

The Back Page

“At my signal,
unleash hell ...”

PLUS: Stones Women Make History
The Steve Watt Column
Disinformation in Dagenham
Herne Bay Watch
The Stones Quiz

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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Ninth edition:
Friday October 10th 2025
Published by Back Page Media
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Next edition:
Friday October 17th



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Teo Kurtaran had looked neat enough in the first half at Victoria Road, without doing anything outstanding.

In the 52nd minute, however, he collected a pass from Sam Oguntayo, strode forward and scored the best goal we've seen from a Maidstone player in a long time.

It had the power of Bivesh Gurung's winners against Barrow and Eastbourne and was as far out as Luque's goal against Oxford City in the title-winning season.

And from now on, every time time he gets the ball, the entire crowd will shout: "Shooooooooot!"



You're right 'mate', it isn't the referee's fault

DAGENHAM & REDBRIDGE 1

Hemmings 44

MAIDSTONE UNITED 2

Panther OG 27, Kurturan 52

Attendance: 1,580 (278 away)

By Fred Atkins

The quote: "Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt" is attributed to Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain, Hemingway and others. In reality it's a rewording of Proverbs 17:28. Or even Keating 17:19: "You say it best, when you say nothing at all." (Translation: give it a rest, love.)

Dagenham's manager Lee Bradbury wasn't about to let any of this worry him during his post-match interview on Saturday. Asked about a penalty incident in first-half stoppage time, when the score was 1-1, he went in two-footed.

"We might not have VAR in the National South, but all the games are filmed and the highlights can you make you look like an imbecile ..."

"Listen, it's not the referee's fault, but he's got it wrong today with the penalty," he said. "Donovan Wilson runs through, takes it round the keeper and the goalkeeper comes out. Rashawn Scott's going to have an opportunity, but the ball's running away from him and he wipes Donny out. It's a penalty. I think he plays on because he thinks he's got an opportunity, but the ball's running away from him and he can't score. It's a penalty all day."

Let's go back to 3:45pm on Saturday, when Dagenham had just equalised and Wilson was one-on-one with Nathan Harness. There was a collective gasp in the away end and from 100 yards away it looked like a penalty. The referee waved it away and we thought: well, we might have got away with that one.

Consider it payback for the time Joe Pigott had one disallowed here when John Still bullshat the officials into thinking he'd kicked it out of the keeper's hands.



1-0. The ball is deflected in after a Papadopoulos cross.

And yet ... we might not have VAR in the National South, but all the games are filmed and the highlights can make you look like an imbecile if you ignore Keating's proverb. What actually happened was that the Dagenham 11 produced a great run and a Fabregas-like assist for Wilson, who took a touch, took a second touch and then dragged his left foot, before dangling his right so it hits Harness's shoulder.

If it's anything it's a free-kick to Maidstone. The crowd howled that the ref didn't know what he was doing and let's be honest here, if that had happened at JWW they would have been baying. But it was the right call

and if VAR cameras had been there, Sesay was kicked in the back of the leg on 29 minutes and nothing was given.

Let's rewind even further. We arrived wondering if there was going to be some aggro, but the protest against the Dagenham board (see edition 8) never happened.

The Filth had spared a van load of officers who might have been better employed ten miles to the west, where they could have banged up a few retired vicars and clamped some mobility scooters. Or perhaps it was just too sombre. Someone who was popular locally



1-1. Dagenham equalise just before half-time.



(Left) Wilson starts diving before contact is made and (right) grins as he hits the turf

had clearly died by the number of flags flying at half-mast from what seemed like every lamp post in the vicinity.

It was interesting to see who *did* turn up. As we walked towards Rainham Road, past the knackered red Sierra that's been in a Victoria Road driveway for several years, a slight looking figure in a Maidstone track suit walked past us. "Was that Teo?" someone asked.

He didn't look like someone who was about to score the best goal by a Maidstone player in a long time, but the afternoon was young.

Andy Carroll was in the house, but only in a non-playing capacity and he watched on in a hoody, blending in effortlessly.

Hakan Hayrettin was also there for Radio Kent, wearing a smart looking long coat and looking healthier than he ever did when he was our manager and his erstwhile assistant, the ex-Dagenham man Terry Harris was also present. (He has subsequently been appointed assistant manager ...)

