

2025/26 SEASON // ISSUE 01 // £3

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF  
KETTERING TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB



## KETTERING TOWN V LEISTON

Tuesday 12th August 2025  
7.45pm Kick-Off  
Pitching In Southern League  
Premier Division Central

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## Who's Who

Owner Nadim (George) Akhtar  
Co-Owner Nadiya Akhtar-Shahzad  
Chairman Nadim (George) Akhtar  
Chief Operating Officer Nadiya Akhtar-Shahzad  
Football Director Fabian Forde  
Club President Ken Samuel  
Chief Executive Officer TBA  
Vice Chairman Mick Coe  
Non-Executive Director TBA  
Finance TBA  
Commercial, Media & Marketing Ross Patrick  
ross.patrick@ketteringtwnfc.com  
Full Associate Directors Gary Foreman  
Bryony Gates  
Ken Samuel  
Sue Samuel

Club Secretary Ian Hopewell  
General Manager Mark Hindwood  
Commercial Manager Naheed Shears  
Academy & Trust Director Phil Wade  
Funding & Grants Paul Bailey  
Match Day Operations Manager Mick Coe  
Bar Manager Mark Hindwood  
Matchday Boardroom Hosts Sue Samuel  
Bryony Gates  
Jill Hope

### Club Shop

### Football Staff

First Team Manager Simon Hollyhead  
Assistant Manager Elijah Bada  
Assistant Coach/Analyst Terry Thompson  
Analyst Jacob Davis  
Strength & Conditioning Shoheib Ibrahim  
Sports Rehabilitator Michael Hunter  
Club Chief Medical Officer TBA  
Club Doctor TBA  
Welfare Officer Andy Fulton  
Board Safeguarding Officer Phil Wade  
Kitman Malcolm Lower  
Adron Lower  
Dan Willis

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## VIEW FROM THE BOARDROOM

# DOUG BROWN



### And so, we begin again

We welcome tonight's visitors Leiston to Latimer Park.

After a summer of transfer whispers, sunlit pre-season optimism, and the inevitable churn of speculation, the real theatre resumes. The turnstiles click, the pitch is pristine, and for ninety minutes, we return to what really matters. League football. Competitive minutes. Points at stake. The Southern League Premier Central season begins here—and with it, the hopes of a club with a proud past and ambitions for a brighter future.

There's something about the first match of a football season that is unrepeatable. No matter how long one has followed this game—whether in the throes of childhood wonder or with the measured realism of a long-suffering veteran—it never loses its pull. The opening fixture is a clean page. Hope, after all, is football's oldest currency.

Statistically, there's more riding on today's game than many might believe. Since the current structure of Step 3 was established, **over 60% of promoted sides have begun their campaigns with a win or a draw**, suggesting that momentum forged in August can last deep into April. Momentum, in this game, is not an abstract ideal. It is tangible, measurable, and unforgiving to those who let it slip.

But of course, not every campaign is about silver polish and champagne. For many, this is about progress, identity, and resilience. A chance to establish rhythm, to introduce new signings not just to the pitch but to the people. The noise, the scrutiny, the expectation—none of it can be replicated on a training ground in Wellingborough.

As we stand at the threshold of another 42-game journey, one is reminded of Bill Shankly's famous assertion that football is not just a matter of life and death, but something far more important. Hyperbole, perhaps—but then again,

try telling that to the supporter who's waited through a dreary close season for this moment, this whistle, this fresh start.

Tonight's opponent arrives with ambitions of their own, and they will not roll over lightly. But this is home. This ground, these seats, this noise—it all matters. This is a league that demands grit as much as guile. With clubs stretching from Halesowen to Hitchin, Stourbridge to Stamford, it is a physical, fast, and unforgiving competition. The margin between top seven and mid-table can be wafer-thin. Consistency is king.

And yet, Kettering fans have every reason to feel quietly optimistic. Attendances here continue to reflect one of the strongest community bases at this level—proof, if ever it were needed, that this club remains a cornerstone of the town. The average opening-day home win rate in Step 3 sits just **under 45%**, but those numbers only tell part of the story. Latimer Park, when in full voice, offers more than statistics—it offers belief.

There are debutants out there today. Not just on the pitch, but in the stands. Children seeing their first live match, eyes wide with wonder. New season ticket holders, freshly initiated into the rituals. Veterans returning to their matchday routines, scarves unfurled, memories rekindled.

This, then, is more than a game. It is a beginning. A prologue written in studs and sweat. There will be twists to come, no doubt. Highs and lows. But for now, it is simply the first step. And if history has taught us anything, it's that how you start often says a great deal about where you might finish.

So, welcome back. Welcome home. With the badge on our chest, and the roar of the Poppies behind us.

Let's make it count.  
Let the season begin.

**Doug**





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# WELCOME SIMON

**We are delighted and excited to announce that Simon Hollyhead has been appointed as the new manager of Kettering Town Football Club.**

The UEFA pro-licence holder has a wealth of experience, from being the Assistant Manager at Champions League side Malmö between 2010 and 2014, together with undertaking Assistant Manager positions at primary national football league clubs at SK Brann FC (Norway), and Odense FC (Denmark). In 2018, he was Assistant Manager at Stevenage FC during their League 2 play-off season and recently manager at Banbury United.

Simon spent his University years playing football and cricket



where an opportunity arose to join Warwickshire County Cricket where he worked at Edgbaston as a fitness coach for 10 years before the lure of football came his way. Currently, he is the Head of Elite Sport in the Education sector and is looking forward to the challenge with Kettering Town FC. He is no stranger to Kettering as his Puritan side claimed 4 points off the Poppies last season, winning 1-0 at The Spencer Stadium and drawing 2-2 at Latimer Park.

Simon commented that "I was taken aback when I heard of the approach from Kettering last week and given its proud history. When a club like Kettering enquires, it's very hard to refuse a discussion considering the tradition that has been fostered over 153 years. I am really excited by the opportunity and looking forward to meeting

everyone at the club in due course."

George Akhtar, Owner of Kettering Town FC said, "We were blown away by the calibre and quantity of unbelievable candidates for this role. After speaking to Simon, I was very enthused by his passion and his commitment to detail. Myself and Fabian have worked tirelessly to select, for our amazing fans, the person who we believe is the best man for the job. I believe his vision for the club is aligned with ours and we are extremely excited about the next chapter of this magical club. I know the fans will welcome Simon to our football family."

We at the club, welcome Simon and wish all the management every success for the forthcoming season.



## IN TOWN TONIGHT

## LEISTON

**We open up our home campaign for the season with tonight's visit from Leiston, a side who have had some consistent finishes over the past four seasons.**

The Blues are now beginning their seventh season of Southern League football after being transferred over from the Isthmian Premier Division at the end of the 2017/18 season.

Their first full season saw them end in nineteenth position but then season's 2019/20 and 2020/21 were both cancelled because of the Covid-pandemic.

Since then though the team have ended in final positions of 7th, 3rd, 13th and 10th and Manager Chris Wigger will surely be targeting a place in the play-offs come the end of the season.

Their record here against the Poppies is a mixed one, winning one, drawing one and losing 2-1 last season.

We are sure to be in for another, close entertaining game this evening with both sides eager to make their mark in the division this season.



