't realise at the time was that he'd literally gotten away with murder*.

Oblivious to this we turned up expecting a difficult game and we got one. Beckenham were a stylish, elegant side who played neat football that almost no one bothered to watch.

We were more direct and certainly more streetwise, although we could still "play a bit" and still managed to draw 3-400 to Sittingbourne.

Lynden Rowland was a case in point and one of the most underrated players of the era. I heard people rubbish his technique and claim he was one-footed, yet at the end of every season he always seemed to have scored 30 goals by accident.

The managers, Alan Walker and Lloyd Hume, knew his value and both Rowland and Mo Takaloo harried the Beckenham defenders from the off, (a strategy that's been rebranded in recent seasons as a "high press" but which Ian Rush was doing 40 years ago.)

The home side were happy to sit back and wait, absorbing the pressure and striking seven minutes before half-time. Ryan Martin, on-loan from Conference South side Fisher (another side where a warm welcome was guaranteed), received an assist from Paul Vines, outpaced Celaire and put the ball past Pat Mullin to make it 1-0.

It stayed that way till 12 minutes from time, by which time either Hume, Walker or quite possibly both had been sent off as their frustration boiled over.

At this point Sam Tydeman picked the ball up perhaps 40 yards from goal, eluded his marker and then crashed in a verified thunderbastard off the underside of the bar.

It was a brilliant goal, one of the best of the era, but five minutes later it looked like it would count for nothing as Martin reacted first to a rebound and curled a shot past Pat Mullin to make it 2-1.

We were three minutes into injury time when Mullin lumped a free-kick into "the mixer" and in the confusion Rowland equalised. Assuming there was no time left we celebrated as if we'd won, not yet realising we actually would.

Two minutes after the equaliser we won a corner. Nick Hegley's cross was met by Rowland whose header looked to have been cleared off the line, only for the linesman to signal that the ball had crossed. At the time what happened next was known as "going fucking mental." This has now been rebranded as "cueing absolute scenes."

Hume thought it was no less than we'd deserved. "I think anything but a victory today would have been an injustice to our team," he told Ruth Tunnell for the club website. "They've scored two goals but I think they were sloppy goals to give away and they were defensive mistakes. We probably created seven or eight good chances, not through defensive mistakes but through good football and I think the players were superb." The result proved crucial as the title



Sadly no pictures from the actual match are available. This was taken at Sevenoaks Town after Maidstone clinched the title
Back row: Bert Roser, Nathan Paul, Simon Austin, Nick Hegley, Paul Bowden-Brown, Jimmy Strouts (observed), Richard Mannerings, Mario Celaire, Leroy Huggins, Lloyd Hume **Front row:** Mal Watkins, Lee Sperring, Sam Tydeman, Aaron Lacy, Mo Takaloo, (lying down) Ryan Royston

race went down to the final day, with Maidstone winning the league at Sevenoaks after Beckenham were held to a 1-1 draw at Erith & Belvedere.

Of the beaten side, Gavin Rose went on to manage Dulwich for several years and Rob Tolfrey went on to make 650 appearances for Kingstonian.

Of the winners, Ryan Royston is now the Headteacher of the School of Science & Technology in Maidstone. Jimmy Strouts' son Josh appeared for the Stones' academy team and is now playing for Jay Saunders at Folkestone, for whom he scored against Canvey on Saturday. Lloyd Hume's son was on target for Ashford this week against Sevenoaks.

Perhaps the strangest story concerned Errison Ahwan, who would join Maidstone from Beceknham at

the end of the season.

He was part of the team that won the Isthmian South title the following season, but midway through the following campaign he unexpectedly quit, citing his religion, saying it forbade him from playing on Saturdays. A source told us the real reason was that he struggled with the "robust" culture in the dressing room. Given who he was sharing it with you could hardly blame him.

**Many sporting stories from the 2000s need an asterisk against them and sadly this is no exception. It goes without saying Mario Celaire shouldn't have been playing. His story has been told extensively elsewhere including in Exodus and in the documentary Murdertown.*

Final League Table

Premier Division									
Pos	Name	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts	
1	Maidstone United	30	22	6	2	85	23	72	
2	Beckenham Town	30	22	4	4	96	24	70	
3	Thamesmead Town	30	18	6	6	73	41	60	
4	Erith & Belvedere	30	17	7	6	50	31	58	
5	Whitstable Town	30	16	7	7	64	38	55	
6	V C D Athletic	30	16	5	9	51	30	53	
7	Herne Bay	30	14	7	9	52	33	49	
8	Lordswood	30	12	9	9	49	45	45	
9	Deal Town	30	13	4	13	53	62	43	
10	Tunbridge Wells	30	10	7	13	39	41	37	
11	Slade Green	30	9	7	14	31	56	34	
12	Hythe Town	30	7	6	17	41	51	27	
13	Greenwich Borough	30	7	3	20	36	69	24	
14	Erith Town	30	4	5	21	21	65	17	
15	Sporting Bengal United	30	3	6	21	27	107	15	
16	Sevenoaks Town	30	3	5	22	18	70	14	

From the Football Club History Database, the final Kent League table from the 2005-06 season.