It was disappointing when we found out we were attacking the goal where the away fans were watching in the

first half, but the 40 mph winds meant it was probably a sensible tactical move. Conditions were so blustery it reminded me of games at Bourne Park where you'd play into the wind in the first half, limit the damage and then cash in against tiring opponents in the second.

Tactically this was a bit different. We'd batter the ball towards the edge of the area and try to exploit the confusion the wind caused in an already very dodgy looking backline. Once there we'd get possession and play a bit, carving out several chances before we finally went ahead.



Some enjoyable street theatre

After four matches without a goal it was slightly ironic that the opener came when Corey Panter stuck his foot out at a Papadopoulos cross and steered it into his own net.

We probably should have been more than 1-0 up on the balance of play, but the equaliser did what equalisers do and sparked a frantic search for a scapegoat.

Someone near us decided Harness was to blame, not a take the replays backed up, but before we could digest that Wilson was through on goal and from our vantage point 100 yards away it looked like a let-off.

From Bradbury's point of view it at least deflected the crowd's ire for a while, with the half-arsed chants of "Bradbury out" turning into an irate chorus of "you don't know what you're doing," aimed at a referee who, it turned out, actually did know what he was doing.

The second half was meandering a little when Oguntayo picked the ball up on the left of midfield and laid it off to Kurtaran, who at that point wasn't far off the half-way line. He ran unopposed for about 20 yards before unleashing hell.

The shot may have been aided by the wind, and it seemed to swerve away from the keeper slightly before going in off the post, but it was an outstanding strike.

There was groaning when one was crocked in our six-yard box, but as someone yelled out: "Leave him. It's their f*ing clock."**

At that point there were still 38 minutes of normal time remaining, but Dagenham never seriously threatened an equaliser, partly because Foran came on at half-time for an injured George Fowler and played like Tony Adams, banging the ball downfield whenever there was any danger and ordering his new team mates around.

Their indifferent game management also helped. There were seven minutes of injury time, but this was because home players kept going down injured. There was groaning when one was crocked in our six-yard box, but as someone yelled out: "Leave him. It's their f***ing clock."

Did they even know they were losing? "Long spells of the second half they sat off us, almost as if they were happy with a point," Bradbury said, perhaps unaware that we were winning for all but eight minutes of it.

There are lots of "pop-up" churches around Victoria Road, housed in buildings that look like off-licences and warehouses. Here you can learn about



Kurtaran receives the plaudits at the end

the wisdom of silence, especially when you're angry, don't have all the facts and are unsure if you've verified a story.

At one point during his interview Bradbury laughed. "It's the level we're at but in the Premier League, with VAR, it's a penalty," he said. "I'm not saying we should have VAR in the National League because it's never going to happen, but we've got to get these big decisions right. "I think the referee will look back and he'll know he should have given it.

And it's tough for referees, listen, it's a hard job ... but as a team of four they need to get that right."

Their owners, whoever they are, may well be thinking about a big decision they need to get right.

Dagenham were apparently very thorough when checking the credentials of visiting media before this game. If they were as thorough about checking directors and managers they might not be in this mess.



Joy or relief? Probably both.

No Hassle off Herne Bay Watch

**HERNE BAY 0
MAIDSTONE UNITED 3**
Carvalho 45, 55, Oguntayo 90
Attendance: 358
(unsegregated)

By Fred Atkins

The approaches to Winch's Field look the same as they ever did, but quite a lot has happened at Herne Bay since we were regular opponents during the Kent League era, including their former chairman being accidentally, according to the court, run over by a business associate, following a "heated row" in a Whitstable business park.

We were there last year in the FA Cup for an awkward afternoon, but on that occasion the ground was too full for it to feel like a throwback to the "good old days."

"Herne Bay's fans sang their own version of The Billy Boys, with the lyric, "If you are a Whitstable fan, surrender or you die."

A Tuesday night under the lights felt a lot more retro. At first glance the ground doesn't look a lot different to the way it did when a then-slimline Danny Kedwell was racing past a less slimline Lloyd Hume up the slope, but the old "seven year" has gone, replaced by a flatter 3G surface and the facilities have been given a serious upgrade.

