



FGIF INBOX NEWS UPDATES 2023-24

shown on posting date...

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR 2023-24 - please note that as per last season all new additions covering club photos, reports, programmes etc are found on the relevant on-site pages. Alternatively, you can also check out the latest club/ground updates as they come in by referring to the yellow panel shown on the *FGIF* Home page...

NOVEMBER 2023

05/11/23: Bob Powell writes - I don't know the state of **Nuneaton Borough's** finances so I don't how likely they are to get back into their ground. Saturday's FA Trophy win at Hyde United earnt them £3000 in prize money. In the next round of the competition due to be played over the weekend of 17/18/19 November they have been drawn away to National League North side Banbury United. Prize money for this round provide winners with £3750 with runners up getting £1000. Of course, all this will help.

Gloucester City AFC of the National League North have suffered big losses after a blaze at kit man Chris Farr's house on Sunday night. It is thought a tumble dryer caused the fire. A lot of the club's equipment including drink bottles, home and away kit and high-tech performance vests were all being stored in his home.

Romford FC will be playing their home fixtures in future (from the start of November) at East Thurrock United's old Rookery Hill ground. The first game in the Essex Senior League on 4th November was against Ilford.

Reading FC have been served with another winding up petition by HMRC over unpaid taxes. It's the second time in four months that the club has been threatened with liquidation by creditors because of unresolved debts.

Sheffield Wednesday owner Dejphon Chansiri had asked supporters to raise £2 million pounds to pay an outstanding HMRC tax debt. By Wednesday he had paid the debt and outstanding wages in full, so the club are free from their transfer embargo.

Cymru Premier club **Pontypridd United** face 18 charges relating to the contractual status of players. A Football Association of Wales investigation say the alleged offences include non-payment of monies owed to players. Further charges include

a failure to register players correctly and the playing of ineligible players. Pontypridd say they intend to defend the charges robustly.

OCTOBER 2023

3/10/23: Jon T Green writes - *Slightly unusual hopping weekend. I went to a couple of **U-19 Women's matches in Wales** on Friday including a great 6-1 for England at The National Development Centre in Newport. The first game was in Cardiff, just across the road from Cardiff City's stadium. Great venue but as always looking across an athletics track is never totally ideal. The plan was then to go to Cwmaman United in the evening, but they were waterlogged off. With the rain hammering down on Saturday morning I headed back to Birmingham for a Midland League game at **Studley** (photos and report to follow) where they entertained Lichfield City in a very tight game between two sides in the top four. Lots of driving but you have to be happy with three new venues to add to the total.*

29/10/23: Bob Powell writes - Sad to see **Belper Town's** ground under 6 inches of flood water on TV last Saturday.

The draw for the **FA Vase 2nd round** was made today Monday 23/10 with ties taking place on Saturday 11th November - winners get £900 with runners-up receiving £275.

Reading FC have strengthened their ties with the Republic of Ireland by partnering their academy with second tier outfit Wexford FC.

Sevenoaks District Council are in talks with **Wasps Rugby Club** re the location of the proposed stadium, training ground and hotel in the Pedham Place area on the outskirts of Swanley. The stadium will be multi-use and we could see several football clubs showing an interest and improving their facilities at a stroke. It is some way off with planning permission, objections etc yet to take place.

Rochester FC of the Staffs County Senior League has launched an appeal to fix damage caused by flooding at the ground, causing £10,000 worth of damage. The club was under several inches of water ruining doors, floors and walls.

Heartbreak for **Horsham FC** supporters as many will be unable to attend their FA Cup 1st Round match at Barnsley. The match has been moved back from Saturday 4th Nov (3.00 pm ko) to Friday 3rd Nov (19.45 pm ko) at the request of the South Yorkshire Police. So far, they have given no reason for not allowing the game to be played on the Saturday.

Everton FC could face a 12-point deduction over alleged breaches of financial rules. The Premier League has recommended this and has asked an independent commission hearing to impose a severe sanction. Such a deduction would leave Everton on minus 5 points.

Nuneaton Borough FC of the Southern League Premier Division...doubts have been cast over the future of the football club after an eviction notice forced the club to be relocated at the last minute. Their match v Bromsgrove Sporting FC was played at Hinckley LRFC. The club has previously faced budget difficulties and so far, chairman Owen Ginnelly has not commented on the situation. Saturday's FA Trophy game between Nuneaton Borough & Hyde United was switched to Hyde as payment issues have not yet been resolved.

Bristol Rovers FC say the club's proposed move to a new ground at the city's fruit market site is off. The area closer to Bristol City centre had been considered as a place to build a modern stadium. Instead, they will look to redevelop three sides at the Memorial Stadium.

22/10/23: Gary Spooner writes - *My original plan for today was heading off to my mates in Buckley from where we would make the short journey to Ashville v Glasshoughton in the Vase though from early in the week it was looking unlikely. My mate described the rain as being of biblical proportions and for a while yesterday Buckley was cut off and Mold, just a couple of miles away, was completely flooded. As expected, Ashville was postponed yesterday afternoon. Needless to say, Wales not an option now though may try again next week if Ashville is rescheduled for next Saturday. Reminds me of last year where I finally managed a Vase game at Egham at the third attempt after it was called off two weeks running. I'm no longer prepared to travel long distances in potentially iffy conditions. Current plan A is **Lutterworth Athletic** v Ardley United in the Vase. Tweeted last night as definitely on and whilst I've been there many times before it has added interest as a new pitch has been installed which means that it is the first game at the ground for 546 days. I'm just happy to get to a Vase game and on the plus side I'll be home for 5.30pm.*

22/10/23: Bob Powell writes - there is a lot of unrest in Northern Ireland about the choice of the Gaelic games ground involving **Casement Park** where Euro 2028 games may be played with protests at Saturday's game v San Marino. The ground is named after Roger Casement who was hanged in 1916 by the British government for high treason after he led the Easter Uprising in Dublin. He is regarded as a folk hero by IRA supporters and disliked by the protestants. At this moment there are no plans to use any other venue.

South Shields chairman Geoff Thompson is selling his share in the National League North club and stepping down to receive treatment for cancer. He has been chairman since 2015 during which time they have won the FA Vase and achieved four promotions.

Journalist and football supporter **Martin Cooper's new book**, 'FOOTBALL MATTERS IN THE CAPITAL' has written about a season long journey through the world of **non-league football in London**.

Just to remind hoppers that **the Southern Combination** takes place over the weekend of Friday 27 - Sun 29 October. If you are not booked on the hop but want to do any of the individual matches the games are as follows-

Friday 27th Oct - **Shoreham** v Crowborough Ath (ko 7.30 pm); Saturday 28th Oct - **Pagham** v Steyning Town (ko 11.00 am); **Bosham** v Jarvis Brook (ko 2.15 pm) and **Selsey** v Roffey (ko 5.45 pm) and Sunday 29th October - **Wick** v Oakwood (ko 11.00 am) and **Billinghurst** v East Preston (2.45 pm)

Maidenhead United FC had planned to move from York Road following a £460,000 deal to acquire land at Braywick Park in 2022. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have blocked the land's release over concerns about the loss of space. The club said it has been "left up in the air" by the council's move and is set to launch legal action over the dispute.

Spurs took legal action over Haringey Council's decision to grant planning permission for almost 3000 homes and commercial development on land near the High Road. The club argued they failed to consider "heritage impacts" and crowd control issues, however, a high court judge dismissed their legal challenge.

The One Day Travelcard is likely to be withdrawn in January 2024!