## CLUB FILE

**FOUNDED  
1880**

**NICKNAME  
THE BLUES**

**GROUND  
VICTORY ROAD  
CAPACITY 2350**

## IN THE DUGOUT

## CHRIS WIGGER

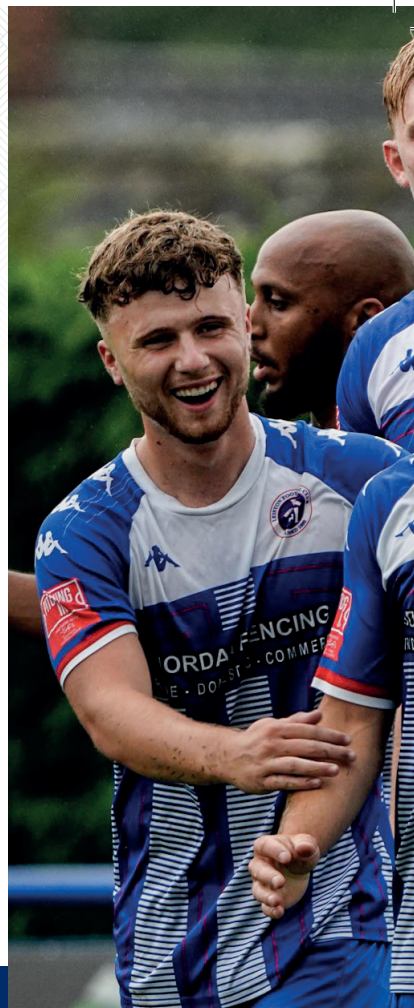
A youth team product at Norwich City Chris played for many seasons at Wroxham after his release from the Canaries.

Took charge at Sheringham as manager where he enjoyed much success.

In March 2020 became Blues boss alongside Darren Eadie.

Both he and Darren signed three year deals with the club in 2023 and the pair were in post for over 1560 days, the longest serving Managers this century.

Following Darren's change of role within the club, Chris is now First Team Manager.



## THE CAPTAIN SEB DUNBAR

32-year-old captain Seb Dunbar signed a new contract with the Blues during the summer and the long-serving player is closing in on four hundred and fifty appearances for the club.

Seb is a talisman in the team and his importance on and off the pitch cannot be overstated.

Thrilled the Leiston fans by agreeing a new contract and is the longest serving player at the club.

He has also played for Bishop's Stortford, Bury Town, Ipswich Town and Stowmarket Town.



## NEW SIGNING WILLIE CLEMONS

A recent signing in the close-season from previous club Felixstowe & Walton United, 30-year-old midfielder, Willie Clemons, is a Bermudian International who has made over thirty appearances for his country after making his debut against Dominican Republic in June 2016.

Whilst playing in England Willie has also represented Stowmarket Town and Braintree Town who he joined in August 2022.



## ONE FOR THE FUTURE BEN BATHO

Teenager, Ben Batho, pictured with Boss Chris Wigger, is a talented defender who has come through the ranks at Leiston from EJA U18s and the club College programmes.

After some sterling displays for the Under 23's, Ben broke into the first team squad last season and signed his contract with the club.

A very good talent he is now establishing himself in the first team squad.



## KETTERING TOWN V LEISTON

## THE STORY SO FAR



The Poppies and The Blues have previously met on six occasions and it is the Poppies who have certainly enjoyed the results the most, winning four of the six games played.

## HEAD TO HEAD

PL6 KT4 D1 LE1

Season	Comp	F-A	Att	Poppies Scorers
2018/19	H ESLSPC	1-2	749	Solkhon (pen)
	A ESLSPC	1-0	328	O'Connor
2023/24	H PISLPC	2-2	507	Yussuf, Andrade
	A PISLPC	2-0	173	Bennett, Lewthwaite
2024/25	H PISLPC	2-1	881	Edwards, Noel-Williams
	A PISLPC	2-0	310	Noel-Williams (2)

Of the fifteen goals scored in the six games played the Poppies have scored ten with the Blues on five.

## POPPIES STATS

BIGGEST HOME WIN

2-1

2024/25

BIGGEST AWAY WIN

2-0

2023/24 &amp; 2024/25

BIGGEST HOME DEFEAT

1-2

2018/19

BIGGEST HOME ATTENDANCE

881

2024/25

LOWEST HOME ATTENDANCE

507

2023/24

BIGGEST AWAY ATTENDANCE

328

2018/19

LOWEST AWAY ATTENDANCE

173

2023/24

MOST GOALS IN A GAME V LEISTON

2 - Isiah Noel-Williams (2024/25)

PLAYED FOR BOTH CLUBS

5 - Sam Banya, Billy Johnson, Claude Stephane Seanla, Jamar Loza, Ismael Fatadjo.

LEISTON PLAYERS SENT OFF V KTFC

1 - Noel Atkins (A - 2018/19)

POPPIES PLAYERS WHO MADE THEIR 100TH CLUB APPEARANCE V LEISTON

1 - Rhys Hoenes (A - 30th March 2019)

MOST CAREER GOALS V LEISTON

3 - Isiah Noel-Williams

POPPIES PLAYER WHO SCORED FOR LEISTON V KTFC

1 - Jamar Loza (H - 2023/24)

LEAGUE DEBUTS

1 - Leon Clarke (A - 2023/24)



Isiah Noel-Williams is the Poppies highest goalscorer against Leiston with three goals to his name.



## PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER CENTRAL

# AROUND THE LEAGUE

**The Poppies will be coming up against five new teams in this season's Premier Division Central.**



Needham Market, Bury Town, Quorn, Real Bedford and Worcester City will provide the new opposition and they will all be looking to make their mark this season.

The Marketmen re-join the Southern League following their relegation from the National League North last season as they ended the campaign in twenty first position, twelve points from safety.

Bury Town join us after winning promotion from the Isthmian League North after beating Brightlingsea Regent 1-0 in the play-off final watched by a crowd of 2139.

Northern Premier League, Midland Division champions, Quorn won their promotion after comfortably winning the title by eighteen points and scoring one hundred and four goals in the process.

Up next come Real Bedford, a side who took the Southern League Division One Central by storm last season winning the league by fifteen points, scoring a massive one hundred and twenty nine goals at the same time.

They have recruited well during the summer and could be a real threat this time around.

The fifth team we will be coming up against is a side that we have had many battles against in the past and it's great to see Worcester City back in action at Step 3.

City gained their promotion by winning their play-off final, 2-1, just up the road at Corby Town and this season they will be playing their home games at Worcester Warriors Rugby Club, which is a superb venue and will be well worth a visit when the Poppies go there on the first Saturday in September.

We lost three clubs at the end of the season, Lowestoft Town, Hitchin Town and Biggleswade Town were all relegated while Barwell were given a reprieve and stay up.

It promises to be another exciting season in the Southern League Premier Division Central division and I'm sure there will be many ups and downs, and twists and turns along the way.

## CLOCKING UP THE MILES

The Poppies will clock up over 2,500 miles on their travels this season with our longest trip of the campaign coming when we have to go to tonight's visitors, Leiston.

Other long trips will see us go to AFC Sudbury, Needham Market, Worcester City, Stourbridge and Halesowen Town.

Our shortest trip of the campaign is Harborough Town, which is a round trip of thirty four miles, while trips to Real Bedford, St Ives Town and Stamford AFC are well under the 100 mile mark.

This is how the mileage chart is looking for the season.