As the PA man informed us on entry, there's even a podcast called *Herne Bay Watch*. I first heard this joke in the early 90s, when it was a sketch on the Angus Deayton sitcom KYTV, but what else are you going to call it? The fact they have a podcast at all indicates how things have moved on.

The crowd was roughly the same size as it was in the 2000s, but we used to make up at least 50 percent of the attendance and this time round I doubt we even made up 58 of the 358, judging by the lack of noise when we scored.

Herne Bay's fans used to be the silent



An ecstatic looking Ruben Carvalho after turning in Tanga's assist to make it 2-0

type. In addition to their podcasters they've since acquired some ultras who sang their own version of The Billy Boys, with the lyric: "If you are a Whitstable fan, surrender or you die."

*

For much of the first half Herne Bay looked just as likely to score as we did. The difference was a bit of composure. They missed a sitter three minutes before the break, the 19 shooting way over the bar from six yards out and in first half stoppage time it was 1-0. Corne slid in to break up a Bay attack and Court picked up the loose ball. With no short pass on, he gambled and picked out Carvalho.

Ruled outside he advanced on the keeper, who stumbled just as he entered the box, allowing him to slide the ball to his left.

They thought they should have had a penalty when Mbogba slid in early in the second half but the replays

suggest it was actually a well-timed tackle, albeit one that fell into the erstwhile "seen 'em given at Old Trafford" territory.

When Tanga set up Carvalho for the second on 55 minutes it didn't kill Herne Bay off but they seemed to lose confidence and it started to feel like a high-class training session.

The third, in the 90th minute, did finish the tie, Oguntayo turning the ball in at the back post after a flick-on from a corner.

The balance sheet looked healthy at the final whistle. No injuries, no suspensions and two goals for a player who missed the start of the season.

It's a shame a few more of us weren't there to see it, but from a footballing point of view this went about as well as it could have done, with a strong side getting through to the next round with a minimum of alarms.

The history makers head for Home Park

MAIDSTONE UNITED 4
Manktelow 24, 61 Hinkley 32,
Culpitt 68
BADSHOT LEA 2
Attendance: 235

By John Tully

The Stones women have earned a glamour away tie in the first round of the Women's FA Cup after a well-deserved 4-2 win on Sunday over Badshot Lea, a team from two leagues above.

A strong, all-round team performance means they will face a long trip to Plymouth Argyle's Home Park stadium on Sunday, October 26.

Falling behind to a Badshot penalty, the Stones ended the first half at 2-2. In a competitive second half the Stones' superior fitness, skill levels and strength saw them score twice more with no reply from the visitors.

Tori Campbell and her players and management team fully deserved this victory, carrying most of the threat against a Badshot team who failed to live up to their status as a club two tiers higher than the Stones.

There were many standout performances but the key was a strong team ethic, built around a strong defence, a competitive, skilful midfield and a hard working forward line who never gave Badshot a moment's peace.

And mention must go to Kylie Manktelow, who scored twice and has a magnificent total of six goals in the FA Cup already.

Ellie Hinkley and Georgia Culpitt were the other scorers as Stones rose to the occasion in front of a record crowd of 235 for Maidstone's Women at the Gallagher.

Confidence must be high and this squad is capable of fulling off another FA Cup giant-killing in a Plymouth stadium with an 18,000 capacity. Shades of Ipswich, maybe.



That wasn't a bad shot.

The Back Page



This FA Cup run could have a long-term impact

By Alex Del-Valle

Some Stones fans may still be living with the disappointment of the Men's first-team's second round qualifying FA Cup exit against Folkestone Invicta a few weeks ago.

It's never a good feeling when your club have a weekend off whilst every other club around you are competing in the next round of the competition. However, that's not to say that FA Cup magic hasn't found it's way back to Maidstone United Football Club this season.

For Maidstone United Women have made the headlines with their superb effort of reaching the first-round proper of the Adobe Women's FA Cup – for the first time this millennium! It all started in the first qualifying round, a comprehensive 5-1 away win against Oxted meant that the Stones made it into the hat for the second qualifying round.

The Stones would go on to draw higher league opposition in Richmond and Kew FC. This wouldn't faze them, as a 5-1 home win ensured that the Stones booked their place in the third qualifying round. That tie was to be played against Badshot Lea FC, at the Gallagher.

