

The Back Page

Influence that

Big Dave 'drops a new banger' on KSI

Moore on ...

... his way to another club? Deon leaves by 'mutual consent'

PLUS: – Going the full Lineker?

– Alex's Corner

– Ghost goal thwarts MUFC women at Cray

– The Stones Quiz

– The Steve Watt column

– Return of the King

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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The new Dagenham circus comes to town.



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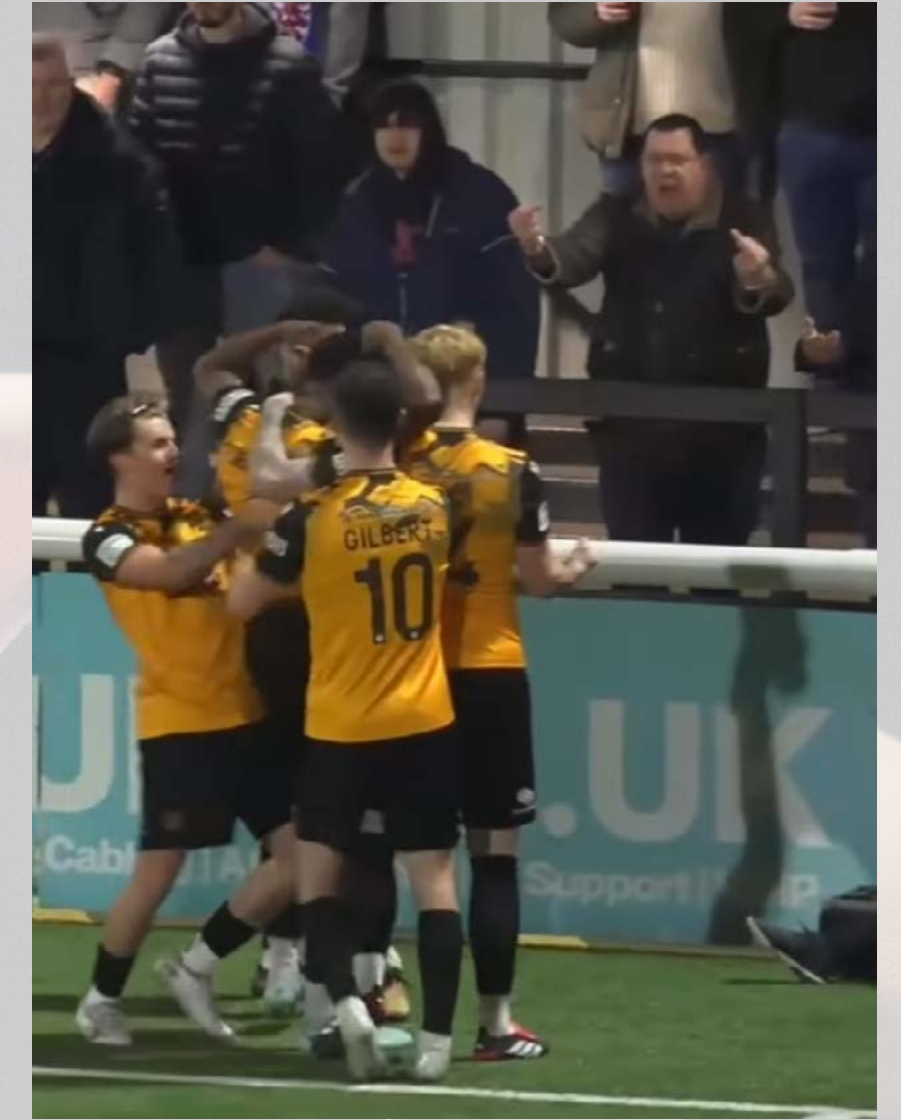
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Did Big Dave realise he was celebrating in front of the away fans? He probably figured it out quickly enough and Taylor certainly knew ...
Report, pages 10 and 11 ...



Papoola poops party

MAIDENHEAD UNITED 2
Clerima 20, Popoola 90+3
MAIDSTONE UNITED 1
Court 72
Attendance: 1,255

By Tom Rogers

The Stones playoff hopes were dealt a dagger blow as a late Josh Popoola penalty earned our hosts a massive win.

After three fantastic victories had propelled us back into the top seven, we were unable to put more points on the board against a direct play off rival. It was a mild atmosphere at York Road, one that didn't befit the importance of the occasion. Much like us, the Magpies have had a respectable enough season but haven't had much to get excited about.