The One Day Travelcard in London is likely to be withdrawn in January 2024. Instead, we will have to buy return train tickets to non-tube railway stations and use Oyster cards for tube travel, although currently it appears to can still buy a day return from say, Stevenage to Woking, and interchange using the tube. The attached You Tube video explains more. It's worth following Geoff Marshall as he deals with lots of oddities about the Transport for London system.

<https://www.youtube.com/@geofftech2>

18/10/23: WebEd - writes - My hop last Saturday (**Broughton WMC v Stanton** in the Scunthorpe & District League Division 2) was quite memorable...not so much for the ground or fixture but the scoreline. Perennial Scunny League Division two side Stanton FC (based near Appleby) are the proverbial whipping boys in the competition. The side is run by a lively 78-year-old called Malc who has being with them for 55 years. Until recently along with his wife Ann, literally does every job imaginable at the club - even preparing the pitch and putting up the nets. They have decided to take it a bit easier and moved to a council site in Scunny itself where there is less work to do. The club regularly gets beaten by high scorelines but still carries on regardless. They had lost 23-0 recently to Division One Barnetby United (who still issue programmes) in a league cup game so I was expecting a few goals on my visit. This week's host Broughton managed comfortably to win 18-1. Incredibly and ironically, Stanton scored the goal of the game (maybe season) coming from their captain Sam Thirkell who, spotting the keeper was off his line, lobbed him from a full forty-odd yards out to score!! Quite remarkable and grassroots footy at its best, eh?

15/10/23: Bob Powell - writes:

The draw for the **FA Trophy** 1st round proper includes 32 ties to be played on 28th October. The winners will get £3000 with runners up receiving £775. There will be no replays with games being decided on penalties.

Oxford United FC has released computer generated pictures to show what their new ground will look like. The proposed complex includes a 180-bed hotel, restaurant, conference centre and a community plaza. This is all subject to planning permission from Cherwell District Council.

A major renovation scheme has been unveiled at **Penrith**. The first team played their first game on Tuesday since the completion of a two-year work programme costing around £885,000. It includes a new artificial pitch, new fencing, new dugouts, new floodlights. There are also plans to build a new catering unit at Frenchfield Park. Sadly, they were promised a new clubhouse, but the developer went bankrupt. The local council provided the funds for the fencing and the Football Foundation the rest.

Bealoniens FC of the Amateur Football Combination Div. 1 North who have played at Oakfield playing fields in Fairlop since 2004 look likely to be evicted as Redbridge Council is likely to approve a long-term lease for the site now earmarked as a new training ground for West Ham United FC.

Uxbridge have ended their short-term ground share at Slough Town and were back home on their new 3G pitch at Honeycroft (v Leatherhead) yesterday. To celebrate their return home admission was taken on a 'pay what you want' basis.

Work is well under way for **Truro's** new ground at Langarth Garden Village on the Western edge of city. The timing is critical for Truro to be on the new ground for the 2024/25 football season as it will also be used by Threemilestone AFC. The intention is also for the Cornish Pirates Rugby Club to join them in due course.

15/10/23: Gary Spooner - writes: *Stress free trip yesterday as my trains all ran and virtually to time. It sure beats driving when they run properly, and the price is right. Guessing lots of cheap seats yesterday as no "big" club fans travelling to fill the seats at silly prices.*

*Excellent friendly welcome at **Horsham YMCA** which extended to them printing me a copy of the online only programme when they knew that I'd travelled from the East Midlands. Not the best of games which the hosts won 3-1. YMCA were 2 up at half-time and it looked like staying that way until a very late penalty for Saltdean was converted. Still time for YMCA to score another in 90+10th minute'.*

08/10/23: Bob Powell - writes: The next round of FA Cup matches will be played Saturday October 14th. **Biggleswade Town** have been placed in the northern half of the draw. So far, they have won £11,250 prize money.

Wales hope to play at the Principality Stadium Cardiff if the UK and Ireland's bid to host Euro 2028 is successful. Games would be played at the home of Welsh rugby should Turkey fail to host the tournament.

Justin Rees hopes to save **Southend** today (Tuesday 10/10). He and the consortium are in extremely advanced talks to take over the club and a deal may be reached before Wednesday's court appearance. He is locked in talks with the club's creditors and progress has been made where that is concerned.

Southend saved! The club's debt to HMRC has been paid in full, as an agreement for the sale of the club has been reached today. It ends chairman Ron Martin's 25-year involvement with the club.

Fresh plans are being worked on at breakneck speed to upgrade Roots Hall. The original plan was to build 500 houses on the site and build the new stadium at Fossetts Farm. The club will remain under a transfer embargo until November when all affairs will be settled, and the new owners will be in total control.

Dundee has plans for a new home with the purchase of Dens Park Stadium. John Bennett a former Dundee United director has owned the ground since 2009. They aim to build a new stadium near Camperdown Park and a statement on the sale says an application for the development will be made this calendar year.

Reading FC is now up for sale with three parties in talks with the current owner Dai Yongge about buying the club. The Chinese businessman values the club in the region of £70 million pounds. The stadium has been given an asset of community value (acv) status by Reading Borough Council which means the club's owner cannot sell the ground quickly and without warning.

Update - With Turkey pulling out, the **2028 Euros** will be held in **the UK and Ireland**. Here are the 10 grounds that are planned to be used:

1 - Wembley; 2 - Principality Stadium Wales (capacity 73,952); 3 - Spurs; 4 - Man City; 5 - Newcastle; 6 - Aston villa; 7 - Hampden Park capacity (52,032); 8 - Everton's new stadium (52,679); 9 - Casement Park West Belfast (currently being redeveloped with a capacity of 34,500) and 10 Dublin Arena (currently known as the Aviva Stadium with a capacity of 51,711).

Sad news - **Hamworthy United** have pulled out of the Southern League Div 1 South with immediate effect. Chairman Steve Mitchener said the financial position has become untenable.

Boro Rangers of Northern League Div 1 are now on their new ground (Phoenix Park). The ground is at Trinity Catholic College Lacy Road Middlesbrough (post code T54 3JW). The facilities include 3G pitch and clubhouse. Travellers wanting to pay an early visit may be interested in the following upcoming league fixtures:

Wed 11th Oct v Heaton Stannington (ko 7.45 pm); Sat 14th Oct v Carlisle City (3.00 pm); Sat 21st Oct v Birtley Town (ko 3.00 pm) and Wed 25th Oct v West Auckland Town (ko 7.45 pm).

08/10/23: Gary Spooner -writes: *Trip to meet a friend in London yesterday and an excellent day out. After a pre-match meal our destination was Northwood. Cracking ground and everything, including an excellent printed programme was cash only. When I commented how good that was the chap on the gate said, "We're old school here". Most impressive! Decent game which was won by Chipstead with the only goal just before half time. Not sure how there was only*

one goal as both sides had several chances with both keepers and the woodwork stopping further goals. All played out under glorious sunshine which was most welcome though not great for taking piccies.

01/10/23: Gary Spooner - writes: A short trip for me yesterday to **Sutton United**. Originally intended to go to Allscott Heath v Hinckley but gridlock on the M6 after an accident made that a nonstarter so Sutton United was a good plan B though my last nearby plastic back up has now been used. Decent set up at Sutton and I was happy to get a printed programme. Also, very happy with my nachos, warm cheese sauce and salsa dip at half time which were superb! The game was a game of two halves. Sutton led 2-0 at half time but the second half was all Paget who managed to get one goal back but could not force an equaliser.

