

The **Back** Page

You nearly gave us a Connery!

Hornchurch and heart failure

- PLUS:** – Dover report and reaction
– The Steve Watt column: defensive nightmares and being back in the game at Faversham Town
– Horsham preview and retro
– The Stones Quiz: Namesakes
– The Back Page: One day you may need a favour

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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Court & Son celebrate at Dover

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... because otherwise you won't see anything of our win on Good Friday

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Ian Court was a prolific local striker who Maidstone tried to sign several times before he joined us from Ramsgate at the start of the 2001-02 season. He scored our first goal back in the Kent League and was at The Crabble on Good Friday to celebrate with his son Riley after a 2-0 win over Dover.

Report – pages 6 and 7.



Dover-style: pictures, or it didn't happen

**DOUVRES ATHLETIQUE 0
MAIDSTONE UNITED 2**
Pattisson 12, Tanga 90+6
Attendance: 2,134

By Tom Rogers

The Stones kept their playoff ambitions alive as they overcame Kent rivals Dover in a deserved win at the Crabble.

In a game that (again) fell into the 'must-win' category, George Elokobi's team were comfortably the better side in the first period, before a Jephthe Tanga goal deep into stoppage time made sure of all three points after a nervy second half.

I am pleased to announce that Dover's stance against racism remains strong as ever (see edition 32). Nearly five years on from that fateful Euro 2021 final, the Crabble reception area still has a moving tribute to the three players who missed against Italy that night.

"Perhaps Dover is like Pyongyang in that you aren't allowed to film or take pictures without the Supreme Leader's permission."

Emblazed with 'Racists do not speak for me', Chairman Jim has proudly placed the painting on the floor in the corner. Surely you'd shell out for some non-adhesive picture hooks? It's been sat there long enough.

We started the stronger of the two sides, with Tanga and Riley Court particularly getting a lot of joy cutting inside from out wide to create opportunities in the penalty area.

The breakthrough came after twelve minutes, when a ball squared to Christie Pattisson was fired goalwards and, with the aid of a massive deflection off Roman Charles-Cook, beat Mitch Walker at his near post.



Pattisson's shot is deflected in for the opener and he celebrates at a bleak looking Crabble.



If I had the luxury of highlights to refer to, I'd be able to say with certainty if Pattisson's initial effort was on target or it should go down as an own goal.

However, due to unforeseen circumstances, no highlights of the game exist. This wouldn't be an issue of course, had Stones TV been allowed to film, yet they weren't.

This seemed especially bizarre as Dover were very accommodating with Chris Bechervaise and me when we were doing the radio commentary. Perhaps Dover is like Pyongyang in that you aren't allowed to film or take pictures without the supreme leader's permission.

The hosts did hit the bar twice in the half, despite the visitors having the better of it. Ruben Soares-Junior's header cannoned back off Lenny Holden's crossbar after he rose highest at a Dover corner, and later in the half a George Nikaj cross-cum-shot hit the bar and had Lenny Holden scrambling before it bounced away to safety.

The Stones didn't convert their first half dominance into a commanding lead and went back into their shell in the second half.

Dover should've levelled things up when winger Luke Baptiste had a free header which he could only steer into Holden's hands.

For much of the next forty-five minutes we slowly retreated deeper into our own half, with Dover beginning to control more of the ball, but aside from the Baptiste chance they created little in the way of clear-cut goalscoring opportunities.

David Sesay replaced Lexus Beeden with a quarter of an hour to go as we switched to a back four in a clear attempt to cling onto what we had.

Despite fearing the worst, we held firm and didn't give away any opportunities. Nor did we shoot ourselves in the foot as we have done so frequently this season. All doubt was dispelled when the busy Tanga was played in on the break, holding off Harrison Sodje and slotting past Walker to send the travelling Stones wild.

It was the sort of performance we could've done with many times this season. On far too many occasions we've given up leads against sides who aren't up to much and it's cost us dearly.

Writing this after the chaos that was the Easter Monday game against Hornchurch, it does finally feel like that has changed.



2-0. Tanga makes it safe in injury time.



Celebrations in front of the wrong part of the away end.