AFC Sudbury	168	CO10 1XR
Alvechurch	136	B48 7RS
Banbury United	94	OX16 5AB
Barwell	82	LE9 8FQ
Bishops Stortford	132	CM23 5RG
Bromsgrove Sporting	140	B61 0DR
Bury Town	138	IP33 1XP
Halesowen Town	144	B63 3TB
Harborough Town	34	LE16 9HF
Leiston	228	IP16 4DQ
Needham Market	172	IP6 8DA
Quorn	110	LE12 8RB
Real Bedford	52	MK44 3SB
Redditch United	138	B97 4RN
Royston Town	106	SG8 7HP
Spalding United	96	PET1 1DA
St Ives Town	62	PE27 6DT
Stamford AFC	62	PE9 1US
Stourbridge	156	DY8 4HN
Stratford Town	118	CV37 7BZ
Worcester City	168	WR3 7SS
<b>Total Mileage</b>	<b>2536</b>	
<b>Average Mileage</b>	<b>121</b>	

## UPCOMING LEAGUE FIXTURES

### TODAY

Alvechurch vs Bromsgrove Sporting  
Banbury United vs Worcester City  
Bishop's Stortford vs AFC Sudbury  
Bury Town vs Royston Town  
Halesowen Town vs Barwell  
**Kettering Town vs Leiston**  
Needham Market vs Real Bedford  
Quorn vs Stourbridge  
Spalding United vs Harborough Town

### SATURDAY 16TH AUGUST 2025

Alvechurch vs AFC Sudbury  
Banbury United vs Leiston  
Bishop's Stortford vs Stamford AFC  
Bury Town vs Harborough Town  
Halesowen Town vs Real Bedford  
**Kettering Town vs Barwell**  
Needham Market vs Worcester City  
Quorn vs Stratford Town  
Redditch United vs Royston Town  
Spalding United vs Bromsgrove Sporting  
St Ives Town vs Stourbridge

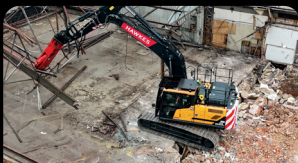


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## TOUCHLINE VIEWS

## SIMON HOLLYHEAD

THE THOUGHTS OF THE POPPIES BOSS AFTER SATURDAY'S SEASON OPENER

**"High  
Performing  
Winning  
Ways!"**

**I am delighted to be writing these notes to you all today as we welcome Leiston FC team, management and supporters here to Latimer Park for our first home game of season and we will get to that in a moment after a few comments about the off season.**

My first comment is to say that the club has been extremely welcoming to myself and my staff in recent weeks. Since my very first discussions, I have been made to feel nothing but welcomed and all the messages are absolutely correct, there is something special about this club, it is definitely the 'sleeping giant' as I have heard numerous times and I see it as my mission to wake the giant up into a new era of success for all of us.

Off the pitch, it has been a big summer of change for us. Whilst we've welcomed several new faces in, we've also said goodbye to a number of players who helped us through last season and we are very thankful to them for their contributions to the Club. As we move forward, it's been more or less a full team re-build task and before too long you are going to see this quality coming through, of that I am sure. We saw glimpses of that quality against Royston on Saturday, especially in the way that we never gave up on our desire and belief to win right up until the very end which resulted in a clean left foot strike with just a couple of minutes to go and wasn't it a beauty from Eddy? On the balance of play it was also a deserved outcome in my opinion

In addition, the re-build is not over yet. There are a few positions we're



looking at for added strength and depth and we'll continue that work through August.

In the meantime, the most important game for us is always the next one as we prepare for and face into Leiston tonight. Leiston will be competitive, they will be working very hard to secure their first win of the season but I expect us to be working even harder for our second win, especially on our own home ground during what is forecasted to be quite a hot evening.

My final comment goes out to you the fans. We met for the first

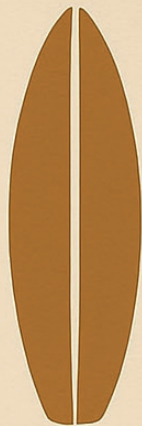
time on Monday 21st July and we had a fantastic following with us at Royston which was brilliant, so thank you for that. I am very excited about the whole season ahead, I look forward to our regular sessions together in the coming months, and together I am completely sure, we are going to wake this sleeping giant up and use all of our collective skills, talents, strengths and qualities and get this club back to its high performing winning ways!

**Enjoy the game**

**Simon**

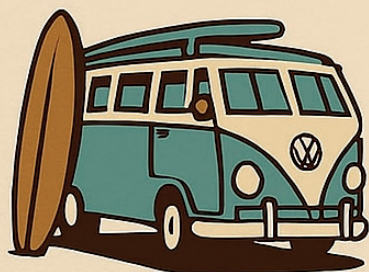


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## KETTERING TOWN POPPIES SUPPORTERS TRUST



# POPPIES TRUST

with Karen Spencer-Lewis | Supporters Trust

### Dear Supporter

Seem like three months since last season finished? No, it doesn't does it! As always, football fans start the season full of optimism and hope – let's see how long we can hold on to that!

The Trust has been pretty busy during the close season, firstly picking up another Board member in Mark Hope. A lot of you may know Mark from working on the turnstyle on match days. This season, he has joined the media team. The Trust Board now has 11 members – the healthiest it has been for quite some time now. We never turn away anyone who wants to join the Board so, if you are interested in joining, let us know.

As mentioned above, we have been active during the close season. The Trust took over the organisation of the Club's annual golf day which took place on 16 July 2025. Board members, Billy Welland and Chris Bright took this project on given their experience in organising golfing events – huge thanks to them for a very successful event. Another huge thanks to all the sponsors, Kettering Golf Club, those who donated raffle and auction prizes and all those who took part

on the day. Money raised overall was £3205 – £300 of that will go to the nominated charity for the day – The Dylan Cecil Memorial Fund. John Cecil expressed his thanks, on behalf of the Fund. The Fund provides respite holidays for families with children affected by life limiting illnesses or other personal hardships which would otherwise prevent them from taking a family break. Since the charity's inception in 2014, twenty six holidays have been provided.

So what else have we have been doing ..... we have launched our **Summer Trust Draw** (formerly the 300 club).

Tickets are £5, with 50% of the proceeds split between 3 winners. The first winning draw will take place at the home game versus Harborough Town on August Bank Holiday Monday.

Also don't forget that the other 50% of proceeds raised will be pumped back into the Club – although with everything the Supporters Trust does, the projects will benefit all of us supporters. So even if you don't win, you will be having a huge impact on our great club and the facilities we can all enjoy.

Tickets are available at our website **ktfctrust30.blogspot.com** or in the Clubhouse before the game.

This first home game of the season sees Leiston pay a visit to Latimer Park tonight – long journey for them on a Tuesday night! We hope they travel safely but we won't be handing over the three points just because they have had a long journey!



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We have obtained several discounts from local businesses for Trust members this coming season – look out for full details in forthcoming programme notes and on social media.



### Kettering Town (Poppies) Supporters Trust

PO Box 6492, Kettering, NN16 0YT

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#### TRUST BOARD MEMBERS

**Karen Spencer-Lewis** (Chair)

**Mark Severn** (Treasurer)

**Richard Atkinson** (Vice Chairman)

Bill Pringle, Martin Bellamy, Dave Tailby, Ed Palmer, Billy Welland, Chris Bright, Lee Wright and Mark Hope



## RAMBLING ROSE

## SOCCER IN THE SEVENTIES

with Roger Rose

**In 1972 Leeds United appeared in their third FA Cup final, losing their first in 1965 after extra-time to Liverpool and in 1970 to Chelsea in a replay.**

The final marked the centenary of the first cup final when Wanderers beat Royal Engineers. Leeds' opponents, Arsenal, had won the cup the previous year sealing a league and cup double. Arsenal would be looking to emulate the achievement of Newcastle United in 1952 and Tottenham Hotspur in 1962 of back to back cup wins.