The hosts started the better of the two teams, with persistent early pressure on deputy keeper Lenny Holden's goal. Popoola slid Liam Dulson through on goal and the latter's effort clattered against the post, giving the Stones a temporary reprieve.

"... it was a muddy pitch: the chances are he could have gone the full Lineker at Italia 90 and nobody would've noticed."

It wasn't long before the hosts opened the scoring though, as on the twenty-minute mark a Popoola corner was met by Remy Clerima at the front post who nodded home.

It was a tame goal to concede. The sort of goal that came from very little, to be greeted with a muffled cheer from a modest home crowd, which it feels like we've conceded so many times this season.

We had a chance to get level a few minutes later, with Deon Moore playing Jamie Yila through on goal, only for his powerful effort to be repelled by Jordi Van Stappershoeef in the Maidenhead goal.

Yila was then forced off after half an hour, further depleting our attack. Considering Yila sprinted off the field without any obvious issue, this was a baffling decision.

Apparently, he was suffering from



1-0, from a tamely defended corner.

diarrhoea, which explains his urgency to exit the field, and he was presumably in a mad rush to find the nearest khazi and a bottle of Pepto-Bismol.

If I were George, I might've been tempted to urge Yila to continue. He might have been wearing light blue shorts, but it was a muddy pitch: the chances are he could have gone the full Lineker at Italia 90 and nobody would've noticed.

The second half started much like the first, with Maidenhead the more

dangerous of the two sides. Dulson floated in a cross in for ex-Stone Will De Havilland to attack, which hit the woodwork and came out.

With just twenty minutes remaining the Stones salvaged an equalizer out of nothing. Ruben Carvalho found Leo Hamblin who crossed the ball into a packed penalty area. The ball eventually fell at the feet of the Parkwood Pirlo who found the bottom corner for the leveller.

For much of the remaining twenty minutes we looked the more



1-1. The hell of hope.

likely to snatch a winner; all of Maidenhead's momentum appeared undone and a point seemed to be the minimum we'd take back to Kent.

Alas we were to once again snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. TJ Bramble was deemed to have pulled down Alfie Pendlebury inside the area.

I'd love to be able to chastise the referee or begrudgingly agree with him, but my view from behind the goal was simply too poor to judge whether it was a foul or not.

Bramble and Foran protested the decision furiously though. Popoola stepped up and scored from a weak effort. Holden got a massive hand on a poorly placed penalty but the ball crept in.

The whole thing was just a bit crap. We never got going for much of the game and when it looked like we would get away with a draw or more we were undone softly. The goals were tame, the atmosphere mild and the performance mediocre at best.

* York Road is right next door to the Maidenhead Conservative Club, the constituency office of the former UK prime minister, Theresa May.

She once confessed to wrecking a wheat field. It sounds like Yila might have been able to fertilize it on Saturday



Injury time. Attempts to persuade the referee that any contact was incidental fail ...



... and Lenny can't keep out the penalty.



I think that might be over the line, mate ..

Title hopes hit as ghost goal ruled out

CRAY WANDERERS 1
White 65
MAIDSTONE UNITED 1
Ascott 71

The Stones' women lost ground in the title race on Sunday when they were held to a 1-1 draw by Cray Wanderers at Flamingo Park.

The first half was goalless and former Stones player Sarah White put Cray in front before Aimee Ascott equalised.

There was also controversy as the Stones looked to have had a legitimate goal disallowed, although when photographer Steve Terrell showed this image to the referee he replied he didn't think the whole of the ball had crossed the line.

Tonbridge, who were beaten 2-1 at The Gallagher last week in the League Cup semi-final, won 6-0 at King's Hill to extend their lead at the top to seven points.

The Stones have a game in hand however, and with home and away fixtures against Tonbridge before the end of the season, the title remains in their hands.

This Sunday the Stones host Chatham Town Development in the Kent Plate semi-final, kick-off 3.15pm.

The last meeting between these sides, at the start of February, saw the Stones run out 5-1 winners in the League Cup quarter-final.



Cray remove the evidence ...



... and it dawns on the players the goal won't be given.



Cray take the lead before Aimee Ascott equalises ...



... but goalmouth scrambles fail to produce a winner.

Influence *this*

MAIDSTONE UNITED 2
Kargbo 16, Agbontohoma 21
DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE 1
Haigh 10
Attendance:
1,931 (119 away)

By Fred Atkins

Two vans loads of old bill turned up midway through the second half of this match. Given there were only 119 away fans, some of whom were clearly infirm, this seemed excessive.