Pass the imodium please, Doctor

MAIDSTONE UNITED 5
Gilbert 6, Court 10, Kargbo 12,
Foran 32, Corne 58
HORNCHURCH 4
Rees 25, 42, Balanta 30, 45+2
Attendance: 2,314

By Fred Atkins

Late in the second half the scoreboard failed. It was understandable. If its circuits were having to deal with anything like the load placed on ours it's a miracle it came back on.

When it did splutter back to life, it read 97 minutes. This brought a moderate cheer until it was corrected to read 78, meaning we all had to deal with at least another quarter of an hour of one of the maddest games most of us will ever watch.

I'm not sure how many of these games a nervous system can cope with in a lifetime.

"Bramble ran through a challenge so weak it might have been American beer and laid it on a plate for Taylor Foran ..."

We lost 5-4 to Hornchurch during the final game of the truncated COVID season, but that didn't really compare. The stadium was even emptier than usual, the quality was poor and the game see-saved: neither side surrendered a three-goal advantage.

These two halves were almost separate matches, one an absurd sideshow more like an ice hockey game than a serious football match, the other almost a George Graham style, 1-0 to the Arsenal by comparison.

Hornchurch, still in with a reasonable chance of the title, came in decent numbers, (for them) and sang "doo-doo-doooo. Starmer is a paedro".

They then shipped three goals in



2-0. Court holds off Phillips and picks his spot.



3-0. Kargbo kisses the turf.

under 12 minutes. The first came in the sixth, when TJ Bramble took John Gilbert's lay off and hit one from the edge of the box that Arthur Nasta could only parry back to Gilbert. He couldn't, and didn't, miss.

The second was amazingly simple. Lenny Holden booted one down the middle, Hamzad Kargbo flicked it on and Riley Court outpaced Giles Phillips before finishing in the far corner.

The third was even simpler, with Kargbo heading in directly from a Court corner.

The only problem with going this far ahead this early is that there are 80 minutes to undo the damage. And when Court was denied in a one-on-one by Nasta the momentum shifted, violently.

Daryl "Macca" McMahon made a tactical switch, bringing off Frankie Edwards for Angelo Balanta and they quickly got one back with a clever move that was finished off by Josh Rees. Their second was uglier. Sam Ling's long throw wasn't cleared and Angelo Balanta scored via a deflection.

Two minutes later it was 4-2, with Bramble running through a challenge so weak it might have been American beer and laying it on a plate for Taylor Foran, who was inexplicably upfield in an orthodox centre-forward's position.

And yet every time Hornchurch attacked, they looked like scoring. Rees made it 4-3 after another ugly melee following a corner and no one was surprised when they equalised in first-half stoppage time. Jephte Tanga gave away a free-kick and the knock-down fell to Balanta, who drilled home from close range.

We were booed off and when you blow a three-goal lead you can hardly expect anything else, but the team deserves immense credit for regrouping at half-time when their heads could easily have gone.

It's possible Hornchurch got complacent, but they offered very little in the early stages of the second half, while we looked far more solid. Court had a free-kick that went just over and then set up Sam Corne for a low shot from the edge of the box that found the bottom corner.

At that point few would have bet on it being the winner, although we looked the more likely scorers until the last ten minutes or so.



4-2. Nasta loses his shit. And what's Foran doing there?

When Jamie Yila missed a free header it was time to mainline the imodium, but Holden kept one shot out with his knee and the game management may not have been pretty but it was effective.

In the third minute of injury time Jacob Berkeley-Agyepong missed a chance

to settle it when Nasta surged out of his area and just about kept out an attempted lob with his hip, giving us another 60 seconds of anxiety.

Let's conclude with the words of John Travolta from Pulp Fiction. "Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go home and have a heart attack."



5-4. Sam Corne finally settles the issue.

Upcoming Commentaries

Horsham (A) Sat 11 April 2026 @ 1500 – Darren Styles & Sean Scurr

Worthing (H) Sat 18 April 2026 @ 1500 – Joe Parkhouse & Nigel Seager

Tonbridge (N) Wed 22 April @ 19.45 – Darren Styles and Sean Scurr

Bath City (A) Sat 25 April 2026 @ 1230 – Chris Bechervaise & Fred Atkins

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**

Back in the game at Faversham ... **STEVE WATT'S** latest column is about getting a call from Frannie Collin and digesting Maidstone's 5-4 win



Watt's Occurring?