Arsenal suffered a blow in their semi-final with Stoke City when goalkeeper Bob Wilson suffered a season ending injury which would see reserve keeper Geoff Barnett playing in the final. Leeds' keeper would be David Harvey who only became their first choice keeper the previous month replacing Gary Sprake.

Arsenal kicked off and within five seconds the first free kick was awarded as Allan Clarke blocked

the forward progress of Alan Ball. Barely a minute later and the game had it's first booking, as Referee Mr David Smith sought to impose his control on the game, when a mistimed lunge by Bob McNab caught Peter Lorimer and not the ball.

Arsenal settled into the game quickly with Leeds appearing to be tentative feeling the weight of expectation on their shoulders. Neither defence were tentative though with no prisoners taken as forwards were closed down quickly and attacks broken up by any means.

Just after the quarter hour mark Norman Hunter was penalised for a foul on Charlie George. The resulting free kick was played into the path of Frank McLintock running from deep and his well struck shot skidding off the damp turf from the morning's rain forced Harvey into a diving save to his right. Leeds were now getting into their stride and having the majority of play but both defences were still on top.

Thirty minutes had been played when Arsenal won their first corner and nearly opened the scoring. The ball was lifted over and picked out Ball lurking on the edge of the penalty area. The England star hit the ball sweetly towards Harvey's right hand post but was denied a goal by Paul Reaney stationed on the post clearing away the shot. Leeds responded well and three minutes later a penetrating run by Clarke set up Mick Jones with a shot which passed narrowly wide of Barnett's post with the keeper diving vainly to his left. Shortly after the game got it's second booking as Hunter brought down Ball.

Shortly before half-time Leeds almost got the goal the game needed. A lofted cross from Lorimer was met by Clarke beyond the far post, he headed the ball goalwards and with Barnett beaten it stuck the front of the crossbar before being hacked clear. Just before the half-time Bremner was booked for dissent after questioning a Referee's decision.

Shortly after the restart Charlie George was booked following a foul on Bremner, not for the foul but for back chatting Mr Smith. After fifty minutes Leeds got the ball into Arsenal's net when a cross from the by-line from Eddie Gray was deflected into his own goal by Peter Simpson but the ball had crossed the by-line.

Three minutes later the ball was in the Arsenal net again. Lorimer set Jones off down the right wing. He got past McNab and crossed the ball. Clarke central, about 12 yards out, with a diving header sent the ball rocketing into the corner with Barnett having no chance.





The goal boosted Leeds already growing confidence and forced Arsenal to commit more men to the attack opening up the game. Leeds' defence remained solid though and when they moved forward did so with patience moving the ball effortlessly among themselves to retain possession.

With twenty minutes to play Ball aimed a low shot from distance into a crowded penalty area. The ball struck the heel of a defender and broke kindly to George, who falling backward fired in a fierce shot. The ball cannoned off the crossbar with Harvey beaten and rebounded to Simpson who sent the ball harmlessly wide. This would be Arsenal's last threat on the Leeds goal. Shortly after Gray showed his skills taking the ball past Ball and cutting inside Pat Rice before unleashing a shot from the corner of the penalty area which Barnett diving at full stretch to his left palmed the ball away for a corner, saving a certain goal.

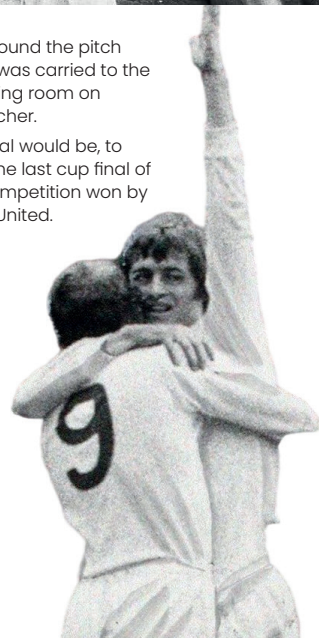
Arsenal made the only substitution of the game after seventy-three minutes with Ray Kennedy replacing John Radford.

In the final minute of normal time Hunter played a ball forward for Jones to run onto. He collected the ball and turned McIntock inside out and made directly for the Arsenal penalty area. Barnett came out to close him down on the edge of the 6 yard box where Jones wearily tumbled over the keeper. Play continued with Jones in pain on the floor until the final whistle sounded shortly after. It later transpired that Jones had dislocated his elbow after falling awkwardly. As he was receiving treatment on the pitch his teammates went up to collect the cup. Leeds' substitute Mick Bates collected Jones' medal on his behalf. Jones refused to miss his opportunity of meeting the Queen and climbed the steps aided by Hunter to shake hands with Her Majesty. As Leeds paraded the

cup around the pitch Jones was carried to the changing room on a stretcher.

This final would be, to date, the last cup final of any competition won by Leeds United.

**Roger**



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## THE EXILE

## DIARY OF A SUMMER

SIMON WARD WRITES FROM DEEPEST SUSSEX

## MAY

I'm starting to write this column as the dust has only just settled on the 24/25 season. We now know we're facing another year of Southern League Central football. There's a lot of disappointment and feelings that it never should have come to this. But it has.

While it was undeniably gutting to have lost our lead at the top and then to have lost the play-off final too, I think to say the season and the team won't be remembered in years to come is totally untrue. Names such as Nile Ranger, Dan Jezeph, Connor Johnson, Luca Miller and, yes, Isiah Noel-Williams will go into the Poppies annals. They beat the Cobblers in the FA Cup. Away. After going behind. On national TV.

But the days are long as I think about what might have been. After a few weeks, we don't have a manager, although this isn't really a huge surprise given some of his comments in interviews at the end

of the season. What is a surprise is Paul White is back at the club.

## JUNE

Much of the early month is spent refreshing the Kettering website every day in hope there will be some managerial news. I discover the Poppycast podcast, which makes the month go by a bit quicker as I relieve the highs and eventual low of the last few months. I then spend my days also refreshing Spotify, hoping for new episodes.

Players start to leave but we sign one of the most prolific strikers in the league so no panic from these quarters yet. We just need a manager now...

We've got a manager, although this isn't really a huge surprise given the rumour mill had all started to point to him. Cue the usual virtual gnashing of virtual teeth on social media. Some of the starts of last season re-sign, while others depart. Cue the usual virtual

gnashing of virtual teeth on social media. The new kit designs are released. Cue the usual virtual gnashing of virtual teeth on social media.

## JULY

Pre-season starts and there are more comings and goings. Some football actually happens. Mullered Sports is back too, capturing the action at Moulton, which is most welcome. Hopefully we'll see that bucket hat at plenty of our games this coming season.

The fixtures get released, and typically our first game is one I probably would have gone to, except for the fact that I'm on holiday. More on those in a future column.

The game at Bedworth has plenty of highlights to watch, although not sure if that's what the Poppies want with so many trialists (nearly covering half the alphabet) who could be potentially identified.

## AUGUST

The final friendly comes around. Nile Ranger is back after all. There is sadly a casualty (wishing you well Ismael) but that's it. The talking stops, and the playing begins. The new kits can be bought before the start of the season, so that's good progress.

Here we go again...

**Simon**





# PITCHING IN

## Ever thought of volunteering to help your local football club?

There are many different volunteer roles in non-league football and Southern League football clubs need your help with them.

The Trident Leagues and Pitching In's online Volunteer Hub is the place where you can find opportunities and contact your local football club.