According to our man in the gantry of power, Dagenham's new owner KSI wasn't among them but, perhaps thinking they'd get a glimpse of an online superstar (*no, me neither* ...) the crowd was 400 up from the previous Tuesday, and this was despite Saturday's defeat.

There seemed to be a lot of "yoof" present and quite a few of them seemed more interested in goading the opposition than the actual match, so this might partly explain why the police screeched into action. But only partly.

*

The game started at full pelt and then turned into a classic defensive shutdown. The first chance fell to Kargbo, starting ahead of "unsettled" Moore. He shot over from the edge of the box, before Holden thwarted Broad in a one-on-one at the other end. Gilbert then had a shot saved by the keeper, before Panter flung his chest, bodyguard-style, at Fowler's follow-up.

Dagenham went in front after 10 minutes, when Panter's long throw was nodded down by Stephenson and Haigh reacted quickest, but their lead only lasted six minutes.

Kargbo's equaliser came from a "proper" corner. Cross, header, bang. It was about as subtle as a Tovil tongue-lash and within five minutes we were ahead, after a goal that was only slightly more complex.

Another corner was cleared, but only as far as Fowler, who floated the ball to the back post, where Agbontohoma buried it.

Court then cleared one off the line



... a vital early save from Lenny Holden



Hamzad Kargbo survives a shirt-tug and a fist in the cheek to head the equaliser.



Agbontohoma after making it 2-1.

from Maghoma. At that point it looked extremely unlikely the game would end 2-1 and equally unlikely that we'd finish with 11 players, with tackles that were eligible for the "delay repay" scheme flying in and Court getting booked, a decision that incensed the Main Stand.

And frankly, it was good to see the Main Stand incensed. It's been too quiet this year, as has the Elvis End, a consequence of the new segregation arrangements.

On Tuesday, however, our Brave Barrier Boys packed into the Town End and sang something along the lines of "KSI's shagging your Mum." The East Enders responded by saying that we live in a "town full of pikeys" and that Maidstone is a "shithole".

This bit of street theatre ended at half-time, when ours were either persuaded to go back to the Elvis End or went there willingly.

The defensive shutdown was so effective that little happened in the second half. Corne had a long-range shot just about kept out by Howes and Tanga somehow picked out a defender when he'd have scored if he'd shot to either side.

"When the game was over, Maidstone fans were initially prevented from walking along the river. As a result at least one missed his train home ..."

At the other end, Holden was more of a sweeper than a keeper, occasionally smothering a loose ball but never having to make an actual save. It was tense, because single-goal leads always are, but in the end it was a fully-deserved win.

Both managers agreed Maidstone had outmuscled Dagenham where it mattered.

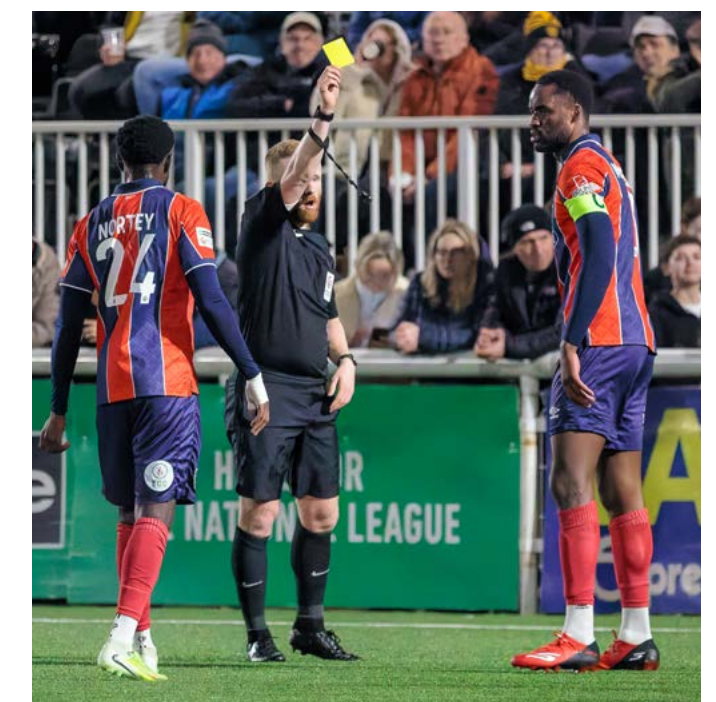
George looked pleased that his pointed comments about restarts on Saturday had been taken on board, but still hammered home the need for reinforcements.