An impressive home crowd would go on to witness a historic 4-2 victory

to book the Stones' place in the first-round proper.

The reward? An away draw to Plymouth Argyle FC – a side four divisions higher than Maidstone United Women. This tie is set to be played on the 26th October at Home Park.

It's an incredible reward for the women – who have shown absolutely superb form not just in the cup but also to their start of the league campaign – even if the Stones have picked up the longest away journey possible at this stage of the competition.

The average league home attendance for a men's first team game increased by over 400 after Ipswich. Can this FA Cup run have a similar impact on the women's team?

Some of you may be wondering what this means in terms of prize money for the club.

Well, Maidstone enter the competition at the first qualifying round where the prize for the winning team is £1,800.

This increases to £3,000 and £4,000 for winning the second and third

qualifying rounds respectively. So, the Stones have already accumulated £8,800 in prize money. With a further £6,000 up for grabs in the first-round proper for a win, and £1,500 for a loss. Now, this may be considered immaterial in comparison to the men's game – where first round proper winners receive £45,000 in prize money. That's a whole separate discussion.

That said, it can't be ignored that this will provide valuable investment into the women's side and, most importantly, put them on the map and increase future gate revenue for home games.

As an example, the average league home attendance for a men's first team game increased by over 400 following the historic FA Cup win at Ipswich – and it hasn't really showed any signs of tailing off. Can this FA Cup run have a similar impact on the women's team?

The women host Hollands & Blair in their next game where it's back to league action at the Gallagher on Sunday 12th October (kick-off 3.15pm.)

They undoubtedly deserve all the praise and support for what has been a very promising start to the season.

Upcoming Commentaries

Chesham United (H) Sat 11 October 2025: 1500 – Fred Atkins & Alex del Valle

Farnborough (A) Sat 18 October 2025: 1500 – Darren Styles & Alex del Valle

Eastbourne Borough (H) Tue 21 October 2025: 1945 – Chris Bechervaise & Alan Thatcher

Slough Town (A) Sat 25 October 2025: 1500 – Fred Atkins & 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).



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The value of an organiser, the art of the wonder goal and when and how to celebrate a goal are this week's topics for **Steve Watt** in his exclusive Back Page column ...



Watt's Occurring?

Organisation is crucial for every defence

Maybe it's because I'm a defender and I'm biased, but I've always been a firm believer in the old cliché, that while goals win you games, defences win you championships.

It's very rare that you see a team without a good backline winning anything. Arsenal obviously haven't got over the line yet, but they look very good defensively. So did Liverpool in recent years and Pep Guardiola spent hundreds of millions on full-backs at Manchester City.

Having the right individuals in there is really important and you really do need someone who can talk and organise. At the higher levels you can't hear the organisation that goes on, but in non-league football it's more audible.

I heard good things about Taylor Foran's performance on Saturday. It sounds like he's an organiser and that's something I've always encouraged my teams to have. When I played it wasn't just necessarily the backline.

I tried to organise everyone and help everyone I could, wherever they were on the pitch, to give information, because the more information you get, the better.

It's an environment that changes every second, so if you get the right organiser back there, only good things can happen, in my opinion.

In my later years as a player, when injuries were impacting my athletic ability, my biggest asset was my organisation and when you talk to players and managers now everyone is looking for a centre-half who can talk and do that side of the game well.

"It's nice to hear of a young player coming in and taking the responsibility ..."

Young players often need a wise head to guide them through certain situations and these are the sorts of players who end up as coaches or managers, but it's nice to hear of a young player coming in and taking the responsibility.

He was also quick to clear his lines. First and foremost, you defend. You can look for passes, but I wouldn't expect my players to try and risk balls in certain areas if it's not on to do so.

Again, a young player coming in

and making the right decisions is something I appreciate as a coach. It's decision-making.

Do you make the right decisions more often than not? That is how you can get forward in football.

Obviously, your quality and everything else will determine how far you could go, but some of the best youngsters I've ever played with didn't amount to anything because they didn't make the right decisions with it.

If I'm a centre-half, I'm not going to try and dribble out my six-yard, but I could be great in the air, brilliant in the boxes, tackling, everything. If I keep on dribbling the ball out and passing to the opposition in my own third, my own 18-yard box, I'm not going to have a career in the game. I think that's just black and white.