Tough to watch - but you can't fault the spirit

As a defender, it was hard to watch the highlights of the Hornchurch match, but it was a great game and you have to praise both teams, because they both showed great character.

A lot of teams would have folded after going 3-0 down early on, so you have to give Hornchurch credit for fighting their way back in.

The fourth Maidstone goal might have knocked the stuffing out of them, but they came back again, which meant it was Maidstone's turn to show their character.

They were comfortable, but after getting pegged back a lot of teams would have gone the other way. Instead they found a way to win. Sam Corne scored the fifth fairly early in the second half and that was enough.

George will obviously be happier because he managed to get the three points, but I don't think either manager will be happy with the goals they conceded.

For the first Maidstone goal, the Hornchurch keeper has to do better, but there were a lot of individual errors in the build-up to almost

all the goals. The difference in the second half was that mistakes were still being made, but they weren't getting punished.

Some of them were just basic: keepers failing to deal with shots, basic defending and clearing your lines.

Nine times out of ten the scrambles that led to Hornchurch's goals would get blocked because of the number of bodies in the way, but their strikers had a bit of luck and found the back of the net.

I've never been in a situation where it's been 4-4 at half-time before so I'm not sure how I'd have reacted as a manager.

You're obviously going to be annoyed and angry, but you don't want to lose the game, so you'd just have to treat it like a restart: win the half and you win the game.

Tighten things up defensively and try to address some of the issues you saw in that first half. I can't imagine the players would have been in good spirits, so your job is to pick them up again - and a 5-4 win is as good as a 1-0 win.

"They were comfortable, but after getting pegged back, a lot of teams would have gone the other way. Instead Maidstone found a way to win ..."



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The Ice Fran Cometh ... to Salters Lane

Things move really quickly in football. On Good Friday I took my son down to Homelands, because I have friends on both sides - Matt Bodkin's at Ashford and Tommy Warrilow and Frannie Collin were with Faversham.

I never thought for a minute that I'd be on the bench with Frannie by Monday but, after Ashford won 1-0, Faversham parted company with Tommy and they asked Frannie to take over until the end of the season.

He called me up and I didn't take a lot of persuading to join him: one because it's Fran and two because Faversham is very a good club.

"Because he was so cool, people sometimes misunderstood him. He wasn't a screamer and a shouter like me ..."

We've still got a chance of making the play-offs and we'll need some help from elsewhere, but we got off to a great start with a 3-0 win over Sheppey on Monday.

Wherever I went as a manager, I always had Fran with me. He always dropped what he was doing to join me, so I was always going to help him.

As a player he was like Ice Man in Top Gun. Nothing ever really got under his skin and he had ice in his veins. He was great in the dressing room and the sort of person you always wanted to have in the building, not just for what he gives you on the pitch but for everything he gives you off it.

As a finisher he's up there with the best I've seen and, from penalties, he was near enough automatic. In a play-off semi-final with Ramsgate he told the keeper exactly

where he was going to put it and said "stop it if you're good enough". He buried it.

Because he was so cool, people sometimes misunderstood him. He wasn't a screamer and a shouter like me, but that isn't always a reliable sign - players who shout aren't always as selfless as they make out.

Later in his career I played him in centre-midfield and I've even seen him play at centre-half.

He will do anything to get the team over the line and he's got some very good players there. If we're there for another two or three weeks, we'll enjoy it. And if there's a conversation to be had about next season, we'll have it.



Frannie Collin vs Welling in the FA Cup in 2014, when he took what seemed like an eon to score the decisive second goal and was in fact a split second

I scored a hat-trick and couldn't even celebrate

Games like Maidstone's 5-4 win over Hornchurch may offer great entertainment for neutrals, but for defenders they can leave a sour taste in the mouth. After leaving Maidstone I went to Hemel Hempstead for a short period, but I left after a high-scoring game when no one seemed interested in defending.

I ended up at Hastings United, where I scored the first hat-trick of my career, but as that came in a 4-4 draw at Car-

shalton, I didn't feel like celebrating that either! It was Bonfire Night in 2016 and I scored two headers early on. We were 3-1 up at half-time, but conceded three goals in nine minutes after half-time.

The local paper wrote that I had the last laugh, because I scored the equaliser with a shot from an angle, but I can assure you that I was so pissed off that we'd conceded four I absolutely didn't feel like laughing.