Bradbury claimed Kargbo should have been sent off and said we were rolling around faking injuries. Outstanding hypocrisy: the only reason he was on a yellow card in the first place was because Marsh had gone the full RADA when the two of them tangled near the dug-out.

Frankly it's surprising he's still there. He was getting vitriolic criticism after we'd beaten them 2-1 in October and seemed to survive due to the pre-takeover power vacuum.



Maghoma gets a yellow card after taking out Riley Court.



It's possible the hype about KSI played a part in the police's response. When the game was over, Maidstone fans were initially prevented from walking along the river.

As a result at least one missed his train home. By the time I'd left the ground, 8 (eight) officers were standing at the bottom of the steps to the high-level bridge. I walked up it unimpeded, but others had apparently been refused entry.

There were more officers at the top, talking to what looked like a family of Dagenham fans, and another brigade kept watch at the entrance to the Barracks station

Maybe they'd heard that someone

we'll call "Fan C" has apparently been released from jail and that he'd posted "I'm back, bitches," on his social feed. Or maybe it was just a severe overreaction.

When the old security arrangements were in place, I saw them tested past breaking point: specifically Yeovil in 2024 and Gillingham in the Kent Senior Cup, when an off-duty taxi driver tried to scramble his way over the security curtain with tragicomic consequences.

Coins were thrown, drinks were chucked, threats were issued, security staff seemed overwhelmed and all the while the police stood on the steps, doing precisely fuck all. There's probably a rational explanation for this. I'd love to know what it is.



Maghoma's shot is blocked on the line by Court.

Upcoming Commentaries

Farnborough (H) Sat 14 March 2026 @ 1500 – Fred Atkins & Sean Scurr

Chesham United (A) Sat 21 March 2026 @ 1500 – Chris Bechervaise & Adrian Sharpe

AFC Totton (H) Sat 28 March 2026 @1500 – Alan Thatcher & Alex del Valle

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.



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The
**Back
Page**

Set-pieces, how to handle Hamzad, unsettled players and a horrowshow in Madrid ...
It's **STEVE WATT'S** latest column ...



Watt's Occurring?

Set pieces are part of the game: deal with them

It's been fashionable to complain about set-pieces recently, but they're a part of the game and always will be.

People criticised Arsenal for years for being too soft and for wanting to score the perfect goal.

I always go back to the Mourinho side at Chelsea that conceded just 15 goals in a season: they weren't a particularly good side to watch, but they knew how to win games. They did so by any means necessary and they always used to beat Arsenal

Now Arsenal look like a team that just wants to win and they have some unbelievable routines. If you're the opposition, your job is to stop them, not complain about it.

George, to his credit, didn't do this after the Maidenhead game and both of Maidstone's goals on Tuesday night came from set pieces.

Hamzad Kargbo is a huge asset in the air. You'd deal with him by putting your best header of the ball on him, figuring out his strengths and trying to nullify them. If you come up against a striker who's good at a lot of things, you've got to be positionally sound and protect the right areas.

The only player I came across who I really struggled to deal with was Peter Crouch, when I was playing a reserve game at Southampton.

He was a handful to say the least, not because he was physically stronger, but because of his sheer size and quality.

Some strikers can jump, some like to back in and use their body. I would always try to take away their strengths.

"If someone's elbowing you, you might try to make the referee aware, but trying to get someone sent off just because he's good in the air is pathetic..."

As a centre-half I liked to try and break their will. If you don't let strikers do what they're good at, it can make them overthink things and they can become a bit lost.

So I'd drag under the ball to make them concerned about me, then drop off and win the header, or maybe just give them a little nudge before the jump.

If we had an attacking set piece one of my weaknesses was that if a player got ultra-tight to me I could be nullified, which is what we're seeing in the Premier League right now. If you gave me a little bit of space I would punish you.

I'll never forget the away game at Stevenage in the FA Cup. At the first set piece I was marked by Jon Ashton, who was a really tall centre-back, but at the next one they put Darius Charles on me and he just grabbed me.

He was a really strong individual and I just thought 'well that's me done'. So from then on I'd take him out of the danger area: we had several other players who could threaten.

All these little things can help you win individual battles on the pitch, something I don't think is spoken about enough these days. What I wouldn't do is try to get a player sent off.

If someone's elbowing you, you might make the ref aware, but trying to get someone sent off just because he's good in the air is pathetic.

Players get tapped up every single week ...