01/10/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

The draw for the 3rd qualifying round of the **FA Trophy** took place today Monday 25th September. 64 ties are scheduled for Sat 7th October with winners getting £2450 and losers, £625.

The draw for the 1st round proper of the **FA Vase** took place today Monday 25th September. 102 ties are scheduled for sat 21st October, winners getting £825 and losers, £250.

Wales will host the UEFA European Under 19 men's finals in 2026. The games will be played at five venues across North Wales with Wales qualifying automatically. The venues (1) Bangor; (2) Colwyn Bay; (3) Connah's Quay; (4) Denbigh Town and (5) Wrexham

Owner David Hilton has withdrawn funding for **Scunthorpe United** who will play games away from Glanford Park. Hilton feels his position is untenable and is seeking a way out. Scunthorpe will leave Glanford Park after hosting Brackley on 7th October. They will play all remaining home games 16 miles away at **Gainsborough Trinity FC**.

However, Gainsborough have insisted tonight that the statement was issued without their knowledge or consent? They have since issued another statement this morning (Fri 29th Sept) saying there is an agreement in place for Scunthorpe United to groundshare, but this is subject to several safety conditions and Scunthorpe's statement yesterday was premature.

Since Friday Scunthorpe United fans have raised more than £50,000 to help pay staff wages after the owner withdrew funding.

Sheffield Wednesday owner Dejphon Chansiri says he will stop funding the club as he is unhappy with treatment towards him and his family from some fans.

Reading FC have been placed under a transfer embargo for failing to pay HMRC on time. They have paid their players and staff today (Friday 29th Sept) thus avoiding a further points deduction.

London is to host its first **Soccer Ashes** clash in 69 years. New Zealand v Australia at **Brentford FC** on Tuesday 17th October (ko 19.45 pm). Tickets: adults £16, seniors & young adults (18-24) £14 and under 17's £12.

SEPTEMBER 2023

25/09/23: Jon T Green - writes: *Photos from Saturday's repeat visit to **Folland Sports** after a very wet and nasty call off last March. Glorious day this time around and a totally crazy game, more of which in the report.*

24/09/23: Gary Spooner writes - *Top day out for Mandy and I yesterday. Even managed to drive through the gorge with enough time to stop for a short walk before heading to the ground. Very friendly welcome and the food from Rachel's grill looked superb though it was coffee only for us as we'd stopped for a wild boar sausage roll (as seen on TV) from Gloucester Farm services on the way down. Nice to see a free programme on entry and that badges are available at **Cheddar FC**.*

In front of a small crowd of 66, including several from Newquay the game kicked off and was instantly a hard-fought cup-tie with very few chances. Therefore, it was not surprising it was scoreless at half time. The second half started at a rapid pace and Cheddar took the lead just after the restart. There were several chances for Cheddar to increase their lead including one when a forward rounded the keeper only to scuff his shot past the post with an empty net beckoning. I commented that it should have been game over and that Cheddar might later rue their missed chances. With around ten minutes remaining Newquay were awarded a free kick and Cameron Turner thumped in a Beckham-esque pearler to equalise. Would there be a late winner, or it would there be penalty drama? There was both. With the full-time whistle looming Newquay punted the ball forward. The Cheddar keeper rushed out and took the ball from the onrushing forward who promptly fell over the keeper. Cue disbelief all around the ground when the ref blew for a penalty and that included the Newquay players and fans. In (not just) my view a shocking decision! Ton Shepherd duly stepped up and deposited the winner. Disregarding the dodgy decision, a cracker of a cup tie though Cheddar have every right to feel well and truly aggrieved at the way they went out.

You can judge for yourself here: [Newquay AFC on X: "MATCH HIGHLIGHTS All the goals from yesterdays dramatic FA Vase win.](#)

PS - I'm the chap to right of the goal as you look when the penalty was taken.

24/09/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

From the start of season 2024/25 **Northwich Victoria** will be ground sharing at Winsford United having signed an initial 3-year deal.

Radcliffe FC - work has begun on a new £2.4 million 3G facility at Redbank playing fields. Work is hoped to be completed by June 2024.

Oxford County Council cabinet has approved leasehold sale of the land at the Triangle to **Oxford United** this afternoon (Tuesday). So subject to planning permission it should be all systems go for Oxford's new ground.

A statement from Justin Rees on behalf of a consortium bidding to buy **Southend United** -

Given the recent speculation surrounding a consortium bid for Southend United FC (SUFC), combined with the club's scheduled court appearance date on 4th October 2023, we would like to make a brief statement.

We confirm that a consortium has been formed to purchase Ron Martin's SUFC shareholding. Most of the consortium members have a long association with the Southend area, and all are football fans.

Our first objective is to save the club and then work hard to transform it into a sustainable operating model that is not vulnerable to the various ownership issues that have impacted the club in recent years. We are confident we have the skills, energy, and finances to help Southend United's fortunes improve both on and off the pitch.

Discussions with Mr. Martin have been in progress for more than 10 weeks. Any deal is particularly complicated due to the state of the club's finances, the condition of Roots Hall, the non-viability of a new stadium at Fossetts Farm, as well as the ownership of the training ground and Roots Hall properties remaining outside of the club.

Despite this, the consortium has submitted two bids over the past week, neither of which has been accepted. We remain open to continued negotiations with Mr. Martin however it now seems unlikely that any deal can be agreed prior to the 4th of October court appearance date.

It is our understanding that Mr. Martin will ensure the club avoids liquidation on the 4th of October, however, the threat of administration remains. Administration impacts the club significantly, on and off the pitch, as well as its numerous creditors who have supported the club financially for many years. As such, it has been our strong preference to avoid Administration, however this is of course not within our control.

We do not intend to make the full details of our bid public at this time except to note that it is centred around retaining and upgrading Roots Hall as the club's stadium, while taking ownership of that property plus the training ground back into the club. We believe this would release Mr. Martin to develop Fossetts Farm

without a new stadium requirement, and as a result, are looking to him to contribute funds back towards the redevelopment of Roots Hall.

The structure of our bid and the decision to stay at Roots Hall have been discussed with Anna Firth MP, Sir James Duddridge, Cllr Tony Cox (leader of Southend City Council) and members of the Shrimpers Trust, each of whom have given their full support. We appreciate updates such as this can answer some questions but raise new ones. We also recognise this is a period of great concern and anxiety for fans so will keep in regular contact with the Shrimpers Trust to answer questions that may arise although there are some details, we will not be able to share until the process has formally completed.

then last Thursday...more problems for Southend. The court case for e-on chasing outstanding energy bills will now be heard at Chelmsford Crown Court on Tuesday 3rd October. Southend are due to play Oxford City at Roots Hall that night and in theory if e-on win their case all power to the stadium could be switched off so there must be some doubt about the game going ahead.

Scunthorpe United chairman David Hilton who bought the club in January and is facing a court case over ownership of Glanford Park has now put the club up for sale saying the club has serious financial problems that need to be addressed.

A new 5500 seat stand at **Wrexham** will not be open in time for next season. There is no start date for work on the Kop and it is expected to take 12 months to build. It is said funding for the project is not yet finalised.

Grays Athletic which has been without a permanent home for 13 years has been given the green light to move into a disused stadium. Thurrock Council gave Grays the go ahead to move into Thurrock's old ground in Aveley. However, the government will have the final say as the stadium stands on green belt land.