---

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## GUEST ARTICLE

# MAN ON A MISSION

**Terry Brumpton is a man on a mission. After being involved in Matchday Programme production for half-a-century, he is keen to bust the myth that clubs lose money by producing printed programmes for each home game.**

**As Managing Director of JJ Sports Promotions Ltd., his company work with clubs throughout the UK and at all levels of the game, including an ever-expanding number here in the Southern League.**

"The question of shall we or shall we not produce a printed Matchday Programme is something that clubs have been increasingly asking in recent years," he told us. "As we speak, clubs will be having this discussion as they look ahead to the new season that stands before us.

"Sadly, more clubs are opting not to bother, citing losing money as an excuse, and as such a cherished part of the matchday experience is slowly disappearing.

"But it doesn't have to be that way. Clubs can make a profit from the Matchday Programme and through running JJ Sports Promotions Ltd, I have seen that at first-hand.

"A lot of it comes down to how clubs cost out their Matchday Programme. There are numerous opportunities within the pages to raise additional funds, not just from standard adverts, but also various sponsorships such as player sponsorships, covering players not only in the first-team squad, but also the other affiliated teams, pitch square sponsorships, which is so easy to set up and display, and various page and programme sponsorships.

"There are so many additional revenue streams to explore that can slot in alongside engaging and informative content that covers all aspects of the club and football in general.

"Once you have a product that looks good and reads well, it can easily be promoted ahead of each home game via the various media channels that clubs have at their disposal these days and with a couple of enthusiastic and keen sellers at the game, who are well positioned within the stadium, then the programme has every chance of being successful.



"Clubs need to be pro-active and recognise the worth of their Matchday Programme and the additional revenue that it can bring in. It has become too easy these days just to ignore it, but it's still very much a part of the fabric of the game and we hear from plenty of ground hoppers who will not attend games if there is no printed programme available.

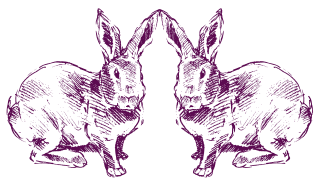
"There is the argument of how much time and effort is required, particularly for volunteers who often have many other roles at the club. That's why our 'all-in' service has proved to be popular in recent seasons whereby we handle all aspects of Matchday Programme production; design, editorial, print and delivery as well as setting up a subscription service for some clubs too.

"We also have sales experience and have assisted in selling programme advertising and sponsorships on behalf of clubs.

"The ethos of JJ Sports Promotions Ltd. is to help all clubs, regardless of their level and size, have a Matchday Programme to be proud of and keep this long-standing tradition of the game alive and kicking.

"It has been my life's work for decades and I'm always looking to get new clubs on board to see how we can assist them and continue to build upon our award-winning and glowing reputation."





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## STATS ZONE



## POPPIES PLAYER STATS 2025/26

	LEAGUE			CUPS			2025/26 SEASON TOTAL				POPPIES CAREER	
	STARTS	AS SUB	GOALS	STARTS	AS SUB	TOTAL	STARTS	AS SUB	APPS	GOALS	APPS	GOALS
Levi Andoh	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Finlay Corrigan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Archie Crowther*	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Ismael Fatadjo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kai Fifield	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	31	7
Shane Flynn	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
George Forsyth	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	46	2
Will Glennon	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Josh Humphrey (GK)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alfie Lewis	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Leon Lobjoit	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Jamar Loza	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	9	4
Edmond Oppong	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Callum Powell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	20
Nile Ranger	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	39	13
Andi Thanaj	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	40	1
Connor Stanley	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Lewis White	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	91	6
Paul White (GK)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	160	0
Wes York	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	42	7

\* In On Loan. Up to and including 09.08.2025

## PITCHING IN SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION CENTRAL LEAGUE TABLE



	P	HOME					AWAY					GD	Pts
		W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A		
1 Harborough Town	1	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
2 Banbury United	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
3 AFC Sudbury	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
4 Bishop's Stortford	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
5 Stourbridge	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
6 Kettering Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	3	1	3
7 Barwell	1	1	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
8 Real Bedford	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
9 Quorn	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
10 Halesowen Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
11 Leiston	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
12 Alvechurch	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
13 Stamford AFC	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
14 Royston Town	1	0	0	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0
15 St Ives Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
16 Spalding United	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
17 Worcester City	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0
18 Bromsgrove Sporting	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	-2	0
19 Bury Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
20 Redditch United	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
21 Stratford Town	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	-3	0
22 Needham Market	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0

# POPPIES AWAY TRAVEL

## REAL BEDFORD SATURDAY 23RD AUGUST

A coach will be running to our forthcoming away game at Real Bedford on Saturday 23rd August, 3pm kick-off.

The coach will depart the bus stop outside Avery Park Care Home, Rockingham Road at 12.30pm and Latimer Park at 12.45pm.

### Prices are as follows;

Adults: **£15**  
U16s: **£10**  
U12s: **£5**  
U8s: **FOC**

To book your place, please contact [kafccoachbookings@gmail.com](mailto:kafccoachbookings@gmail.com) or **07510 860683** (preferably on WhatsApp) and provide your full name, pick-up point, and mobile number.

Children Under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

A gentle reminder that no alcohol should be brought onto or consumed on the coach.

Both our facebook page and WhatsApp channel are called **KTFC Supporters Travel Club**.

**#KTFCSTC**



## MATCH BY MATCH

## FOLLOW THE POPPIES THROUGHOUT THE 2025/2026 SEASON

DATE	OPPOSITION	COMP	F-A	ATT	STARTING LINE-UP
<b>AUGUST</b>					
Sat 9	Royston Town	A	LGE	4-3	586 P. White Andoh Flynn Forsyth Crowther 1 Glennon
Tue 12	<b>Leiston</b>	H	LGE	19:45	
Sat 16	<b>Barwell</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 23	Real Bedford	A	LGE	15:00	
Mon 25	<b>Harborough Town</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 30	Emirates FA Cup IQR			15:00	
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>					
Sat 6	Worcester City	A	LGE	15:00	
Tue 9	Spalding United	A	LGE	19:45	
Sat 20	<b>Bishop's Stortford</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Tue 23	<b>Stamford AFC</b>	H	LGE	19:45	
<b>OCTOBER</b>					
Sat 4	Isuzu FA Trophy 3QR			15:00	
Sat 11	Alvechurch	A	LGE	15:00	
Tue 14	<b>Needham Market</b>	H	LGE	19:45	
Sat 18	Redditch United	A	LGE	15:00	
Tue 21	Banbury United	A	LGE	19:45	
<b>NOVEMBER</b>					
Sat 1	<b>St Ives Town</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 8	Quorn	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 15	<b>AFC Sudbury</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Tue 18	<b>Spalding United</b>	H	LGE	19:45	
Sat 22	Bromsgrove Sporting	A	LGE	15:00	
Tue 25	Stamford AFC	A	LGE	19:45	
Sat 29	<b>Stourbridge</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
<b>DECEMBER</b>					
Sat 6	Halesowen Town	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 13	<b>Bury Town</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 20	<b>Royston Town</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 27	Harborough Town	A	LGE	15:00	
<b>JANUARY</b>					
Sat 3	<b>Stratford Town</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 10	Leiston	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 17	<b>Alvechurch</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 24	Bishop's Stortford	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 31	Needham Market	A	LGE	15:00	
<b>FEBRUARY</b>					
Sat 7	<b>Redditch United</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 14	St Ives Town	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 21	<b>Banbury United</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 28	Stourbridge	A	LGE	15:00	
<b>MARCH</b>					
Sat 7	<b>Bromsgrove Sporting</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 14	AFC Sudbury	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 21	<b>Quorn</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 28	Barwell	A	LGE	15:00	
<b>APRIL</b>					
Fri 3	<b>Real Bedford</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Mon 6	Stratford Town	A	LGE	15:00	
Sat 11	<b>Worcester City</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 18	<b>Halesowen Town</b>	H	LGE	15:00	
Sat 25	Bury Town	A	LGE	15:00	