Kargbo was starting, partly because Mo Faal is injured and partly because Deon Moore had been approached by a rival club. This sort of thing happens all the time and how you deal with it depends on your relationship with the player.

If the relationship isn't great, you're probably not going to be able to deal with it very well, so honesty is the key. I've had players who were tapped up in my bar after games.

One of them came straight over to me with a pint in his hand and told me he'd just been offered £500 a week. I said: "you'd better take it then! Why are you still here?"

We weren't going to be able to offer him anything like that. Sometimes they'd say they were happy and if they were, great. If not, if you want to go for that money, go. To this day, players ring me when they can't decide between two clubs and I'm not even in the game!

"I always found it funny that managers thought I wouldn't find out..."

I always found it funny that managers thought I wouldn't find out. Players were always forwarding me text messages and screenshots and DJ Oldaker got tapped up every single week when we were at Hythe.

I know some eyebrows were raised when Steve King got the Eastbourne job this week, but to be fair to him, he was the only manager who approached me directly.

Dartford had just beaten us 5-1, but DJ was brilliant that day and it could have been 5-5. King rang me and said "this kid is unbelievable." I said speak to him, but I don't think he'll go because he only wants to go full-time.

And as I mentioned in a previous edition, he could have gone to Maidstone ...



Dagenham captain Christian Maghoma grabbing Deon Moore's shirt on Tuesday night - it might become a collector's item.

You cannot do what Tudor did to Kinsky

I've never seen anything like what happened to the Tottenham keeper Kinsky on Tuesday night and it wasn't right, in my opinion.

First and foremost, I feel for the player. He's very young, he was probably excited about a fantastic opportunity and you might not see him again. That could and probably will crush him and Tottenham need to think about his wellbeing

I'd never criticise a manager for making a tactical decision. If something's not right, you need to fix it. Managers make early substitutions: Mourinho once made a double change in the first half and I've taken

players off at half-time, but I've always checked on them if I can see they're down about it.

Tudor just blanked Kinsky. As a senior player I'd be going to see him the next day to ask if he'd checked on him, because while I respect the decision to take him off, the way he handled him was not right.

If it's true that Romero, his captain, told his manager to sub him, that makes it even worse. He has got a lot to say for himself and he's no good for a dressing room in that situation. I can't believe the manager hasn't got rid of him.



THE SPITFIRE



Launching in March 2026

A new media outlet dedicated to independent coverage of Kent Cricket is coming in 2026.

The Spitfire will be run by Fred Atkins, who has followed Kent since the early 90s and has covered them for the ECB and Wisden since 2021.

Expect expert storytelling, colourful matchday writing, insightful analysis and in-depth interviews, as The Spitfire takes coverage of the club to new heights.

Everyone who signs up to the site's mailing list prior to launch will get a special discount on membership.

The site, which offers a modern reader experience and a commitment to zero intrusive advertising, will be up and running in March.

The Spitfire is the eighth county cricket outlet to be

confirmed on CounterPress ahead of the 2026 season, as part of a wide-reaching project designed to revitalise written digital coverage of our domestic summer sport.

Other outlets announced so far include The Hawk (Hampshire), The Rey (Surrey), Lanky Lanky (Lancashire), Up The Middle (Middlesex), From The Sea End (Sussex), Cider Press (Somerset) and The Chester (Durham).

Further sites are still to be released.

CounterPress co-founder Sam Morshead said: "The Spitfire promises to be the go-to place for proper cricket writing on events at Canterbury and Beckenham."

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BASEBALL STORIES THAT CROSS OCEANS, CULTURES, AND SANITY CHECKS

Could JBA or Pattison return after Moore exit?

By Tom Rogers

Deon Moore has gone by “mutual consent” but we may not have seen the last of him as one of his rumoured possible destinations was Farnborough, which could make Saturday even more interesting.

He was touted as a possible replacement for Dom Poleon when he left for Hornchurch and a friend of the striker told me he’d be ‘off in the morning’ at the Dagenham game on Tuesday night. He was out by about a day, as his departure was announced on Thursday afternoon.

This presumably opens the door for another attacking option to come in, as Hamzad Kargbo, despite his ability, clearly isn’t fit enough to be relied upon to start and play all eight remaining games.

Though Mark Boruk was promoted from the U23’s and Jacob Berkeley-Agyepong was training with the side again recently, a late move for a goalscorer is probable. (Christie Pattison’s name has also been mentioned.)

Farnborough still have plenty to fight for at the wrong end of the table, with a few more wins being required on their end to shake off relegation woes.