21/09/23: Dan Hayden (Programme editor Wythenshawe FC): Programme News writes: Hope you are well. Thanks for your kind words regarding the previous programme I sent you. This weekend's game is against Squires Gate, so quite an enjoyable one for me. Hope you enjoy the read too. Will try and send a printed copy for you to judge the end of season **FGIF PoY Awards** Dan

WebEd - click on the following link to see Dan's superb programme which he is currently editing this season. You'll no doubt agree that it's absolutely brilliant!!

[Wythenshawe vs Squires Gate Final.pdf](#)

19/09/23: C Roberts (Dolgellau Athletic FC) writes: *Further to your (Jon's) visit to Dolgellau on Saturday, please find attached a couple of pictures of how our pitch looks today!*

WebEd - Many thanks for the terrific photos. Readers can check out the photo Album by clicking on the following link: [Dolgellau Athletic FC | Flickr](#)

17/09/23: Jon T Green - writes - *Hope all is well at FGIF Towers? I was lucky enough to complete a nice little North Wales double this weekend - the very impressive **Colwyn Bay** (complete with their recently opened new grandstand) on Friday night in front of over 1,000 fans and then an amazing drive down through Snowdonia to **Dolgellau Athletic** on Saturday. What an amazing hobby we have, sometimes I really have to pinch myself at the fantastic places it takes us to.*

17/09/23: Gary Spooner - writes - *Visited Yorkshire yesterday with Mandy and had a cracking day out despite our chosen game at **Ilkley Town** being dreadful! We at least escaped a dreaded 0-0 when 10 men Daisy Hill scored a stunning winner in injury time.*

17/09/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

Today, (Monday 11th September), **Witton Albion** announced that at the end of season 2023-24 they will no longer be ground sharing with Northwich Victoria. **Northwich** who this season are playing in the Midland Football League Premier division will at this moment be homeless.

Plans for a new stadium for **Oxford United** on council owned land have taken a step closer after its sale was recommended for approval. A report by Oxfordshire County Council said the Triangle south of Kidlington should be sold rather than leased for the new 16,000 capacity stadium. The football club also wants to build a 200-bedroom hotel, restaurant and cafe. The council meet on Tuesday (Sept 19th) to decide whether to sell the land.

Berwick Rangers Football Club has been devastated by damage and theft of goods at its Shielfield Park stadium. The Lowland League club said windows were smashed and items were stolen from its shop in the raid which took place overnight into Tuesday 12th September.

17/09/23: Neil Harvey (via Brian Buck) writes -

Still no firm date for **Cambridge City's** first game at Sawston, will advise as soon as I get definite news.

Harpenden Town - has recently installed 3G pitch, which should see an end to their having to postpone games on wet days.

Hertford Heath (Herts Senior County League Premier Division) are ground sharing at nearby St Margaretsbury this season, because although their reserves continue to play in the village, their ground isn't Step 7 compliant. However, they are issuing programmes this season and they were available at last Friday night's home match against Bush Hill Rangers.

Knebworth (also of the Herts Senior County League), continue to issue programmes, both for first team and reserve games.

10.09/23: Gary Spooner - writes - *Yesterday saw me heading to Buckley and meet up with my mate. We're aiming to do this at least once a month. Great for me as*

*I still have lots of wonderful Welsh grounds to visit. The choice yesterday was **Llandyrnog United**. Very scenic setting and the unexpected bonus of a paper programme. The game was very good and especially so given the heat. Probably around 28 to 30 during the game. It was still 26.5 when I drove home at 6pm. The teams had already met twice previously this season with Llandyrnog winning one 3-0 and the other ending in a 3 all draw. Yesterday saw Bro Cernyw take the honours with a 2-1 victory. Marvellous day out in the sun!*

10/09/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

Benfleet FC of the Eastern Counties League and whose 1st team has played at Canvey Island FC at Park Lane since 2019 last night (Tuesday 5th September) got planning permission from Castle Point Council to redevelop their Woodside Park ground with six floodlight pylons, four grandstands and other enhancements.

Sat 16th September 2023 - Notts Senior League - Notts Olympic are doing their first ever programme for their home match v buyglass reindeer fc (ko 3.00 pm) To pre-order a programme contact Rob Hornby at hornby60uk@yahoo.co.uk

From **Enfield FC** (Isthmian North): Worrying developments emerge. Hoping the club will be able to survive just days after much loved director Simon Needham (51) tragically died after being hit by a train as it travelled through Bishop's Stortford. This time last week we thought we had it all. The reality is we have nothing. We thought we owned all the vehicles but now find out they are only leased. They are being returned with immediate effect and the players have agreed to compete in Sunday's FA trophy game (10 Sept) v Walthamstow despite not having been paid for the last month. The future is very uncertain at this moment in time.

10/09/23: Brian Buck - firstly, an apology. A few weeks ago, I told you that the **Hertford & District League** had folded. But I have subsequently found out that this is not true. Whilst many of its senior clubs have indeed transferred to the Herts Senior County league, the Hertford & District League is still going. See the link below. I am sorry for misleading you.

<https://fulltime.thefa.com/index.html?league=426725802>

06/10/23: Brian Buck - Independent Schools FA - Boodles ISFA Cup Fixtures.

2023-24 PRELIMINARY ROUND. These matches must be played by 16th September 2023. The recommended midweek period is 13th-15th September. www.isfa.org.uk

03/09/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

Blanford United of the Dorset Premier League have been given planning permission to build an extension to the clubhouse and addition of a pergola in front of it.

A legal battle for **Scunthorpe United's** Glanford Park Stadium will take place next year. The dispute between former owner Peter Swann and new owner David Hilton

over possession of the ground will go to court in January. A three-day hearing is listed for the case.

Westfields FC of the Hellenic League are to stage an international fixture between England Fire Service v Wales Fire Service on Thursday 2nd November 2023 (ko 2.00 pm).

More **National League** matches to be shown live on TNT Sports.

Sat October 7th - **Dorking Wanderers** v Barnet (ko 5.30 pm).

Sat October 21st - **Wealdstone** v Boreham Wood (ko 5.30 pm).

Sat October 28th - **York City** v Halifax Town (ko 5.30 pm).

Sad news today (Saturday) - **East Thurrock United** of the Isthmian League North, have gone into liquidation and folded.

03/09/23: Steve Ayre writes: *I attended a game in the Banbury Lord Jersey Premier Division at **Longford Park**. It ended 4-3 to visitors Glory Farm. Excellent facilities for this level and the tea bar was free for this season opener. I used the car but there is a stop nearby.*

AUGUST 2023

30/08/23: Gary Spooner writes - *A glorious sunny Bank Holiday Monday - ideal for watching a game or two of footie! First up was **Flackwell Heath** where the home side comfortably won 3-0 against Hilltop. Paper programme issued as well! From here it was a very short hop to **Marlow** and their magnificent old stand for game two. The sun was still shining, and Marlow made hay while the sun shone winning 6-1. No programme here and no dogs allowed. Probably not a factor but a prog and several dogs at Flackwell Heath who had a better crowd than their higher placed neighbours. (217 against 179). An excellent Bank Holiday day out and taking the M40 home instead of the M1 proved a wise choice as home in time for dinner.*

28/08/23: Jon T Green writes - *I went to the gorgeous **Sherwood Colliery** on Friday night (pictures and report to follow) and although the traffic through the A17 in Lincolnshire was worse than normal (exactly how many tractors are there in the world?) the trip was so worthwhile.*

*Today (Monday) I ventured down to the **61 FC in Luton**. To be honest, the club are doing an amazing job in pretty difficult circumstances. Playing in a public park is obviously less than ideal but their friendliness was second to none and a real credit to every one of the volunteers working there - more power to them is what I say!!!*

27/08/23: Gary Spooner writes - *Yesterday we headed to **Bishop Sutton** for their Vase game against Wadebridge Town. We took the scenic route down ignoring motorways. Wise move as when we crossed the M4 it was gridlocked with stationary traffic as far as we could see. Before the game we ate our sandwiches*

at Chew Valley Lake. Excellent view and thousands of birds. Arrived at the ground and received a great welcome from the eccentric gateman who told us he had been doing the job for 34 years. When entry duties were finished, he stood behind the goal, pint in one hand, waving his stick with the other and shouting encouragement throughout the game. Very scenic ground it is too with enough cover for the sparse crowd, including a dozen or so from Wadebridge, to dodge a couple of heavy but short showers during the afternoon. Excellent game which saw Wadebridge go two up before Bishop Sutton pulled a goal back just before half-time. Second half saw Bishop Sutton striving for an equaliser and Wadebridge nervously hanging on until a late goal made the game safe for the visitors and the final score 1-3. The magic of the Vase was definitely alive and well yesterday.