August Commentaries

Hemel Hempstead (A) Sat 9 August 2025
1500 – Sean Scurr & Nigel Seager

Torquay United (H) Sat 16 August 2025
1500 – Fred Atkins & Nigel Seager

Hampton & Richmond (H) Tue 19 August 2025
1945 – Chris Bechervaise & Darren Styles

AFC Totton (A) Sat 23 August 2025
1500 – Fred Atkins & Sean Scurr

Chelmsford (H) Mon 25 August 2025
1500 – Joseph Parkhouse & Alex del Valle

Worthing (A) Sat 30 August 2025
1500 – Darren Styles & Sean Scurr

Stones Live! has been providing radio commentaries of Maidstone United matches since the 2008 –09 season, way back when the club was a fraction of the size it is now, playing to crowds of 200 in Sittingbourne. Founded by Stones fan Chris Bechervaise, its audiences grew steadily at first and then rapidly when the club returned home after the end of its 24-year exile in 2012. The Back Page editor, Fred Atkins, is a regular commentator, as are a number of this publication's contributors.

It's run by volunteer supporters who have a background in professional broadcast radio and funded independently from the football club by volunteer donations or through sponsorship and advertising. Stones Live! is a not-for-profit service and any monies raised are put back into the radio station to pay for various broadcast licences and to renew worn or broken equipment. (Such as the laptop Charlie Seaman accidentally smashed last year).



2025–26 Fixtures August

9 Hemel Hempstead A D 1-1
16 Torquay United H D 1-1
19 Hampton & Richmond H W 2-0
23 AFC Totton A
25 Chelmsford City H
30 Worthing A

September

2 Weston-super-Mare A
6 Horsham H
20 Maidenhead United H

October

4 Dagenham & Redbridge A
11 Chesham United H
18 Farnborough A
21 Eastbourne Borough H
25 Slough Town A

November

1 Tonbridge Angels H
4 Ebbsfleet United A
8 Chippenham Town H
22 Dorking Wanderers A
25 Enfield A
29 Salisbury H

December

6 Bath City H
20 Hampton & Richmond A
26 Dover Athletic H
30 Hornchurch A

January

3 Chelmsford City A
10 Weston-super-Mare H
17 Torquay United A
24 Hemel Hempstead H
27 Ebbsfleet United H
31 Tonbridge Angels A

February

7 Slough Town H
10 Eastbourne Borough A
14 Chippenham Town A
21 Dorking Wanderers H
24 Enfield Town H
28 Salisbury City A

March

3 Maidenhead United A
10 Dagenham & Redbridge H
14 Farnborough H
21 Chesham United A
28 AFC Totton H

April

3 Dover Athletic A
6 Hornchurch H
11 Horsham A
18 Worthing H
25 Bath City A



Traditionally a graveyard for Maidstone, Hayes Lane, will be hosting top-flight women's football this season

The Bromley Method

By Alan Thatcher

Maidstone United's attendance for the visit of Torquay United was the largest in the NLS on Saturday – and almost twice as big as the "crowd" who watched Bromley in League Two.

In the county town, the Gallagher Stadium attracted 2,424 for the 1-1 draw with a much-fancied Torquay side who snatched their equaliser during added time.

Some of the eternal optimists who follow the Stones expected a bigger crowd but many families who support the club will have been away on their summer holidays.

The gate at the Gallagher, enhanced by almost 300 fans travelling up from Devon, was still the best by far in the NLS, with several games failing to reach four figures.

At Bromley's exotically named CopperJax Community Stadium, a meagre 1,472 spectators watched Saturday's 2-2 draw with Fleetwood Town, who, like Torquay, snatched an equaliser in added time.

It must have been a massive disappointment for the Bromley management, with the match following a penalty shoot-out win a few days earlier against our old friends Ipswich Town in the Carabao Cup.