If it's there, be clear, clear it. If there was a pass on, we can discuss it afterwards. We can go through it in analysis, but if you're away from home, a tough place, 1-0 up, and you're hooking things on, I'd be surprised if anyone was going to tell a defender off for doing his job.

Flisher hit it hard, Frannie made it look ordinary

There's nothing better than being involved in a game where you see a goal like the one Teo Kurtaran scored on Saturday. It's a great feeling, not only for the player but for everyone around him as well, particularly when you go on to win.

I feel like goals scored from outside the box are going out of the game as everyone is trying to work a path to goal. You don't see so many goals scored from 25 to 30 yards any more so it was great to see someone take a chance. He could have put it 60 yards over the bar and everyone would have moaned, but he was willing to take a chance and stuck it right in the back of the net. It was a fantastic strike, and what a way to go on and win a game!

At Maidstone the two team-mates I had who were most likely to do that were Frannie Collin and Alex Flisher. (Jay May had it in him as well - he'd score important goals for the team.)

Now I've seen Alex go through on the keeper and put it 60 yards over the bar but he'd do exactly the same thing from 30 yards out and put it in the top corner. We always used to have a running joke about it because he was not one for finesse. It was always about laces: put your foot through the ball. He always had a spectacular goal in him.

With Frannie he did it so often it almost got boring. When we were at Hythe we were playing a tight-game at Sevenoaks and the scores were level in the last minute. The ball rolled to him 30 yards out and he just hit it straight into the top corner. That was the start of a seven or eight game run that took us to the play-off final.



Alex Flisher's spectacular last-minute winner against Gosport Borough in 2015-16

You wouldn't see me sprinting down a touchline after a goal celebration ...

I understood why Enzo Maresca celebrated like he did when Chelsea scored in injury time to beat Liverpool, although it's not for me. First and foremost my knee wouldn't let me move that quickly, but do I understand why he did it? Absolutely.

Can people not celebrate goals? We're human. That adrenaline rush you get from a goal like that is something you can't control. They're not robots. We can't control our emotions. I understand they have to draw a line so you can't do certain things. I obviously understand that. I still

don't understand why taking your top off gets you a yellow card but people should be able to celebrate within reason.

I've been part of some significant goals and big results in my short management career but the first thing I did after Hythe beat Ramsgate in the play-off semi-final was to go and see Jamie Coyle and shake every Ramsgate player's hand before I celebrated with my team. Obviously, Coyle's a good friend, so I wanted to make sure he was all right. I also knew a lot of the Ramsgate players so that was my priority rather than sprinting with my

boys because I knew I'd get time to celebrate with them and that the job hadn't been done yet.

I will, however, give as good as I get. There have been managers that have been really out of order in the past, so if we've scored a winner I've just turned around to them and told them to maybe be quiet. Or asked them if they've had anything more to say. I'm not one for running down touchlines and never have been but I can see this being pointed out to me if I do it in the future, so never say never ...

Gray Day as struggling Borough wield the axe

By Alan Thatcher

Eastbourne Borough have promoted women's coach Chris Day to take over the men's team, after sacking Matt Gray on Tuesday.

Despite operating a full-time system with reportedly one of the biggest playing budgets in the National League South, Eastbourne are without a win in their opening 10 games and are level at the bottom of the table with Salisbury and Chippenham Town on five points.

Day has been appointed interim manager after an eight-match winning run was halted by a 7-1 loss to Farnham Town in the Women's FA Cup last weekend.

The Borough men's team had begun to show signs of improvement with a five-match unbeaten run in all competitions. Many fans were surprised to see Gray get the chop following a 2-2 draw at Ebbsfleet and just a few days before tomorrow's FA Cup fourth qualifying round tie at home to Boreham Wood.

Day has an impressive pedigree in women's football. He is a former head coach to the England Deaf Women and was manager of the Brighton and Hove Albion under-16 girls' team.



Ben Brookes scored his first goal for York, getting the winner against Hartlepool

Saturday's opponents Chesham produced a stunning second half revival to thump Enfield Town 4-1 after trailing 1-0 at half time. Enfield had Mickey Parcell sent off early in the second half (his second red card of the season) when the scores were level and then conceded three more in quick succession. Farnborough drew 2-2 at home to Bath City, with the visitors going 2-1 ahead on 88 minutes only for Dominic Poleon to equalise two minutes into added time.