27/08/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

The draw for the **FA Cup** 1st qualifying round was made last Monday. The full draw can be seen on various platforms and the matches will take place on Saturday 2nd September with winners getting £2250 and losers taking £750. One thing of note at the moment is that the RMT rail union are on strike that day and the ASLEF union have banned overtime. Travellers without cars could have major problems.

News re- **Hamworthy United FC** of the Southern League Div.1 South - a condemned football stand can now finally be demolished to make way for a new structure after months of uncertainty. The club has been sharing at Weymouth's ground as they were not allowed to play at home. However, an application for a new 150-seater stand has been approved.

Chickerell United have pulled out of the Dorset Senior League citing a shortage of players as the reason behind their decision.

Southend United - the saga rumbles on as the club have been given a final 42-day notice to complete the sale of the club. They will reappear in court on Wednesday 4th October according to Ron Martin. An unnamed Australian buyer should be finalised by the end of September.

Further to my notes above about today's hearing (Wed 23 August) the National League have docked Southend United 10 points for failing to clear their tax bill at today's hearing.

Cymru North side **Llandudno FC** have put down an initial deposit for a new pitch to be installed at their home ground. Work is expected to start on September 18th and the club hope to be playing on the ground by late October.

Forest Green Rovers have submitted a planning application for a 5000-seat friendly timber stadium near to junction 13 of the M5. The planning application to Stroud council is for the layout, scale and external appearance of the stadium. District planners are expected to consider the scheme by 23rd October.

Westbury United of the Southern League Div 1 South will ground share at Melksham Town over the next month playing 4 games there. This is so that work can be carried out to increase the size of the dressing rooms.

The 4 home games being played at Melksham are: Monday Aug 28th v Melksham Town (ko 3.00 pm); Saturday September 2nd v Malvern Town (ko 3.00 pm); Saturday September 9th v Bemerton Heath Harlequins in the FA Trophy 1st qualifying round (ko 3.00 pm) and Tuesday September 26th v Wimbourne Town (ko 7.45 pm) although I have not been able to confirm this fixture...

Hertford Town - the new secretary of Hertford Town is Ian Bush, who once fulfilled the same role at Ware. In his spare time, he is also an excellent photographer and part time Groundhopper.

20/08/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

Midland Football League Div 1 - **Droitwich Spa v Wednesfield** on Sat 12th August... a sign of the times as this match was abandoned in the 80th minute when a Wednesfield sub warming up near the dug-out suffered racist remarks from spectators. The Wednesfield team walked off in support of their player. In a statement Droitwich Spa directors apologised to the visiting club.

Sat 12th August MWCL Div 1 North - **Darwen v South Liverpool** - match abandoned as officials abused and threatened. The league say they are waiting for reports and may deal with it or passed on to the FA.

Saudi Arabia will play two international friendlies at **Newcastle United's St. James Park** - on

Friday 8th September SA v Costa Rica (ko 8.00 pm) and Tuesday 12th Sept SA v South Korea (ko 5.30 pm)

Atherstone v Highgate - Midland League Premier Division was abandoned when Highgate refused to play on after their goalkeeper was racially abused. Atherstone said two fans were ejected and given life bans.

Spartan South Midland League Premier Division (15/08) - a non-league match between **Arlesey Town and Potton United** was abandoned after allegations of a racial comment during the game. The referee stopped the match after a fight broke out between the two sides. Arlesey Town said they were made aware of an alleged racist comment at one of their coaches.

Bilston Town Community FC of the Midland Football League Division 1 have voted in principle to become the first fan owned club in the West Midlands.

Southend United are due back in the high court on Wednesday (23 August) to face a winding up order. Let's hope they get some good news at last and can put their troubles behind them.

Spurs Under 21's - after Premier League 2 (cunningly) reorganised themselves to save Spurs the embarrassment of getting relegated at the end of last season, all

the teams in Division 1 and 2 have now been lumped together and this season everyone will play each other once. Spurs fans will note that most home games will be played at Stevenage on Saturdays with a 1pm kick off. However, subject to change, they do have a Friday night home game in February!

Hertford & District League - The H & D L has in effect folded with all remaining clubs merging into the Herts Senior County League.

20/08/23: Gary Spooner - writes: *Cracking day yesterday at **Cranfield United** - the only ground I know with a fully operational Chinese restaurant! Small airfield behind far goal meant plane spotting available too. Game started explosively with Cranfield 1 up in the first minute and two up after about 8 minutes. At that point I thought it might be 5 or 6 at half time. Huntingdon dug in and but for a marvellous save from the CU goalie on the stroke of half time could have been back in the game. Second half saw two more goals for Cranfield and a comprehensive victory.*

17/08/23: Gary Spooner - writes: *Our recent European adventure started in Milan from where it was a short train ride to Lake Como. A short walk from the station takes you to the funicular up to Brunate from where there are stunning views and some great photo opportunities of the Italian landscape, lake, mountains and **Stadio Comunale G. Sinigaglia, home of Como 1907** who play in Serie B -*

WebEd - check out the superb album in our Flickr gallery by clicking [HERE](#) .

16/08/23: Gary Spooner - writes: *Back from our jaunt round Europe and an excellent time was had. Managed a couple of footie games - the first of which was **Bayern Munich II** v Nuremberg II played at Grunwalder Stadion, home of TSV 1860 Munich in the Regionalliga Bayern, the 4th tier of German football.*

On a baking hot Friday evening we arrived at the stadium around 6pm for a 7pm kick off. We were rewarded with an excellent game. Nuremberg took the lead to the delight of the 29 fans in the away enclosure - it was very easy to count them - but Bayern hit back with 2 goals to lead 2-1 at half time. Second half saw an equaliser from Nurnberg and the hilarious sight of a single Nurnberg fan hurdling 3 crush barriers to get to the fenced in celebration. Ed Moses would have been very impressed! No more goals but excellent entertainment in an excellent stadium which TSV returned to in 2017 after twelve years sharing the Allianz with their more illustrious neighbours.

*Next morning saw us hit the rails again taking the 8.55 train from Munich to **Bregenz**. It's an excellent city on the banks of Lake Constance. We arrived at 11 with plenty of time for a pre match stroll along the shore in absolutely baking conditions which necessitated stopping for a cold drink and later on an ice cream. The stadium is very close to the shore as well. The stadium was excellent and there were many different food and drink offerings. I was very tempted by the cakes but as I had just eaten, I didn't partake. The game was pretty awful. Kapfenberger scored a goal in each half to win 2-0. SW who were promoted to 2 Liga at the end of last season produced little and were lucky to get nil! At full time we made our exit along with some of the home fans. I say some as a large*

number stayed behind to have a beer or six. The bars and food stalls were doing a roaring trade after the final whistle despite the home defeat. A brilliant day out!