Bromley owner Robin Stanton-Gleaves has pumped considerable funds into his hometown club and is busy transforming the Hayes Lane ground into one befitting EFL status, with a second new stand currently going up.

The new East Stand is nearing completion to replace the open terrace opposite the main stand. The area will house 2,000 standing fans who will now enjoy the luxury of a roof and enhanced hospitality offerings. The club already has a huge Spoons-style bar behind the all-seater South Stand.

Stanton-Gleaves is keen for the club to develop as a sustainable business and their revenues have been enhanced by a ground-sharing arrangement with Maidstone-based London City Lionesses.

Having taken over the old Cobdown Sports Ground in Ditton as a training base and club headquarters, the Lionesses will play their home games at Bromley following their promotion to the Women's Super League.

Their first home game is against Manchester United on September 14th and it will be interesting to see if the Lionesses attract bigger crowds than the Bromley men.

With top women's teams Chelsea and Arsenal sure to bring plenty of fans with them, that could well prove to be the case, especially with the Lionesses investing heavily in new signings in the summer to give them a realistic chance of doing much better than merely staying in the top flight this season.

The Lionesses are now being bankrolled by Asian-American businesswoman Michele Kang, who ranks 28th on the Forbes list of America's Richest Self Made Women.

Since 2020 Kang has invested heavily in women's football. Last year she established London-based Kynisca as an umbrella management group for her multi-club ownership structure, which includes Washington Spirit (USA) and Olympique Lyonnais (France).

"Kang has been described as 'the first tycoon of women's football' and the Lionesses are reaping the benefits of her phenomenal business acumen..."

She has been described as "the first tycoon of women's football" and the Lionesses, the only independent club in the top division who are not linked to a major men's club, are reaping the benefits of her phenomenal business acumen.

The reason for this ramble around the football scene is that it follows Fred Atkins' wide-reaching interview with Stones joint owner Oliver Ash in editions one and two, and highlights those clubs fortunate enough to attract investors with a solid vision backed by the necessary funding.

Bromley and the Lionesses have business models that mean the clubs can rely on multiple revenue streams in addition to gate money.

I wonder if Michele fancies a pie and a pint at the Gallagher some time soon.

MAIDSTONE UNITED

2025/26 SQUAD

 George ELOKOB Manager	 Nathan HARNES Goalkeeper	 Lenny HOLDEN Goalkeeper	 Sam CORNE Midfielder	 Dean MOORE Forward	 John GILBERT Midfielder
 David SESAY Defender	 Leo HAMBLIN Defender	 Lexus BEEDEN Defender	 Jamie YILA Midfielder	 Dajon GOLDING Forward	 Josh REDFEARN Forward
 George FOWLER Defender	 Thomas-James BRAMBLE Midfielder	 Jephthe TANGA Midfielder	 David AGBONTOHOMA Defender	 Jesse NWABUEZE Forward	 Riley COURT Midfielder
			 Sam OGUNTAYO Defender	 Ruben CARVALHO Midfielder	 Malachi MBOGBA Midfielder

Designed by MAIDSTONE UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB IN VIETNAM

The Stones Quiz: Edition 3

Theme: Home Boys

- 1) Which former Castle Colts player played in the top flight before briefly playing for Maidstone United under his former team-mate, Jay Saunders?
- 2) Schooled at St. Simon Stock, he went on to play for Maidstone, Brighton and Leeds. Who is he?
- 3) Who is the Park Wood Pirlo, aka The Park Wood Gremlin?
- 4) Which pub in Yalding was future European Cup winner David Sadler born in?
- 5) Who played for us, Ipswich, Wimbledon and many others? (Like David Sadler and the answer to question 1, he went to Oakwood Park Grammar.)



(Above) Once of Allington, then of Chelsea (Below) If you don't know the answer to this one ...



- 6) Once thought of as a "rugby school," MGS produced which midfielder, nicknamed "The Nepalese Zidane"?
- 7) He's run a picture framing business on Bearsted Green for 25 years. Before that he played for us in the Alliance Premier and then the Kent County League. But who is he?
- 8) Which double title winning defender from the mid 2000s is now playing for Castle Colts Vets?

- 9) Who made 105 appearances for Manchester United, after joining Brighton and then Norwich from Maidstone in 1905, before returning to The Stones in 1920?
- 10) Which former waiter at Flaming Henrys in Maidstone High Street started his career at Arsenal and played for Barnet, Dover and Gillingham, before being loaned to Maidstone in 2015-16?