We currently sit eighth on 58 points, having played anywhere between one and four more matches than those around us. With eight games to play, we’ll likely need to win six of our remaining games to be certain of a playoff spot.

Accumulating eighteen points would leave us on a total of 76, which would be historically enough to assure us of post-season football.

Across all three National League divisions, 73 points is the average total for the seventh-place finisher, meaning five wins or even four wins and a selection of draws could be enough to sneak into an Eliminator. Our total of 79 points was the highest total for any 7th place finisher in National League history.

On paper this is our most ‘winnable’ game left, with Farnborough being our weakest remaining opponent to visit the Gallagher this season. We also beat them comfortably 2-0 in the reverse fixture earlier in the season.



Mason Bloomfield, now with Farnborough, during Hampton's 5-2 win over the Stones in 2023-24.

Unlike Totton or Dover in a few weeks’ time, they have something to play for still. Their 1-0 triumph at Bath in midweek pushed them five clear of the bottom four. Micah Anthony’s stoppage time winner was enough for a second win in eight, although Bath have two games in hand on the Yellows.

Amongst the current Farnborough crop is Michael Klass. One of the many ex-Stones you would be forgiven for forgetting existed.

Klass has cut a peripheral figure this season, playing just seven league games amidst a couple of loan spells elsewhere. Farnborough did recruit some big names in the summer, with feared former Ebbsfleet strikers Poleon and Rakish Bingham joining and despite Poleon’s departure Bingham is still a regular..

They also have Mason Bloomfield though, who I’ll never be able to forget after he dismantled us in a 5-2 loss at Hampton a couple of years ago.

How long Holden stays in the side is the big question, with Harness still being out on Tuesday night due to concussion protocol.

Holden came on as a substitute in both games against Farnborough last season, first as an emergency striker in a 4-0 win at the Gallagher, before replacing Alexis Andre in goal for the last stage of a dead rubber in the last regular season game back in April of last year.

Agbontohoma seems to have nailed down the right back spot from David Sesay, which is still a massive surprise, although his performances have come on a bit in recent weeks.

Yila will hopefully return, having been bright when he came on in the Dagenham game.

Going forward you’d expect Kargbo to keep his place despite being withdrawn early as he looked in danger of getting a second yellow card.



A busier than usual media gantry on Tuesday night

The circus is in town

By Alex del-Valle

It was only in last week’s edition that I was covering the new investment into Dagenham and Redbridge FC by social media star KSI.

The highly anticipated start to a new chapter began at Victoria Road, where the Daggers welcomed league leaders, Dorking Wanderers. They got off to a perfect start as the home side edged out a 1-0 win, with KSI and Andy Carroll both in attendance.

It certainly looked like a spectacle. Not only was KSI livestreaming for his YouTube audience, which at one time amassed over 10,000 live viewers, but DAZN were also there filming the whole event. KSI’s presence drew a larger crowd than average, with many people eager to meet the social media star.

A fairytale start therefore, but up next for them was a Tuesday evening visit to the Gallagher – would the fairytale beginning continue?

As I walked into the ground on Tuesday night something felt off. There were seemingly more youth around than normal – I wonder why? Unfortunately for them, there was no sign of KSI, although I did

bump into Andy Carroll on the way to the gantry – he was sitting up in the director’s box.

It’s fair to say, there was still some element of a media circus. Not only were the Daggers’ media team there filming and commenting for their own local radio, but DAZN had made the trip to film the Daggers for the second game running. There was barely any room to stand in either media gantry!

KSI took the bait: “Am I going to get this every time we lose lol?”

As the game kicked off you could sense an atmosphere building – the attendance, 1,931, was the highest we’ve had for a midweek fixture in a long time. Early on however, the Daggers nullified this – going ahead inside 15 minutes. It kind of felt inevitable that would happen if I’m honest.

How would we respond was the question. The Stones hadn’t come from behind to win in over a year (the last time was when we beat Salisbury 3-2, after trailing 2-1 early in the second half.) This was a bleak stat indeed, but the response was instant. Hamzad Kargbo, start-

ing for the injured Mo Faal, got a towering header to the ball following a corner and quickly equalised.