14/08/23: Jon Green - writes: *Here are my pictures from **Tring Corinthians** - lovely ground set below the Chiltern Hills. Tring itself is also delightful although £4 for a pint of draft coke at a pub on the Grand Union Canal was a touch excessive, I thought.*

13/08/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

Two Hellenic League clubs have withdrawn from the league at the start of the season - Div 1 **Bourton Rovers FC** and Div 2 **East Old Bradwell United Development**. No reasons have been given for these withdrawals.

BBC Television Scotland will be showing live **Servette v Rangers** (Champions League 3rd qualifying round 2nd leg) on Tuesday 15th August (ko 7.30 pm).

BBC Television Scotland will be showing live **Hearts v Rosenburg** (Europa Conference League 3rd qualifying round 2nd leg) on Thursday 17th August (ko 7.45pm).

Derry City have asked UEFA if their Europa Conference League 3rd qualifying round 2nd leg v Tobol Kostanay (Kazakhstan) on Thursday 17th august can be switched to Windsor Park Belfast - so far, no decision from UEFA.

Amendment - further to my earlier post UEFA has turned down Derry's request to play the game at Windsor Park. Instead, it will be played at the Tallaght Stadium Dublin (home of Shamrock Rovers).

To keep in line with EFL regulations **Barrow AFC** have installed 2000 extra covered seats.

Carabao Cup - Sky are to show **Doncaster Rovers** v Everton live on Wednesday 30th August (ko 8.00 pm).

Carabao Cup 2nd round Tuesday 29th August **Salford City** v Leeds United (ko 8.00 pm) will be shown live on Sky Sports.

06/08/23: Gary Spooner writes - *As expected the cricket yesterday at Middlesex (Plan A) was washed out without a ball being bowled. En route to **Colney Heath** in torrential rain I was not confident that Plan B would survive the weather and was thinking that Plan C, Hendon on plastic, would end up being my afternoon entertainment. No need to have worried as the pitch at Colney Heath was fine and so it was to be the magic of the Cup. Alas, little magic yesterday as another poor game witnessed. Virtually nothing happened until Ilford took the lead with a penalty midway through the second half. I thought that was it but late drama saw Colney Heath snatch an equaliser in the 94th minute to secure a replay. On the plus side it did stop raining for a while so that I managed some pics...*

06/08/23: Keith Aslan writes - *Re a hop to Louth Town FC. I doubt you'd recognise the ground now judging by the photos when you went there. A great club and great people running it, I hope they get the success they deserve.*

06/08/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck)

According to BBC Essex, **Southend** must get a new safety certificate by 5.00 pm tonight (30/07) otherwise Saturday's game v Oldham cannot be played at Roots Hall. Whether a suitable ground would be available at short notice I don't know as policing comes into the equation if the match is moved. (NB. This safety certificate was obtained).

Llandudno FC will be playing their homes at **Conwy Borough FC**. The club hope to move back to their old ground once a new pitch is laid...after being refused funding the supporters have started a pitch back bond scheme once the funds are raised the new pitch will be relayed.

Colwyn Bay are to play in the Cymru Premier for the first time in their history.

Colwyn Bay v Caernarfon on Sunday 13th August ko 5.15pm is all ticket with no cash admissions on the day.

Environmental campaigners have issued a legal challenge over **Oxford United's** proposed new stadium site. The club is considering a move to green belt land north of the city when its lease on the Kassam Stadium expires in 2026.

Reading owners are looking for new investors to provide financial stability at the club. The club sees its EFL transfer embargo removed after settling HMRC issue

Bracknell Town (Southern League Premier) and ground sharers **Sandhurst Town** (Combined Counties League Div.1) are pleased to announce the unveiling of their new state of the art 3G pitch for the coming season.

Maidenhead United FC has expressed "shock" after a council changed its mind about selling land for the purpose of building a new stadium. United agreed in 2022 to buy land at Braywick Park for £460,000.

Boro Rangers of the Northern League Div 1 are on a new ground. They are playing at Phoenix Park in Middlesbrough where the new stand capacity of 200 (100 seated 100 standing) will not be ready until September.

06/08/23: Bedfordshire FA (via the Bedfordshire County League):

Bedfordshire FA Junior Cup 1st Round Draw Season 2023-24:

Caldecote A v Elstow Abbey Reserves;
Leighton Woodside v Tempsford;
Bedford Wanderers v CS Rovers;
Clifton Reserves v Biggleswade FC Development;
Bedford Albion Development v M&DH Clapham Sports Reserves;

Ampthill Town Colts v Blunham (CCL);
Woburn & Wavendon v Harlington Juniors Reserves and
Turvey v Dunstable Wanderers

Ties to be played on Saturday 21st October 2023.

Sandy Reserves v GS Athletic;
FC Haynes Reserves v Shefford Town & Campton U23 and
Leighton Woodside U23 v Lidlington United Sports Club Colts

Ties to be played on Saturday 28th October 2023.

Byes: Flitwick Town A; Kempston Athletic; Luton Panthers; Meltis Rangers &
Queens Park Crescents Development.

JULY 2023

31/07/23: Jon T Green writes - After seemingly weeks of pre-season matches it was fab to get back underway with some proper competitive games this weekend. I went to **Redcar Town** on Friday night (photos to follow) and then across to Barrow-in-Furness on Saturday for **Holker Old Boys** - there will be a match report for the latter in the next couple of days.

Redcar were one of the friendliest clubs I have visited in a long while and those hoppers obsessed by paper they even produced a nice, printed programme. Holker had some amazing views of the Lakeland Hills which even on a grey day looked pretty spectacular.

30/07/23: Gary Spooner writes - Alas no pics from my game at **Buckley** last weekend due to it raining in monsoon proportions on arrival. My camera stayed firmly in the car.

Yesterday saw a footie trip to **Portishead Town FC**. Not too difficult to persuade Mandy to join me with decent weather and the seaside on offer. Will be somewhat more difficult (near impossible) later in the season when it's a trip to the middle of nowhere and freezing cold! We had a great day out and stopped for a lovely meal on the way home. Only downside was the game which will certainly be one of, if not the worst that I'll see all season. The hosts won with a first half goal in front of 153 spectators.

30/07/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck) - The leader of Glasgow City Council has warned **Glasgow United** it could be barred from playing at its facility if it signs convicted rapist David Goodwillie, the ex-Scottish international played for Glasgow United in a friendly match. The club have not confirmed if they have signed the player.

National League fixtures:

TNT Sports will no longer show **Dagenham** v Southend (this match goes back to a 3.00 pm ko) instead now on Saturday August 12th as they will now broadcast **Bromley** v Barnet (ko 5.30pm).

Southend v Barnet on Boxing Day will now ko at 1.00 pm and Barnet v Southend on Saturday 30th December will ko at 3.00pm.

More games to be shown on TNT Sports,

Sat. 2nd Sept - **Gateshead** v Oldham Ath. (ko 5.30pm);

Sat. 9th Sept - **Bromley** v Maidenhead (ko 3.00pm);

Sat. 16th Sept - **Kidderminster H.** v Solihull Moors (ko 5.30pm);

Sat. 23rd Sept - **Woking** v York City (ko 12.30pm)

Tues. 26th Sept - **Rochdale** v Chesterfield (ko 7.45pm) and

Sat. 30th Sept - **Oxford City** v Altrincham (ko 5.30pm).