Slough Town enjoyed an excellent 3-2 win at Hampton and Richmond with two goals from Tarik Gidaree and one from Scott Davies. Hampton scored a penalty but Gidaree added his second in the 62nd minute to make it 3-1. The Beavers scored deep into stoppage time but Slough held on for a valuable win.

In the Kent derby at Longmead, Tonbridge beat Dover 2-1 with a winner from Wycombe Wanderers loanee Brody Peart. Dover scored the first goal through Jalen Jones but Matt Wagstaff equalised early on in the second half to crown a superb display that earned him the man of the match award.

Unbeaten leaders Hornchurch were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Horsham, second placed Weston lost 3-1 at Totton and Torquay United moved to within two points of Weston after a 1-0 win at Salisbury thanks to Matt Worthington's first goal for the club.

Chelmsford pulled in a crowd of 1,723 for the visit of Dorking, who grabbed an 85th minute equaliser from Josh Herbert after Shiloh Remy scored inside six minutes for the Clarets. Dorking entertain Aldershot in the FA Cup this weekend.

Matt Rush scored his eighth goal of the season for Boreham Wood in a 3-0 win at Yeovil that keeps Wood in fourth place in the National League.

Ben Brookes scored his first goal for seventh-placed York City seconds after coming on as an 86th minute substitute at Hartlepool. His tap-in put York two goals clear and they held on for a 2-1 victory as Hartlepool mounted a late comeback. Ben's celebrations were slightly delayed as he extricated his right boot from the goal netting!

At the other end of the table, Sutton United finally persuaded Chris Agutter to join them from our NLS rivals Worthing. The process took some time, with the Rebels determined to hold on to their inspirational boss. When they couldn't they subsequently rehired Adam Hinshelwood, who was sacked by York a fortnight ago.

Agutter replaces Steve Morison, who left "by mutual consent" on September 17 with Jon Meeney taking interim charge.

In the FA Trophy, Jay Saunders' Folkestone Invicta continued their fine form with a 3-1 win at Dunstable and will hope to spring a shock result at Southend in the FA Cup this weekend.

Ramsgate crashed 4-1 after opening the scoring at Leatherhead, Sittingbourne beat Hashtag United 1-0, while Ashford United drew 3-3 with Biggleswade before winning 4-2 on penalties.

Chatham won 3-2 in another penalty shoot-out after a 0-0 draw with Needham Market, a name guaranteed to spark nightmares for the Stones fans who travelled to Suffolk almost exactly three years ago to see us dumped out of the FA Cup in humiliating circumstances.

League Two Bromley opened their new East Stand against Tranmere and attracted an above-average attendance of 3,589.

Club owner and chairman Robin Stanton-Gleaves enjoyed this historic day from the new covered terrace as Bromley led 3-1 but Tranmere fought back to grab a 3-3 draw.

Bizarrely, the stand was not open for the London City Lionesses' 1-0 win over Liverpool at Hayes Lane the following day. I wanted to see which match drew the bigger crowd, but the BBC Sport website deleted my post beneath the Lionesses' report asking for the attendance figure.

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FitSTONES Habits for Health is a carefully crafted 12 week course that is based on scientific findings and first hand experience. Following a wellbeing age assessment, participants learn how to put themselves at the centre of their own wellbeing journey through small, daily habit changes, rooted in four foundational cornerstones of wellbeing: **Mindset, Nutrition, Movement, and Lifestyle.**

"Without realising, all of the results from the end of course assessment have shown improvements right across the board, compared to those at the start of the course. The knowledge I have gained has allowed me to make changes to my diet, which has seen me started to lose weight."
Daniel, programme participant 2025