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"You do have some days when you just can't be arsed..."

Who would have guessed the Ashes would be a farce?

Apart from absolutely everyone who read Rob Key's book ...



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Shaq Coulthirst and Pierre Fonkeu at Horsham last season, where we bowed out of the FA Trophy with a whimper, losing 2-1.

We keep winning, but sadly so do all our rivals

By Tom Rogers

After a massive pair of wins over the Easter weekend, we go to Horsham in need of another three points to hunt down our playoff rivals.

I initially believed we could afford to drop points in one of our remaining five games going into the weekend, however I now suspect it'll need to be nine from nine in our remaining three if we are to get into the postseason.

Horsham have nothing to play for, are in terrible form after a strong start to the season and we are finally getting hot. This should pose less of a test than a title chasing Hornchurch who we edged in one of the best games ever seen at the Gallagher.

However, the Hornets battered us 3-0 at the Gallagher earlier in the season and they derailed Dorking's title charge when they dispatched them by the same scoreline on Good Friday.

Dominic Di Paola's tenure at Horsham is an incredibly impressive story. Having taken over at the backend of the 2014-15 campaign when the side were already consigned to relegation to Step Five, he has led the club back up the divisions and on numerous impressive cup runs.

To pick up a club barely averaging 200 in the crowd without a stadium and lead them into Step 2 is a remarkable achievement.

Although the drop off from play-off candidates to a lower midtable finish will have been disappointing, it is important not to underestimate the job Di Paola has done over an extended period in Sussex. It is a surprise nobody at a higher level has taken him on.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the disparity in levels the two clubs have played at since we won promotion from the Isthmian South in 2013, there

"Keeping most of this team together for next season and adding a prolific striker would probably make us title contenders ..."



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are very few players who have crossed over between the two teams in recent memory.

Greg Luer, who has been an ever present in the Hornets attack this season, turned out for us six times in the National League back in 2018 as we scrambled to survive the drop after losing Joe Pigott.*

Goals have been an issue for Horsham, who've only scored a modest 49 times this season - only Salisbury and Bath have scored less.

Like us they have struggled to find a reliable goalscorer this season. James Hammond's twelve league goals make him the team's top scorer.

With just four wins in their last twenty league games, all signs point towards a struggling team who have done enough to survive and are coasting toward the end of the season. Inevitably we will make them look like Pep's Barcelona.

Hamzad Kargbo was the surprise selection on Monday, with George dropping the duo of Pattison and Yila to give us more height at set pieces.

The selection was validated when Kargbo leapt highest to power home a header eleven minutes in. John Gilbert also regained a place in the XI, playing as a false nine behind target man Kargbo.

Whether George reinstates the Yila/Pattison duo or sticks by his Hornchurch selection is probably the only uncertainty in the line-up. It's clear we'll be sticking with a 3-4-1-2 then shifting to a back four if we have a lead to conserve towards the end, as George has finally got a system he likes.

One way or another we must win. We currently sit two points off Maidenhead and Hemel in 9th, albeit we have a significantly better goal difference (Thank you Enfield).

There isn't any more room for error. Despite the struggles we've faced at times this season this team is finally coming together. Keeping most of this team together for next season with the addition of a prolific striker would probably make us title contenders.

**(One other exception is Simon Austin, who joined Horsham in 2007 after being released by Maidstone and was part of the team that took Swansea to a replay in the second round of the FA Cup.)*



The opening day of the 2007-08 season. Clicking on the picture above will take you to Horsham's report from 2007.

Unhappy memories of a Sittingbourne debacle

What should have been a great day was overshadowed when Maidstone United, as they so often did during the wilderness years, made the headlines for all the wrong reasons.

The club had won successive promotions to the Isthmian Premier Division, but they were roundly beaten by Horsham on the opening day of the 2007-08 season.

Both goals came from Lee Farrell, a striker who, through no fault of his own, was at the centre of a row between Stones boss Lloyd Hume and his Horsham equivalent John Maggs.

Maggs, who'd been a Maidstone keeper during the 70s, accused Hume of abusing Farrell, a Great Britain Deaf International. After confronting him at half-time he was sent off for the first time in his career.

Hume denied the accusation. "When John Maggs accused me of taking the mickey out of Lee, my response was immediate and clear. I did not know he was deaf, I did not call him any names relating to this affliction. How could I, I didn't know he had an affliction. I shook hands with Lee at the end of the game, congratulated him on his performance."