Europa Conference League 2nd qualifying round 2nd leg match, **Swift Hesperange** v The New Saints will now be played on Tuesday 1st august (ko 7.00pm).

EFL League One - **Cambridge United** v Reading was Sat. 2nd Sept now Monday 4th Sept (ko 8.00pm live on Sky Sports).

Tuesday 12th September - **Scotland v England** - a match to celebrate the SFA's 150 anniversary at Hampden Park. England will have a reduced allocation of just 2901 tickets; for the 2017 World Cup game England got 4784 tickets.

Possible trouble for **Spurs** owner Joe Lewis has been charged in the USA with orchestrating a brazen insider trader scheme. 86-year-old Lewis has gone to the USA to defend himself. Spurs said as this is a legal matter, we have no comment to make.

More problems for **Reading**...they have been placed under an immediate transfer embargo again for failing to pay HMRC on time again. I don't know how this will affect their hearing on August 7th.

Champions League 3rd qualifying round 1st leg - BBC Scotland will show **Rangers** v Servette or Genk live on Wednesday 9th August (ko 7.45pm). Note: Tues 25th July Servette 1 -1 Genk and Wed 2 August Genk v Servette (ko 6.00pm).

Southern League Premiership side **Beaconsfield Town** have agreed to allow Combined Counties Div.1 side **Windsor** to ground share with them.

National League fixture change: **Southend United** v Eastleigh now Friday August 25th (ko 7.45pm) moved from Saturday 26th August.

Penrith AFC of Northern League Div.1...£870k is being spent on ground improvements including a state-of-the-art 3G pitch. Work is underway so the venue of some home matches may be changed.

Enfield Town have been invited to take part in the Fenix Trophy, a competition for non-league clubs sanctioned by UEFA. The draw for the 12-team tournament

takes place on Sat 29th July with the group stages to take place later this year and the semi-final and final next Summer. This year's final in June was staged at the legendary San Siro stadium.

Darlington United of the Northern Alliance league will this season play their home matches at the 26,500 capacity Darlington area they will be sharing the ground with Darlington Modwen Park rugby club...it is also the former home of Darlington FC.

The draw for the **Fenix Trophy** looks like this...

Group A - **Enfield Town**; Llantwit Major; BK Skjold (Denmark).

Group B - Prague Raptors; Venus Bucuresti; Gilla FC.

Group C - **FCUM**; Vinsky FC; Krakow Dragons.

Group D - **Lewes FC**; KSK Beveren; FC Oslo

...the winners of each group proceed to the Semi-Finals.

Yesterday (29/07), **Bury** made a stunning return to **Gigg Lane** beating Glossop North End 5-1 in front of a terrific crowd of **5451**.

Harlow Town FC intend to do a tribute to the late **Steve Dobson** at their home match on Saturday 5th August v Basildon Town. It is assumed that it will be something like a minute's silence or applause before KO.

26/07/23: Steve Hardy - UK Non-League Football Programme Database - Our outstanding contributor, programme guru, super hopper and dedicated archivist has now COMPLETELY UPDATED all sections of his extensive UK Non-League Football Programme Database featuring 1000's of clubs covering English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish, Ladies, School and Youth and Sunday football. The impressive catalogue lists include EVERY KNOWN CLUB THAT HAS ISSUED up to the end of the 2022-23 season. Reference to all alterations/additions since last year's database are handily highlighted in red ink for ease of identification. Check out the selection of new programmes (including covers) Steve has tracked down since last season. As you will appreciate an incredible amount of work has gone into making this possible and we are indebted once again to Steve for his painstaking efforts. You'll agree it's an absolutely fantastic resource for programme collectors and ground hoppers alike. To find out more simply click on the following link shown below. Enjoy browsing! footballgroundsinfocus.com/UKPDBHome.htm

23/07/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck) - If **Southend United** get the all-clear their match at Dagenham & Redbridge on Saturday August 12th will be shown live on *TNT Sports* (BT re-branded) ko 17.30.

The following matches will also be shown live on *TNT Sport 1*:

Rochdale v Ebbsfleet - Saturday August 5th (ko 17.30)

Chesterfield v Oldham Athletic - Saturday August 19th (ko 12.30)

Hartlepool United v AFC Fylde - Saturday August 26th (ko 17.30)

Eastleigh v Aldershot - Monday August 28th (ko 15.00)

After ground sharing at Lowestoft Town, **Gorleston** of Isthmian League North division have now signed a long-term deal to play at Great Yarmouth Town of the Eastern Counties League.

After being knocked out of the Champions League **The New Saints** have dropped down to the Europa Conference League 2nd qualifying round.

Tuesday 25 July The New Saints v Swift Hesperange (Luxembourg) ko 19.00 pm and Thursday 3rd August Swift Hesperange v The New Saints (ko tbc)

NCEL Premier Division fixture changes:

Tadcaster Albion v Barton Town now on Friday 18th August ko 19.45 (from Sat 19th August);

Hallam v Rossington Main now Tuesday 5th September ko 19.45 (from Sat 9th September due to cricket) and

Barton Town v Tadcaster Albion now Friday 22nd December ko 19.45 (from Sat 23rd December)

Southend's pre-season friendly on Saturday July 29th v AFC Wimbledon has now been postponed.

At a special court hearing (Friday 23/07) a judge is allowing Southend to pay football creditors-related debts of £300,000 so they can keep their licence and remain in the national league. The club is insolvent and has debts of £2.5 million pounds. It is understood that several investors are willing to help the new owners get the club on a safe footing.

Millwall v Leeds United - the match due to have been played on Saturday September 16th will now be played the next day on Sunday September 17th ko 12.00 midday (live on Sky Sports)

18/07/23: Jon T Green writes - *I was over on the West coast of Ireland to take in a couple of Irish league games last weekend - the weather was beyond abysmal, but I was lucky enough to visit the superb **Finn Park home of Finn Harps** (funnily enough!!!). The first team will soon move to a new venue close by so there is only a season or so left to catch a game here. The Belfast roof on the Main Stand is simply enormous and not something that we see any more in England. Only a couple of weeks before the start of the new non-league season so hope you have something exciting lined up for the opening day. Stay dry and I will be in touch with the first report of the year in a couple of weeks.*

16/07/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck) - Chris Phillips the Southend Echo sports reporter, stated this morning that the club still hasn't been sold. They were due back in court last Wednesday 12th July over a £250,000 unpaid tax bill. They face

a winding up petition if this is not paid. The National League have previously said that if all debts are not paid, they will expel **Southend United FC** from the league. Chris also mentioned that some members of staff have not been paid for 3 months - worrying times indeed for Southend. To add to their many problems United can't use their training ground (Boots and Laces) as the water supply has been cut off due to an unpaid bill. The saga rumbles on as the judge has granted another 42 days next court appearance (until August 23rd). Owner Ron Martin argued that he needed more time to complete the sale of the club saying the new owners had to satisfy the FA's directors test despite being in talks since May with the new owners! The tax debt has now risen to £275,000, and the club are due to play Oldham Athletic on August 5th. So far, they have passed no comment about today's court hearing. The National League have said they have been talking to Southend today (Thursday 13th) and the league will hold a full board meeting tomorrow to discuss the situation. If Southend are given the go ahead to start the season, they have only 14 registered players (striker Chris Wreh was the latest departure, having signed for Hartlepool United). As they are under a transfer embargo, they cannot sign anyone before their next court visit on August 23rd.