KEY: G GOAL(S) SCORED; P PENALTY SCORED;  
 FIRST SUB; SECOND SUB; THIRD SUB; FOURTH SUB; FIFTH SUB  
 ● YELLOW CARD; ● RED CARD



Emirates  
FA CUP



OG USED SUBSTITUTES (MINUTE INTRODUCED)

Thanoj

Ranger 1

Lobjoit ●

Loza 1

Stanley

York (47); Lewis (50); Oppong 1 (50); L. White (90); Fifield (90)



# COMMUNITY & ACADEMY

with Phil Wade | Academy Director / Community



## Welcome to our first home league encounter of the season against Leiston FC.

We wish the players, officials and all the 'Blues' supporters a good day with us at Latimer Park and a safe journey back to Suffolk.

For the Poppies, once more it's been an eventful close season, with the departure of Richard Lavery and his backroom staff; following their second place finish last season and the subsequent loss to AFC Telford United in the play-off final.

Season 2024-25 was a campaign that most fans would have taken this time last year, however I think in the end most supporters feel it was a case of what might have been, after being in such a prominent position post our fabulous FA Cup run. The beauty of football though, is that you get to start all over again a few months later and we welcome Simon and his staff to see where this season's adventures can take us.

## ACADEMY NEWS

Last season made me very proud to be Academy Director of KTFC. The specific remit I was given a few years back, was to focus on development for our younger teams and to try and get our older sides to a position of competing at the right end of the Junior Premier League.

Season 2023-24 saw our U16's narrowly miss out on the title and our U13's and U14's win the Junior Premier Midlands League;

a fantastic achievement, with our U14's going on to be Regional Champions and narrowly miss out on being the National Champions at the JPL National Finals weekend. This was a season that we knew we'd find hard to match come season 2024-25.

For the U16's and below that I oversee, we have a fantastic leadership team, with Academy Manager Michael McNally's assured presence and experience

at the helm, in my opinion being a key factor in our success and the difference between perhaps being there or thereabouts, or actually getting over the line at the end of a campaign.

We did just that once more last season, with the structure we've created providing the platform for our excellent U16's coach Ben Atkins and his team, going onto win the JPL Midlands Division with weeks to spare.



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WK 3: MON 4 AUG - FRI 8 AUG  
WK 4: MON 11 AUG - FRI 15 AUG  
WK 5: MON 18 AUG - FRI 22 AUG  
WK 6: TUE 26 AUG - FRI 29 AUG

**PRICES**  
10AM - 3PM : £18 PER DAY  
**EXTRA HOURS**  
9AM - 10AM : £3.50 PER HOUR  
3PM - 4PM : £3.50 PER HOUR  
**FULL WEEK DISCOUNT 10AM-3PM**  
WK 1 - £45 (9AM-4PM : £63)  
WK 2, WK 3, WK 4, WK 5 - £75 (9AM - 4PM : £105)  
WK 6 - £60 (9AM - 4PM : £84)

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Our U15's narrowly missed out on winning their league but more than made up for it by winning the JPL National Vase competition, as they beat Macclesfield on their own turf to lift the Cup.

Their manager Gareth Livsey (son of former Poppies Legend Gordon) has followed on from being Ben Foster's very able assistant and continued to drive the team on in tremendous fashion and what an asset to KTFC he has become.

Pictures can be seen opposite of both last season's victorious Under 15's and Under 16's teams.

## COMMUNITY TRUST

School holidays are upon us and our summer holiday camps are buzzing with some fantastic numbers already having attended.

As well as our paid places (see poster above), KTFC Community Charity Trust are pleased to provide HAF places for those children that qualify for free school meal vouchers. To book through HAF, please use the following link: [eequ.org/hafnorthants](http://eequ.org/hafnorthants)

We look forward to continuing to provide these camps over the summer, as we continue to strive to bring KTFC increased links with our local community.

Enjoy the game and please give our mascots plenty of encouragement when you see them out on the pitch this evening.

Phil

# MASCOT MAGIC

## WELCOME KETTERING TOWN FC UNDER 11S ACADEMY

This evening we welcome our KTFC U11's Academy side as our team mascots.

It's a privilege to have them with us today and we hope they have a fantastic season in the Midland's Junior Premier League this coming year.

The close season has seen this age group revamped, with many new very talented players joining the side. New coaches James Logan and Tom Isaacs have brought a fresh impetus and excellent coaching to the side, and it's going to be exciting to see how they develop and fair this season.

KTFC would like to thank James and Tom for all their commitment and hard work in organising and coaching the side.

We're also very proud that James has been successful in gaining a place in the first team coaching staff for the new 2025/26 season. James is an experienced coach with a good knowledge of the game and we wish him the very best of luck for the season ahead with KTFC.



## POPPIES SQUAD NEWS

## ALL CHANGE AT LATIMER PARK

**It's been a summer of change around Latimer Park with both player and managerial changes at the club.**

The summer has seen a number of new players recruited to the club, with a number of them leaving and several players have stayed with the club for the season ahead.

There has also been a Managerial change with Richard Lavery leaving to be replaced by former Banbury United manager, Simon Hollyhead. We also welcome of course new Manager Simon Hollyhead to the club and I know he is raring to go.

First of all the players leaving are Jonny Edwards who has been sold to Hednesford Town, Ben Hart and Connor Johnson have both moved to Spalding United whilst keeper Dan Jezeph has joined Rushall Olympic.

Unfortunately Dan dislocated a finger during pre-season training and will miss the start of the season.

Devon Kelly-Evans will come up against the Poppies this season with his new club Harborough Town whilst Sam McIntock and Luca Miller have joined with Peterborough Sports.

Kyle Storer, who joined the Poppies halfway through last season, has signed for Alvechurch while Barwell have taken Tyree Wilson.

Terrell Pennant has also left the club, but at the time of writing, we hadn't heard where he will be playing his football this season.

There were several players who were on-loan last season and Alex Gudger, having returned to parent club, Brackley Town, has since been released and has linked up with Halesowen Town. Aaron Powell returned to Peterborough United, but on his release from the 'Posh', has moved to Peterborough Sports,

while Finlay Wilkinson has been released by Barnet and chosen to move to Hemel Hempstead Town.

Jamara Loza, Nile Rangers and Callum Powell remain with the club.

As you would expect we have been extremely busy in the player recruitment department and the following players have all joined the Poppies for the coming season.

Levi Andoh, Will Glennon, Finlay Corrigan, Ish Fatadjo, Shane Flynn, George Forsyth, Josh Humphrey, Leon Lobjoit, Edmond Oppong, Connor Stanley, Paul White and Archie Crowther are the new faces.

Simon Hollyhead boosted his squad further during the week ahead of the big kick-off with two more signings.

First of all the club announced the signing of central-defender Will Glennon who joins us from Bedford Town. Will is no stranger to Latimer Park having scored twice for St. Ives Town last season in the Ives 3-2 win.