Chairman Paul Bowden-Brown backed his man. "First, I want to say how seriously the club treat abuse of any kind. However, I'm satisfied that Lloyd has no case to answer. Lloyd has given me a full and frank response to the allegations and I fully support his version of events. If Lloyd was guilty of this, I wouldn't need to sack him as he would resign himself."

That didn't satisfy Maggs: "I'm disgusted with their bench. It was a disgrace," he told the *Argus*.

"It all started when Lee and Hume collided on the touchline. We believe Hume kicked out at Lee, who showed how upset he was by making a noise which sounded like a grunt. From then on, they took the mickey out of him and kept trying to make similar grunting noises.

"I had words with Hume who said he hadn't realised Lee was deaf and mute. When I disputed that he said something provocative in reference to my age and I raised my fist and said something like 'I'm 64 but can still deal with the likes of you'. There were no blows and we didn't square up.

"All this was in front of the officials and the referee told me to sit in the stands, while no action was taken against Hume.

It is the first time I've been sent off and it is a blemish on my record but I would defend Lee again like that in similar circumstances."

I covered the game for the KM. Sat in the stand opposite the dug outs. I didn't hear the alleged abuse, but that doesn't mean it didn't happen. And I *did* hear a fan call Farrell a "mincer" because he had a high-pitched voice.

Fittingly, it was Farrell who had the final word, by lobbing Pat Mullin for the opening goal just before the hour. He scored a second 11 minutes from time, after which he saluted the Maidstone bench. Which was fair enough in my book.

FA.

MAIDSTONE UNITED
2025/26 SQUAD

M



George
ELOKOB
Manager

1



Nathan
HARNES
Goalkeeper

13



Lenny
HOLDEN
Goalkeeper

2



David
SESAY
Defender

3



Leo
HAMBLIN
Defender

4



Lexus
BEEDEN
Defender

5



George
FOWLER
Defender

6



Thomas-James
BRAMBLE
Midfielder

7



Jephthe
TANGA
Midfielder

8



Sam
CORNE
Midfielder

10



John
GILBERT
Midfielder

11



Jamie
YILA
Midfielder

12



Dajon
GOLDING
Forward

15



David
AGBONTOHOMA
Defender

17



Riley
COURT
Midfielder

19



Ruben
CARVALHO
Midfielder

20



Christie
PATTISON
Midfielder

21



Malachi
MBOGBA
Midfielder

22



Muhammadu
FAAL
Forward

23



Hamzad
KARGBO
Forward

24



Taylor
FORAN
Defender

26



Jacob
BERKELEY-AGYEPPONG
Midfielder

30



Christopher
SWIFT
Goalkeeper

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What, *the* Captain Marvel?

This week, **JURGEN DAHMER** looks at players who donned the famous black and amber whilst also making their name elsewhere...or in some cases doing something completely different. Ok, they might NOT actually be the same person (and their name may not even be spelt the same), but there's enough there to confuse you if you're easily confused.



1) Manchester United winger under Matt Busby, who went to Colombia before keeping goal for The Stones.

2) Hollyoaks actress who played on the wing for Maidstone during two separate spells.

3) Rugby Union international - Wales' most capped scrum half - who adopted two guises for The Stones, featuring in two spells for both.

4) American film director, who - having directed Star Wars: The Last Jedi, and episodes of Breaking Bad - turned out in defence for The Stones in 2019/20

5) Hollywood hall of famer from 'The Adventure of Kit Carson' who married Barbara Hale in 1946. He debuted for Maidstone United in the 1970s and - to this day - has performed pretty much every role for the club since.

6) Marvel son of Captain America, who also played a key role in Stones promotions of 2015 and 2016.



7) English actor who had the unenviable tasks of playing Jennifer Aniston's boyfriend in Love Happens, and replacing Tom Mills as Maidstone's left back.

8) Goalkeeper who won the FA Vase with Deal before a spell as the Stones number one. Transforming into a respected journalist covering the club for the Kent Messenger, all whilst featuring in South Park.



9) Widely considered the greatest triple jumper in history prior to becoming a journeyman striker who scored once in 16 appearances for Maidstone during a forgettable spell in the first half of the 2019/20 season.