The subject of question 10, scoring against Havant & Waterlooville while on loan from Bromley

Edition 2 answers

- 1) Signed in the mid-2000s, which midfielder is believed to have been the first French player to appear for Maidstone United?
Stéphane Mamadou
- 2) Complete the lyric: "Who needs Messi, we've got ..."
Ade Olorunda
- 3) Which member of the England team that played Switzerland in the Euro 2024 Quarter-final played for Charlton in a 5-1 win over Maidstone in the Kent Senior Cup in 2015?
Ezri Konsa
- 4) Which member of the 1989-90 squad was a full Welsh international?
Howard Pritchard
- 5) Which midfielder, who'd played for Glenavon, Newry City and Linfield in Northern Ireland, briefly appeared for Maidstone under manager Alan Walker?

Conor Hagan

- 6) Which French-Greek player joined the Stones from Leatherhead in 2015?
Vas Karagiannis
- 7) Which Scottish midfielder moved to Cornwall to run a retirement home after playing for Maidstone in the 1980s?
George Torrance
- 8) Which country was Nathan Paul called up by in 2007?
St Lucia
- 9) Stones keeper Michal Czanner was nicknamed "Ivan The Russian". Why?
Because he was from Slovakia. No, us neither.
- 10) Which Swiss player scored our second goal in a 2-0 win at Barnet in 2018-19 under Harry Wheeler?
Gold Omatayo.



The new independent source for Maidstone United news: Edition 3 (August 22nd 2025)

Absolutely tinpot

By Fred Atkins

Maidstone United v Torquay United isn't exactly Millwall v Cardiff, but ahead of last Saturday's fixture there were warnings that fans might get delayed by a protest march through the town centre.

The admin of a Maidstone United facebook group helpfully decided to share a picture advertising the march in question, although it was eventually removed when the nature of the "concerned citizens" on the march became apparent.

These included a politician called Nick Tenconi, the leader of what's left of UKIP, and a man who was filmed giving an Elon Musk-style straight arm salute the week before.

Marchers filmed themselves shouting "send them home" as they walked past foreign owned businesses. Tenconi shouted "we don't need endless fast food outlets" into a loud-hailer and accused the town's barbers of money-laundering.

He described migrants as "filth," claimed they had "terrorised Britain" and said Maidstone had been flooded with "170,000 invaders since 2018."

"You want to know what Maidstone is actually full of, that it wasn't 25 years ago? Maidstone United fans..."

On social media platforms, professional, amateur and AI-generated shit-stirrers were trying to portray my home town as a powder keg that was about to erupt at any second.

If someone tells you it's raining and someone else says it's dry, a journalist's job is to step outside and find out who's telling the truth.

So as a journalist of 25 years, I altered my usual route to the ground so that I could walk through the town centre and take a look at what was actually happening: as opposed to what Elon's algorithm told me was happening.

What I saw was a standard Saturday afternoon in the 'Stone, with several thousand people shopping, drinking and generally going about their business as usual.



"Coming over here, taking us to the fifth round of the FA Cup ..."

By the time I reached the epicentre at County Hall, protesters were outnumbered, two-to-one, by police and security staff. There were around ten left, including an Ozempic-dodger in a "Trust Tommy" t-shirt.

She, admittedly, didn't need endless fast food outlets, although her t-shirt could have been used to sail one of the boats she wanted to stop.

Widely shared online footage showed a caterwauling chanteuse in a knock-off Spice Girls dress, singing (in the loosest sense) about saving "our" kids and sending "them" home. One respondent suggested amending the words to "I really, really, really wanna Sieg a Sieg Heil."

You want to know what Maidstone is *actually* full of, that it wasn't 25 years ago? Maidstone United fans.

When I first started covering the club it was almost like being part of a cult. If you saw someone walking down Week Street wearing a Stones hat it was almost like you'd been given a secret signal.

You now see hundreds of fans wearing black and amber gear on matchdays,

as they head to a stadium to watch a team led by a manager from Cameroon.

18 months ago, he led a squad including a Brazilian keeper, Trinidadian captain, Grenadan midfielder, Dutch-Ghanaian striker, Anglo-Nepalese midfielder, Guyanese central defender, Greek-Cypriot left-back, Anglo-Jamaican forward and an Anglo-Kenyan winger to the fifth round of the FA Cup.

The population of Maidstone is 185,000. Take away Tenconi's 170,000 "invaders" and that leaves 15,000. Maybe 100 people attended the march. There were bigger crowds for matches at Ide Hill, Corinthian and Lydd.

An away side bringing that level of support to JWW would be derided, so let's call that march out for exactly what it was: absolutely tinpot.