Reading FC is due in court on Wednesday 9th August at 10.30 am to face a winding up petition over an unpaid tax bill, amount unknown. They have since had their transfer embargo lifted after settling an outstanding tax debt...hopefully that winding up petition due to be heard on August 9th will be dropped.

Hearts are cutting the number of away tickets at Tynecastle to 650. The only exception will be matches with Hibernian who will be given the Roseburn stand with a near 3400-capacity. This is a reciprocal agreement between the Edinburgh clubs based on high season ticket sales and match by match demand from their own supporters.

The **Midland Football League** fixtures are being released on Thursday 20th July.

Cambridge City FC will be ground sharing at St. Ives Town again next season but they are very confident they will be moving into their new stadium ahead of the start of the 2024/25 campaign. The new Community Stadium is progressing well...the 3000-capacity venue will be in Sawston which is 6 miles south of Cambridge. There is a change to the ground grading system...previously it was done by the league itself, but it will now be completed by the FA, hopefully making things a bit easier.

Barnsley FC have been charged by the EFL with multiple breaches of their regulations. These charges relate to the period 2017-2022 during the ownership of Paul Conway and Chien Lee.

Luton Town v Burnley due to be played on Sat 19th August has been postponed due to ongoing refurbishment work at Kenilworth Road.

The **Manchester City** v Brentford PL match due to be played on Sat 23rd December has been postponed due to city's involvement in the Club World Cup.

16/07/23: Spartan South Midlands League - Fixtures for all three divisions up to the end of October will be available no later than the 18th July.

16/07/23: Gray's Athletic FC - Thurrock Council has approved a development on green belt land which includes Grays Athletic FC moving into the disused Ship Lane Stadium in Aveley, Essex, the former home of Thurrock FC, thus saving a decent ground from demolition.

09/07/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck) writes - Planning permission has been granted for a statue of Portsmouth FC legend Jimmy Dickinson outside the club's stadium. The 2.2m (7ft) bronze statue will be installed on the northwest side of Fratton Park. They hope to have the statue up in August ahead of the club's 125th anniversary year.

More trouble ahead for **Southend United**. The players halted pre-season training after they failed to receive their June wages. Software company Midex Pro have ended their sponsorship deal with the football club.

Pre-season friendly - **Southampton** v AZ Alkmaar @St. Mary's on Sat 29th July ko 3.00 pm

Div.1 - **Wigan Athletic** v Carlisle United on Friday December 29th - this match will now ko @7.00 pm not 7.45 pm due to lack of public transport.

Former **Fleetwood Town** owner Andy Pilley has been jailed for 13 years after frauds to the value of £15 million.

Due to continued refurbishment at **Kenilworth Road** Luton's pre-season game v Ipswich will now be played at Colchester United's ground on Tuesday July 25th ko 7.30 pm.

There are fears for the future of **Llandudno FC** of Cymru North. Last season they played many matches at Bangor as their 3g pitch was deemed unfit. They applied for funding to replace the pitch and have new led floodlights after getting good feedback. However, their request was denied and as a result they will have to play home matches away again and many players have said they will leave the club. Llandudno manager Sean Eardley has in fact resigned and left the club.

One thing for travellers to keep an eye this coming season...the **Central Midlands League** has merged with the Midlands Regional Alliance and will be known as the Central Midlands Alliance and the competition will have 7 divisions with 93 teams.

The **Southern League** fixtures will be released on Friday 14th July (they will be officially announced on Monday 10th July).

Canvey Island v Southend United pre-season friendly due to be played on Tuesday 11th July has now been postponed until Tuesday 25th July. As a result of this change Canvey will play Maldon & Tiptree on this date (11/07) instead.

09/07/23: Leverington Sports FC - Chairman confirms positive news for the club going forward with news of ground improvements...pitch barrier to be installed within 6 months; floodlights within 24 months and new changing room with 36 months. The future is bright, the future is orange!

09/07/23: Twitter post from Haringey Borough FC to Tottenham Hotspur FC - *Dear Ange Postecoglou, I am the manager of Haringey Borough FC. Unfortunately, Bishop's Cleeve have cancelled our pre-season friendly on the 22nd of July. Could you please send a team down to play us. All expenses will be paid. We are 1 mile away. Bus W3 stops right outside. T Loizou xx.*

02/07/23: Bob Powell (via Brian Buck) - The FA and Premier League will be joining forces from July 2023 to launch a new stadium accreditation programme for clubs that play in the National League System. The Premier League Stadium Fund will begin collecting ground grading data for the FA; the process will be digitised for the first time since ground grading process was introduced 15 years ago through the creation of a new digital tool (Stadium Power) at all stadiums used within the National League System.

Northern League Division 1 side **Thornaby**'s Teesdale Park ground was badly damaged in an arson attack. The club are devastated by the damage to its facilities. It has launched an on-line appeal to raise funds for the repair work.

Saturday 8th July - **Solihull Moors** v Birmingham City ko 3.00 pm @the Armco Arena. It is for the Arthur Cup, but the main purpose is to raise money for the NSPC and the Solihull Foundation.

Subject to final FA and league approval, **AFC Croydon** has been bought by a three-man consortium with former Crystal Palace man Danny Young, current player Wilfried Zaha and rapper Stormzy involved.

Ellesmere Rangers have resigned from NWCL 1 South due to high operating costs. As a result, Droylsden have been moved from Div 1 North to Div 1 South. The FA Inter-League Cup will return in season 2023/24 for the first time since the 2019/20 campaign with leagues from step 5 and 6 able to enter representative teams in the competition. There is also the added bonus of next season's winners going on to represent England in the UEFA regions cup.

From next season 2023/24 **EFL Championship** sides will be able to name 9 subs using 5 during EFL matches. Both **Division 1 and 2** will be able to name 7 subs using 5.

Beverley Town FC of NCEL 1 whose home ground is Norwood Park Beverley have three home pre-season games each being played at the Beverley Leisure Centre 3G in Flemingate. These are Sat 8th July v Bridlington, ko 1.00 pm; Sat 15th July v Goole AFC, ko 1.00 pm and Sat 22nd July v Hallam, ko 1.00 pm.

02/07/23: Boreham Wood FC - we can announce that for the upcoming 2023/24 Vanarama National League campaign, we will play our midweek home fixtures on Wednesday evenings, rather than a Tuesday.

02/07/23 - Bedfordshire County League - 2023-24 Season Update.

Caldecote Under 23 have now split to become independent of Caldecote FC and have renamed themselves GS Athletic.

Atletico Europa have now had a second name change and become Athletic FC for season 2023-24.

AFC Woburn have now joined for season 2023-24 and will play in Division Four. They are a completely new club being formed out of Woburn Golf club, taking the league membership up to 84 teams.

01/07/23: Web Ed - League twitter Statement from the **Humber Premier League**.... *In an effort to improve the standard of local football and to provide more structured football in the East Riding, the Humber Premier League and Right Car East Riding County League have taken action. After months of negotiations involving Chris Johnson from the East Riding FA, a proposal to return the HPL to 16 teams and create a NEW 14 team Premiership Feeder Division with the remaining HPL Division 1 teams and existing RCERCFL Premier Clubs under the RCERCFL umbrella, was accepted by the HPL clubs last night at the HPL SGM and existing RCERCFL Premier Clubs under the RCERCFL umbrella, was accepted by the HPL clubs last night at the HPL SGM (on 07/06)...*

END