In association with:

stonesinthecommunity.org

CONFERENCE SOUTH TO LEAGUE TWO = PROGRESS

TRIPLE-A TO TOKYO = MADNESS

PACIFIC SWINGS

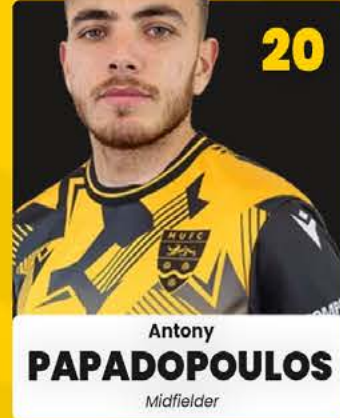
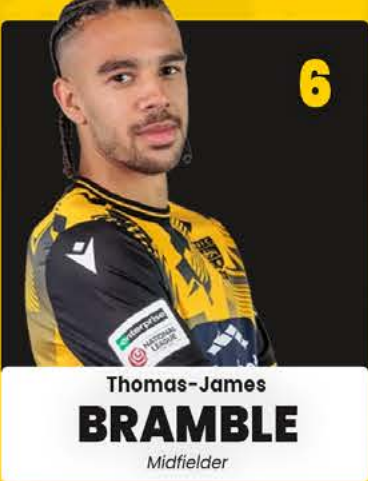
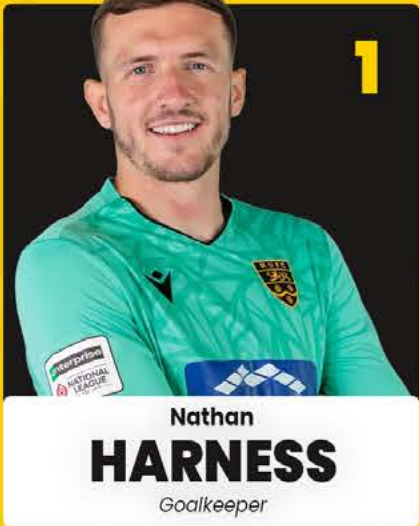
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WATCH EPISODES

BASEBALL STORIES THAT CROSS OCEANS, CULTURES, AND SANITY CHECKS

MAIDSTONE UNITED

2025/26 SQUAD



Designed by MAIDSTONE UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB IN VIETNAM

Andy Carroll may just have sat in the stands wearing a hoodie on Saturday, but a stellar cast of ex-pros have crossed paths with Maidstone United down the years ...



The bloke from Sky who reads the Spanish papers, Jay Saunders and which Champions League finalist?

- 1) Who lifted the European Cup in 1982 and then appeared at The Athletic Ground for Kettering in the mid-1980s?
- 2) Which 1966 World Cup winners managed Telford United in the late 70s and early 80s?
- 3) Which ex-Palace and Man City manager was in charge of Yeovil when they lost 4-2 to us at London Road in 1981?
- 4) He played in two Champions League finals for Valencia, joined Lazio and Barcelona and ended up doing his coaching badges at JWW. Who is he?
- 5) Which Scottish international and "Wembley Wizard" joined us from Partick Thistle in 1921?
- 6) Two of the greatest British players of all time played in a testimonial at the Athletic Ground during Barry Fry's time as manager. Can you name them?
- 7) Who scored the winner in a European Cup final and ended up playing against us for Northwich Victoria?
- 8) Which team mate of David Sadler in Manchester United's 1968 European Cup-winning team later played against us for Altrincham?
- 9) Which member of the Northern Ireland squad that reached the second round in the 1982 World Cup scored against us in a 3-0 win for Burnley, in a pre-season friendly at Folkestone, a month after the end of that tournament?
- 10) Believed to be the only player to have been managed by both Lloyd Hume and Arsene Wenger, which member of Arsenal's 1994 European Cup Winners Cup winning side, played for us in the late 2000s?



Ben Lewis, Andy Walker and Nathan Paul playing for Maidstone at Bourne Park, alongside which ex-Arsenal midfielder?