He has previously played for AFC Hackleton, Bugbrooke St Michael, AFC Rushden & Diamonds, Stamford AFC and St Ives who he left in the summer to join the Eagles.



Levi Andoh



Shane Flynn



Connor Stanley



Paul White



George Forsyth with Simon Hollyhead





Will Glennon with Simon Hollyhead

Will went straight into Simon Hollyhead's squad for the season's opener at Royston Town on Saturday.

Hot on the heels of Will's signing the club also confirmed that midfielder Alfie Lewis had joined the club from Aveley FC. Alfie is a product of the West Ham United academy and was part of the Hammers first team squad, without making a first-class appearance.

He went on loan from West Ham to

St Patrick's Athletic, of the League of Ireland Premier before joining them full-time. Leaving Ireland, Alfie joined Plymouth Argyle playing in EFL League One and the FA Cup for the Pilgrims.

After leaving Argyle, he joined Dundalk in the League of Ireland First Division before joining Aveley FC in the Vanarama National League South where he made 18 appearances, last term.

The Poppies faithful will be looking



Alfie Lewis

forward to seeing all our new arrivals in action this season as we look to build on last season's success.

We will introduce all of the players, old and new, to you throughout the season in your new-look matchday programme.

**We welcome all of the new lads to the club and wish them all a successful stay with us while thanking the departed players for their efforts whilst with us.**



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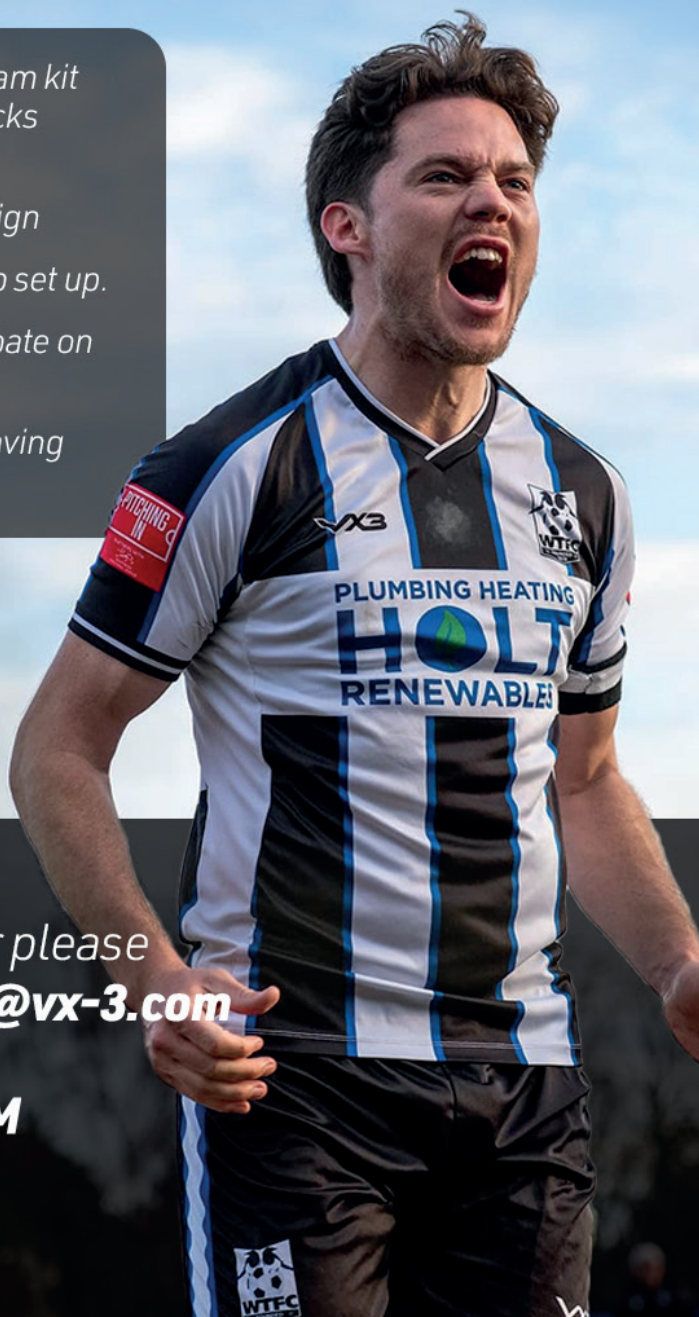
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## ON THIS DAY

# 12TH AUGUST

with Martin Bellamy



## 1968

The Poppies are now in the Southern League Premier after promotion the season before. We were runners up behind today's visitors Worcester City. It's a Monday night; Steve Gammon's charges swept the champions away with a resounding 5-0 victory. The manager was on the score sheet, with Ken Gully scoring a brace and Barry Daldy also with a brace.

A decent crowd of 2,459 packed into Rockingham Road enjoying the season opener at home.

## 1972

We have been yo-yoing between the Southern league Premier league and the first division. In 1968 it was promotion, 1971 sadly relegation, 1972 happily promotion as champions. Big Ron's Poppies open this new season down at the Crabble, home of Dover FC, now known as Dover Athletic since 1983. The match ended all square at one a-piece with the player manager on the scoresheet.

961 spectators watching on.

## 2008

Mark Cooper's Blue Bet Square North Champions opened this Premier League season the previous Saturday drawing 1-1 at home to Forest Green Rovers. This Tuesday night we travel down to Essex to take on Grays Athletic. Another 1-1 draw ensued. With the Poppies scoring both goals, John Dempster in the right end, Guy Branston in the wrong end.

A crowd of 696 watched on at the New Recreation Ground.

## 2014

Unusually, the Poppies started the season with 2 home fixtures. The previous Saturday we saw off Aylesbury United winning 2-1. This Tuesday evening, we entertain Northwood in the Southern league First Division. A resounding 5-0 victory over the Woods with goals from Andy Gooding, scoring from the penalty spot, a Dubi Ogbonna hat-trick, including another penalty, with Alfie Taylor completing the Nap hand.

594 enjoying a summer evening at Latimer Park.

## 2017

This Saturday afternoon we start the season down in Berkshire to take on Slough Town. We're at their new ground Arbour Park, including a 3G pitch. The Rebels spent may seasons as a nomadic club once they were turfed out of Wexham Park Slough.

A few seasons at Windsor & Eton, then sharing with Beaconsfield SYCOB, before they returned to their home town. We're in the Southern League Premier. Marcus Law's Poppies came away with a creditable victory winning 2-1. Brett Solkhon put us one up in the first half with Ben Milnes scoring from 20 yards out, late on. The Rebels pulled one back late into injury time.



770 watching with around 200 Poppies supporters for this season opener.

## 2023

Andy Leese is the new man at the helm, we're back in SLPC after a last match of the season relegation from the National North. We lost our opening match of the season the previous Saturday at Stamford, with a 3-2 defeat. Today we welcomed Stourbridge to Latimer Park. Despite going 2-0 up early on, courtesy of goals from Sam Bennett and Tyrone Lewthwaite, the Poppies were on the wrong end of a 4-2 scoreline. Andy Leese's start to the season wasn't going well, worse was to come.

895 spectators endured this disappointing match.





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## ACTION REPLAY

## THE POPPIES IN PRE-SEASON

**It's been a long pre-season for Kettering Town and a pre-season that has also seen many changes to the playing squad and management team.**

**Last season's Manager, Richard Lavery, left the club and he was replaced by the former Banbury United manager, Simon Hollyhead, who has had a busy few weeks since his appointment, as he prepares for the new season.**

**Oh yes, and along the way there have been six pre-season friendlies, with plenty of goals and plenty of wins.**

It all started way back on Saturday 5th July when we travelled to Huntingdon Town and returned home 4-0 winners and then seven days later we returned from Desborough Town with a 2-0 win under our belts.