10) Assistant manager to brother Jim at The Stones before turning out in goal for Liverpool and Wales. Currently at Hollywood FC.

Answers to Edition 32: They Think It's All Dover

1) Which former Maidstone United manager was in charge of Dover when they achieved their then- highest ever league finish of sixth in the Conference, in 1999-2000? **Bill Williams.**

2) And which ex-Stones full back was their manager when they beat that record by coming fifth in 2015-16? **Chris Kinnear.**

3) The reformed Maidstone United didn't play Dover Athletic in a league fixture until 2006-07. What was the score in that first game at Bourne Park? **0-0.**

4) And which chairman embarrassed himself by striding on to the pitch to remonstrate with the referee, at the end of the same game? **Uncle Jim, of course.**

5) Who scored Maidstone's goals in the 4-2 win at Le Crabble, later that season? **Nick Hegley, Alex Tiesse, Mo Takaloo and Simon Austin.**

6) Which future Maidstone icon scored 49 goals in 97 appearances for Dover, before he joined Tonbridge in 2009? **Frannie Collin.**

7) Who scored the last minute equaliser for Maidstone in a 2-2 draw with Dover on New Year's Day, 2018? **Joe "le taxi" Anderson.**

8) Maidstone actually took the lead at Le Crabble, in the infamous Boxing Day debacle that got Harry Wheeler sacked in 2018, before losing 3-1. Who scored (injuring himself in the process)? **Jake Robinson.**

9) Which ex-Maidstone player was called a "badge-kissing Judas c***?" in the Spitfire Lounge bar, after Dover won the reverse fixture on New Year's Day? **Stuart Lewis.**

10) Who scored the only goal when Maidstone won at Dover for the first time since 2007, in April 2024? **Jephte Tanga.**



The independent source for Maidstone United news: Edition 33 (April 10th 2026)

Be nice: one day you might need a favour

By Fred Atkins

"Life is short. We don't have much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk this way with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind."

Henri-Frederic Amiel

The kids won't believe it, but a trip to Dover was once the highlight of the season, a chance to play in front of a proper crowd in an actual stadium, where fans could mingle freely.

Not any more. Just as the town became a frontline in Theresa May's "Hostile Environment" so the Crabble has become one of the least welcoming venues in the league.

The whole process has become dehumanising, starting with the walk up that hill, to being shunted into one half of the away end when there's no obvious reason for not opening the other half.

Then again, the radicalised 12-year-olds who were mouthing off at us in 2017 may now have become fighting-age males, so perhaps it was for our own protection.

Fans also reported problems with the cashless payment system, which contributed to lengthy queues at the gates.

Not all of this is unique to Dover. Away fans are always complaining about ticket prices, stewarding, catering and restricted views and there are plenty who've complained about JWW.

But it does seem part of a pattern. Two years ago the *Stones Live!* commentary team was en route to Dover when they received an email asking if they had "insurance papers".

When they were in the National



Several hundred fans, unnecessarily crammed into one half of the away end at The Crabble

League, a journalist drove hours from Chester and was refused entry because he didn't have the correct paperwork.

And while Torquay's radio crew were at least allowed in, they couldn't commentate because they were denied a power socket. How did they think they were going to do it, by semaphore?

*

Human beings make mistakes. They're inevitable. When they happen, you need your fellow human beings to have your back, and they're a lot more likely to have your back, if you have a warm or at least a civil relationship.

Dover were unable to bring us highlights because of a "technical issue". If they'd let *Stones TV* film they could have shared the footage, but they didn't and the result is they now look incompetent.

This isn't the first time this has happened. At Tonbridge in 2023-24 an SD card corrupted, conveniently denying us footage of a 3-1 win. The production company, a third-party hired to produce the highlights, owned that mistake, but again it showed the need for a back-up system.

At this level, banning a club from filming isn't just petty, it's stupid. And there's another issue here. Why do this at all? This is non-league. Professional journalists give clubs publicity they desperately need. And without volunteers these clubs wouldn't exist, so why dick them around?

*

Henri-Frederic Amiel was a Swiss philosopher who died in 1881. I agree with the sentiment, but he never lived to read the works of Franz Kafka. Nor did he try to get into a non-league football ground run by someone who thought *In the Penal Colony* was an instruction manual rather than a warning.