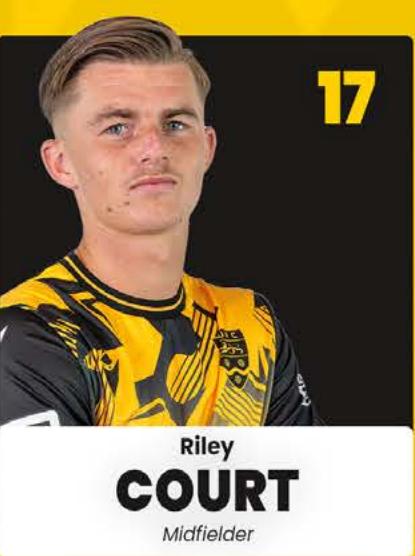
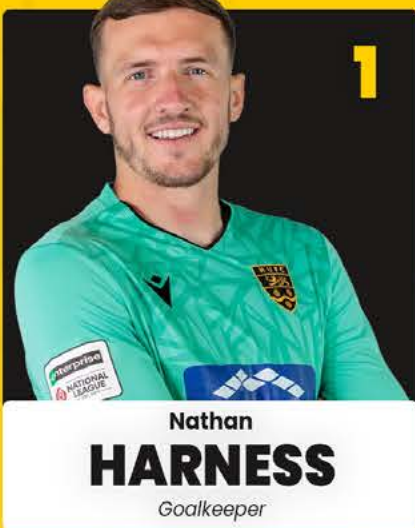
The Stones kept up the pressure, soon taking the lead. This time David Agbontohoma headed his first goal for the club. From there, the Stones held on, coming close to adding a third goal at times with the Daggers looking lost for answers.

A great result for Stones fans and a disappointing result for KSI and the Daggers. Maidstone United admin were quick to tease KSI over social media with a picture of him holding his head in his hands. To which KSI responded to directly saying “Am I going to get this every time we lose lol?”. For what its worth, I think so.

So, what’s next for the new “Wrexham” of non-league? They take on Enfield Town at the weekend in a bid to continue a last-minute play-off push.

That game will be televised – as will the next six of their National League South games – something completely unheard of, until now of course. The media circus has well and truly began – but will the Daggers’ ascendancy up the football pyramid follow suit?

MAIDSTONE UNITED
2025/26 SQUAD



Designed by MAIDSTONE UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB IN VIETNAM

Guess the year ...

It's the staple of every pub quiz. In which year did the following, major geo-political events provide a backdrop to the even more pivotal events taking place in Kent's county town?

1) It's a bad year for tyrants as Muammar Gaddafi, Osama bin-Laden and the *News of the World* are all killed. In happier news, Jay Saunders becomes Maidstone's manager.

2) The Berlin Wall is torn down, communism collapses and more importantly, Maidstone win the GM Vauxhall Conference.

3) Chernobyl explodes, the US Space Shuttle Challenger blows up and, almost as catastrophically, EastEnders' Nick Berry gets to number 1. But there's happier news from Mamfe, Cameroon, where George Elokobi is born.



4) The Germans invent the aspirin, 15 years before they stimulate demand for far stronger painkillers. The second Boer War breaks out, and Maidstone United win the Kent League for the first time.

5) A global catastrophe unfurls as The Spice Girls' career is launched. England's most overrated midfielder, Paul Gascoigne, emulates Iran's Iradj Danaeufard and New Zealand's Steve Woodin by scoring a goal against Scotland in the group stages of a tournament. And Maidstone Invicta become Maidstone United again.



6) The Battle of Stalingrad begins, Casablanca and Bambi are released and future Maidstone United legend Bill Williams is born in Esher.

7) Russia invades Crimea, Ebola breaks out in West Africa, Scotland narrowly votes to stay in the UK and Frannie Collin heads Stevenage out of the FA Cup.

8) The Septics invade Grenada and *Return of the Jedi* is released, as is UB40's excrementitious *Red Red Wine*. Exeter's Peter Taylor gets booed by Maidstone fans when his side are knocked out of the FA Cup at The Athletic Ground.



9) The Twin Towers collapse and the UK charts include the talents of Shaggy, Bob The Builder and Robbie fucking Williams; Michael Owen scores a hat-trick in Munich and Maidstone United return to senior football after nine years.

10) Elon Musk calls a man who rescues 12 boys trapped in an underground cave a paedophile; Newcastle's owner orders a 15-man death squad to assassinate a journalist; Russia commits murder in Salisbury; and Harry Wheeler is named Maidstone manager.