It was then time for cup action when we travelled to Moulton FC for a first round tie in the Northants Hillier Senior Cup and a good performance saw us run out 3-0 winners.

On the final Saturday of July we travelled to the Oval, to face the 'Greenbacks' of Bedworth United where we emerged 4-3 winners. The month ended with a 1-1 draw at Evesham United.

Our final pre-season game was our only one here at Latimer Park when we welcomed Basingstoke Town, a week last Saturday. This is how the Poppies Media reported the game.



### PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY SATURDAY 2ND AUGUST 2025



**KETTERING  
TOWN**

**2**



**BASINGSTOKE  
TOWN**

**3**

It was a beautifully sunny day at Latimer Park with the sun glinting off the new scoreboard at the Morrisons end of the ground as the Poppies entered the field of play.

With Paul White unavailable, Callum Powell recovering well but not fit enough to play, injured, there were just two changes from the Tuesday

night clash with Andi Thanoj on the bench and the arrival of our new loan signee, Archie Crowther who started the game.

The Poppies started brightly and soon applied pressures on 'The Stokes' defence with Fatadjo producing a slide rule pass to Lobjoit who forced an early save from the away goalkeeper with a curling effort producing a corner.

**1-0** / The Poppies found an opening on 19 minutes after Loza was brought down in the penalty area and he recovered to produce a bullet of a penalty down towards the keeper's right.

Simon Hollyhead's side continued the free flowing attacking football, which characterised the first half, with a move in the twenty second

minute which resulted in Fatadjo making an incisive pass through the Basingstoke defence to Lobjoit who aimed a ferocious volley at the visitor's goal forcing a good save.

**2-0** / The home side extended their lead as Archie Crowther, on his debut, headed home at the front post from the resulting corner with the ball nestling in the keeper's right-hand net. It was almost a carbon copy of the goal he forced last season at the same end.

Hollyhead was forced into an early change as Fatadjo had to leave the field with a suspected broken arm following a midfield tussle with a Basingstoke defender. He was replaced with Andi Thanoj after twenty nine minutes.

Both Loza and Stanley looked lively and a constant threat with Lobjoit





having the most significant strike following some neat interplay as he dragged his effort just wide of the goal.

⚡ 2-1 / Basingstoke halved the deficit just before half-time after an initial shot cannoned off the Kettering post and the number seven collected the ball on the six-yard line, cut inside and scored at close range.

#### HALF TIME: KETTERING TOWN 2-1 BASINGSTOKE TOWN

Both Flynn and Stanley were substituted at half-time, with Corrigan and York replacing them, respectively.

⚡ 2-2 / The Stoke began the second half with the clear intention of winning the game and they equalised on fifty one minutes after confusion in the Poppies backline allowed for a low cross which reached the opposing number ten who scored past Humphrey.

It was a physical encounter and with Basingstoke increasingly pushing for

the winning goal, Hollyhead made further changes in the latter half of the game with Oppong being replaced by Fifield and Trialist A replaced by Trialist B on sixty four, and then Loza replaced by Ranger after eighty three minutes).

The Poppies had a few promising, but ultimately unsuccessful attempts on goal, most notably by the effervescent Fifield who had his shot from outside the area agonisingly glance past the opposition's right-hand post.

⚡ 2-3 / However, the visitors scored the winning goal in the eighty eighth minute of the game with a slotted finish past Humphrey after a fluid counterattack.

#### The Poppies line-up was as follows.

Josh Humphrey, Levi Andoh, Shane Flynn, George Forsyth (Captain), Trialist A, Archie Crowther, Connor Stanley, Ismael Fatadjo, Eddie Oppong, Leon Lobjoit, Jamar Loza  
**Substitutes:** Nile Ranger, Kai Fifield, Wes York, Fin Corrigan, Trialist B, Trialist C, Trialist D, Trialist E

**Attendance: 540**

Images courtesy of Paul Cooke



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## COMMERCIAL POPPIES

with Naheed Shears | Poppies Commercial Manager

**It's great to be back at Latimer Park for our first home game of the season, and we'd like to start by giving a big welcome to Leiston FC, along with their board, players, and travelling supporters. We hope you enjoy your visit.**

Of course, a warm welcome as always to our own brilliant Poppies fans, it's fantastic to see you back and behind the lads for what we hope will be an exciting season.

Today, we're also really pleased to be joined by two fantastic matchday sponsors - Trademark Polythene and Plan Associates. Their support means a great deal to the club.

A Warm Welcome to everyone at Trademark Polythene and Plan Associates.

Enjoy the game everyone!  
Up the Poppies!

Naheed



## MATCH SPONSOR

## TRADEMARK POLYTHENE

We're delighted to have Mark from Trademark Polythene and his guests with us as today's Match Sponsor - welcome to Latimer Park!

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Thanks again to Mark and the team for their support today. Enjoy the hospitality, enjoy the game, and don't forget to ask Mark about the good stuff... just maybe leave the bin liner as a souvenir.\*

\*Unless you really want to take one home.

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MAN OF THE MATCH

# JAMAR LOZA

V ROYSTON TOWN



Well, what a start to the season wasn't it?

I don't think many of us saw a seven goal thriller coming but what a fantastic start to the season with the Poppies running out 4-3 winners at Royston Town on Saturday.

Our Man of the Match was named as Jamar Loza who scored our third goal shortly before half-time to make it 3-3.



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## POPPIES IN PROFILE

# LEVI ANDOH

**LEVI WAS BORN IN AMSTERDAM, HOLLAND ON THE 12TH MARCH 2000.**

After moving to England at the age of six he joined Aston Villa's academy at the age of six before being released at the age of fourteen.

He then had trials at Port Vale, Walsall and Wolverhampton Wanderers but in 2017/18 he began his non-league career at Cradley Town.

Levi then had spells with Worcester City and Solihull United before agreeing to join Ipswich Town in January 2020.

Ipswich were then in League One and in October 2020 he enjoyed a loan spell with Lowestoft Town before making his Ipswich debut in November 2020 in a 2-0 EFL Trophy defeat away at Crawley Town.

Another loan spell followed, this time at Dartford, but in September 2021 it was announced that he had joined Hereford initially on a month's loan. His loan was extended but after returning to Portman Road he was released by the club at the end of the 2021/22 season.

Levi re-joined Hereford on a permanent basis in January 2023 and on that same day he scored on his second Hereford debut in a 1-1 draw against Kidderminster Harriers.

On leaving Hereford, Levi joined York City in July 2023 but after just four games for the Minstermen he suffered a bad injury which was to keep him out for the rest of the season.



In August 2024 in a bid to regain fitness he joined Darlington for a month making six appearances before beginning another loan spell at Truro City

He returned to Hereford for a third spell on 29 January 2025, joining on loan for the remainder of the season.

He was ruled out for the remainder of the season after making 12

appearances, after breaking his collarbone against Scarborough Athletic on 15 March.

It was announced in May 2025 that his contract with York would not be extended and he would leave the club at the end of the 2024-25 season.

On 20 July, Andoh signed for Kettering Town.



# KETTERING TOWN

MANAGER

**Simon Hollyhead**

Red & Black



# LEISTON

MANAGER

**Chris Wigger**

Blue & White

Paul White ●●  
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