Answers to Edition 8: JWW Firsts

- 1) Before a ball had been kicked, and whilst everyone thought 3g was just the most amazing technology ever rather than an artificial surface, legendary Stones' fan Dave Ridgley had his ashes buried where the Genco terrace now stands. By what name was he better known?
Elvis.
- 2) Which Scottish international scored the first goal?
Craig Mackail-Smith.
- 3) Who became the first – and only – member of the squad v Brighton to play League football, playing the likes of Bolton and Wigan before heading further afield to Scotland, Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus?
Kaiyne Woolery.
- 4) Shaun Welford scored Maidstone's first goal – coming in the second pre-season friendly. Against which League 2 side was this?
Dagenham & Redbridge.
- 5) The first competitive game ended in a 5-4 defeat to which club?
Walton & Hersham.
- 6) The first competitive win came against Colliers Wood in the FA Cup, but we had to wait until September for the first league win, 2-0 against which club, for whom Socrates (the Brazilian footballer, not the Greek philosopher) once played?
Corinthian Casuals. He also played for Garforth Town in 2004.
- 7) Having been given his debut by Jose Mourinho in 2005, Steve Watt was the first ex-Premier League player to represent Maidstone in the Gallagher era. Followed soon after by which other former Chelsea defender?
Jon Harley.
- 8) Who were the first Football League team to play us in a competitive fixture?
Stevenage.
- 9) Sam Flisher joined brother Alex on the pitch when coming on as a substitute v Hastings in the Isthmian League Cup in December 2012. However, they were only the second pair of brothers to play for The Stones that season – who were the first?
Ade and Tim Olorunda.
- 10) Who was the first Stones player to register a hat trick?
Zac Attwood vs Grays Athletic, February 2014.

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The new independent source for Maidstone United news: Edition 9 (October 10th 2025)



Priory Lane: Home of Influencer Marketing and the National League South's 22nd best team

Don't be *that* guy

A round-up of the latest gossip, speculation and general non-league bitterness

Spoiling the Incelebration

During the men's FA Cup run in 2024 Sol Wanjau-Smith, Sam Bone and Connor Kelly produced a series of podcasts, during which the former offered the following insight: "You don't want to be the person who everyone remembers for spoiling everyone's celebrations." On the way back from the Totton game a colleague predicted we were one run of bad form away from the women's team being blamed for the men's failures. Bang on cue, a school-shooter stan account reacted to the Badshot Lea victory with a side-splitting zinger. It was nearly as hilarious as the "no munters" remarks that still remain on the less enlightened of the facebook fan groups. You can get thrown off this group for disagreeing with admin, but not for a post that makes Marc "teach them how to park" White look like Greta Thunberg. Don't be *that* guy.

Amber warning

The Maidstone Media crew arrived two and a half hours before kick-off at Victoria Road, having banked on the usual traffic at the Dartford Tunnel, only to sail through. Needing to kill at least an hour before they could get into the ground they

decided to take a walk around the surrounding areas and to widespread relief *Stones Live!* Commentator Sean Scurr opted not to wear his amber suit. "Even I can be sensible, sometimes," he said.

Got a new motor?

A Rolls Royce with the letters A-S-H on its plate was parked by the gate at Winch's Field on Tuesday night. Asked if it was his new motor, Stones co-owner Oliver Ash said: "No, mine are painted black and amber and numbered one to ten."

Archives of pain

Last week's Top 10 feature was compiled with the help of the club's extensive picture archive, but it turns out we got in just in time. The club's official facebook page has albums dating from roughly 2020 to the Bourne Park era and on Tuesday of last week we happily raided them for pictures from the Woking and Cheltenham games. By Thursday both albums had gone, as had almost everything from the National League era when Jay Saunders was manager. It wasn't deliberate: the most likely explanation is that the club exceeded facebook's unknowable capacity. The files are apparently backed up somewhere but it's a reminder of how

easily virtual and physical archives can vanish – or gather dust where no one can access them. Some of the exhibits from John Bunyard's 2019 exhibition are still on display in Fremlin Walk, but the rest are aparently in a lock-up somewhere in Marden.

Pining for the Fjords

The club's new advisory board will meet for the second time on October 22nd, with one of the items on the agenda being the need to bring in additional sponsors. An impressive 77 partners are currently listed on the website, compared to Chelmsford City's 25 and Eastbourne Borough's 24, the difference at the moment being that none of them are currently offering the kind of wedge provided by medical journals or Norwegian cruising companies. While City's owners are probably wondering why they've spent all that money on a side currently in 10th place, Eastbourne's have already decided to get rid of Matt Gray, the man who just five years ago took Sutton United into the football league. Having reportedly decided to "give it one more season" after we dumped them out of the play-offs last year, the Borough are in the relegation zone, separated from bottom-placed Salisbury by a single goal. There's an iceberg metaphor in there somewhere.