Answers to Edition 29: 'enhead

1) Which striker, who played for us on loan from Dagenham in the 2007-8 season, made four appearances for Gillingham before ending up at York Road in 2013? **Jacob Erskine.**

2) Which key member of the 2015-16 promotion-winning squad had previously played for Maidenhead? **Manny Parry.**

3) Which member of the same squad reportedly left the ground early and caught a train home after being dropped for a game at York Road? **Adam Birchall (this was a rumour and not necessarily fact. The game was against Hayes & Yeading, who were sharing York Road).**

4) Who scored Maidenhead's equaliser, their first ever goal in the National League, when we met on the opening day of the 2017-18 season at JWW? **Sam Barratt.**

5) Which former Chelsea right-back joined Maidenhead from Maidstone at the end of that season? **Seth Nana-Twumasi.**

6) Which Maidstone striker had a goal wrongly disallowed for offside when the Stones were winning 2-1 in the closing stages at York Road in 2018, in Jay Saunders' penultimate game in charge? **Shamir Mullings.**

7) Signed by Harry Wheeler, which former Maidenhead midfielder usually got booked within the first 20 minutes of his 12 appearances for us in the cataclysmic 2018-19 season? **Aryan Tajbakhsh.**

8) What was the score when we met for our only ever FA Trophy tie? **Trick question: we were due to meet at York Road in the third round 202-21, but Maidenhead forfeited the tie.**

9) Which brick-headed defender joined us from Maidenhead ahead of the 2020-21 season and won the title with us the following year? **Joe Ellul.**

10) Which equally-brick-headed defender, who seemed to look like Mister Bump every time he played for us, ended up wearing a mask and a bandage when Maidenhead won at JWW earlier this season? **Will de Havilland.**



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This must be how Seann Walsh's ex-girlfriend felt

*"The pleasure is to play, it makes no difference what you say ...
"I don't share your greed, the only card I need is ...
"The Ace of Spades ..."*

We've just been dumped by Deon Moore. Really? Is this how Seann Walsh's ex-girlfriend felt?

Moore only came on against Dagenham because Hamzad Kargbo looked like getting sent off. You couldn't fault his effort, but he knew he was leaving and so did half the ground by the sound of it.

George's post-match interview after Maidenhead wasn't subtle. He needs reinforcements and although a couple have been lined-up, with the club up for sale we're at an impasse.

The money might be used on replacements (see page 20), but our owners have reached a point where they feel they've spent enough money.

They're not alone. Eastleigh are where they are due to one man. Stuart Donald bought them in 2010 when they were in National South, and apart from two hideous years at Sunderland, where he was comprehensively Netflixed, he's been there ever since.

This week Eastleigh announced their season ticket prices had tripled, from an admittedly very low £99 to £295, putting the increase down to "rising operational costs".

The graphic Eastleigh used to announce the hike featured two players: Aaron Blair and Temi Eweka. They'd previously lured Josh Hare and Alex Wynter from Maidstone, so sympathy is limited, but Donald has clearly had enough.

Elsewhere, however, others are still prepared to dance with the devil.



The King, picking up a yellow card during Dartford's 4-0 defeat to Maidstone in 2021-22.

In December 2015, Whitehawk got an injury time equaliser at Dagenham, in the second round of the FA Cup, earning a replay (remember them?)

On the following Monday, the draw for the third round was broadcast live and the winners were told they'd be playing Everton at Goodison Park.

It was a once-in-a-lifetime shot for a side who'd never previously made the first-round proper, so the cameras cut to their manager, Steve "Kinky" King for a reaction.

"I wanted the Reds," he said before delivering what he clearly thought was a brilliant pay-off line. "... but I've got the Blues."

Since then he's had some ups and several well-documented downs. At Dartford, he trolled Radio Chippenham's commentators during a play-off penalty shoot-out, which Dartford lost.

At Havant, he took over a side who had a promotion budget. They were relegated, although by then King was long gone. The highlight of his three-month tenure was a leaked "fine list"

which said players could have their wages docked by £25 if they failed to bring in cakes when it was their turn, or £150 for "talking back to the gaffer".

It was a wind-up, but it was still plausible enough for Havant to launch an investigation. They said it was fake but by December they'd sacked him anyway.

And 18 months ago he was sacked by Hednesford following a "breakdown in the relationship" between him and the board. The news broke 24 hours before they were due to play Gainsborough in the first round of the FA Cup so it must have been some breakdown.

Now he's back at bottom-of-the-table Eastbourne, the town he's lived in for 20 years. He told the club's media channel his appointment was "overdue" and, when asked to sum up his career, he said: "Wow."

The game, at every level is about how much an owner is prepared to lose. Terry Casey and Oliver Ash have reached their tipping point. So has Stuart Donald. Eastbourne's Simon Leslie has just played his joker, by hiring a King.