



PEACOCKS



Monday 10th April 2023

Kick Off 3:00pm



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Champions 1968-69, 1989-90, 1995-96,
1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-01

SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER SOUTH

Runners-Up 2018-19, Champions 2021-22

CUP HONOURS

FA VASE

Winners 2000-01

SOMERSET PREMIER CUP

Winners 2002-03, 2005-06, 2013-14,
2014-15, 2016-17

CONTACT DETAILS

Taunton Town Football Club
Cygnets Healthcare Stadium
Wordsworth Drive
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 2HG

Website: www.tauntontown.com
Phone: (01823) 254909
E-mail: admin@tauntontown.com

Twitter: @TauntonTownFC
Facebook: Taunton Town FC
Instagram: Taunton Town FC
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President: Tom Harris
Life Vice President: Harold Needs
Chairman: Kevin Sturme
Chief Executive: Kevin Sturme
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Fixture Secretary: Martin Dongworth
Retail Commercial Director: Lee Derrick
Hospitality Manager: Catherine Herbert

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr D. Budge, Mr M. Dongworth, Mrs J. Ellis, Mr T. Gibbs,
Mr J. Mayled, Mr P. Mayled, Mr R. Musker, Mr H. Needs,
Mrs M. Needs, Mr A. Payne

FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

Head of Football: Rob Dray
Assistant Manager: Matt Villis
First Team Coach: Michael Meaker
Goalkeeping Coach: Connor Sidley-Adams
Performance Analyst: David Cohen
Sports Therapists: Anthony Cornish
Sports Masseur: Paul Edwards
Kit Manager: Karl Lindsay
Club Doctor: Dr Tim Norbury

Head Groundsman: Kevin Sturme
Safety Officer: Roger Conway
Head Steward: Mike Parsons
Welfare Officer: Neil White
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Club Shop Manager: Lee Derrick
Club Photographers: Colin Andrews, Ashley Harris,
Debbie Gould
Media Team: Daniel Howell, Andy Power, Josh Perkins,
Darren Harris, Jake Crump, Paul Smith

The Gaffer

ROB DRAY



Good afternoon and welcome to the Cygnet Health Care Stadium for today's Vanarama National League South game as we host Scott Davies, his Slough Town team and their supporters to Somerset.

A number of big games in quick succession recently for us, hosting champions elect Ebbsfleet United before hosting bottom of the league Concord Rangers a couple of days later. It was then Bath City away on Good Friday before we arrive here today to host Slough Town. An injury time loss to Ebbsfleet (0-1) but we bounced back against Concord taking the 3 points (1-0) and we will have been hoping for a positive result at Bath on Friday too.

Looking ahead there is no let up either with a trip to Dartford on Thursday and then we are off to Dulwich Hamlet on Saturday before returning here on Tuesday against Hungerford Town. It is a real testament to the lads to be able to play this many games with very little time for rest and recuperation. Oh how we could do with a bigger squad. But it is what it is and we will roll up our sleeves and dig deep as always for the peacock on the shirt.

Special mention to head groundsman Rob Hake for ensuring the pitch was fit to play on against Ebbsfleet, it didn't look good after all the rain we had had in the build up to the game, but he did a superb job.

Loud and proud for the boys in claret and blue this afternoon. Enjoy the game!

Rob

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The Away End

SLOUGH TOWN

November saw a change in management for the Rebels with Scott Davies, club captain becoming Team Manager and player/coach Lee Togwell Assistant Manager following the surprise departure of Neil Baker and Jon Underwood. They left in their tenth season with the club and fifth in the Vanarama National League South to the disappointment but gratitude from supporters and Board alike. In their first term back in 2014, Slough Town won the play-offs the hard way, to win promotion to the Southern League Premier Division. Two seasons of consolidation followed and 2016/17 saw Slough make a play-off place losing out to Leamington. A very strong run-in from Slough the following year saw the Rebels finish in third place to earn a play-off place. Ironically, they beat Kettering in the semi-final, the same team defeated in the 2014 play-off final, and a tremendous fight back at King's Lynn saw Slough win promotion again by 2-1. Slough had regained their position in the National League after 20 years. The circumstances of which still rankles with some supporters. In the first term in the National South division, Slough missed out on a play-off place by 2 points. The doors on football were shut by Covid in March. However, in the points per game in the second season at this level saw Slough finish in fifth place to earn a play-off place and a chance into the Premier Division of the National League. In the event behind closed doors, the Rebels were well

beaten by Dartford at Arbour Park. The adventure continues tentatively amid the dark impact of Covid. What that means is far from certain and starting the season is tentative.

Slough have found the National League South tougher and the score margins are much closer. Most teams are capable of beating everyone else in this Division, so it is fine margins. As before Slough had a solid start to the season, tailing off in the New Year. The FA Cup was a little disappointing having had a good win at Flackwell Heath, Slough bowed out in a replay at home to Chippenham. In the first match Slough went 1-0 down only to rally to a 2-1 lead. The bluebirds then came back to 3-2 before a stoppage time equaliser from Bird. Slough almost had time for a winner but the whistle blew. In the replay, the visitors always seemed more determined and went 1-0 up before Slough levelled. Chippenham went ahead again before another leveller from the home side. But Chippenham stuck at it and Chambers scored the last goal, so 11 goals in this cup tie. It was a similar tale with the FA Trophy, drawing away to Concord Rangers but losing the replay at home. The Senior Cup win over MK Dons gave high hopes of retaining the oldest County cup but the competition was abandoned because of the emergency.

The last two seasons will long be remembered for the epic FA Cup runs. In

2017 reaching the Second Round was the equivalent of a Premier League club reaching the Final. Promotion did mean that Slough had one less round to play to reach the Second Round again in 2018.

Probably Slough had the hardest task in 2017, starting at Berkhamsted winning 3-1, they defeated Dulwich 3-2 at home, Poole 2-1 at home, Folkestone 1-0 at home before winning 6-0 in Lincolnshire at Gainsborough. Once Rochdale scored their first goal at Arbour Park, the result was not really in doubt for the Second Round tie.

Slough started the FA Cup trail slowly last term with a 2-2 home draw with Sholing, winning the replay 3-0. Bristol Manor Farm were the visitors in the next round and they also secured a replay with a 2-2 draw. This time, Slough won the replay 4-0, and fans for both clubs enjoyed the occasion. Fellow league opponents were next for Slough with a visit to Eastbourne Borough, Slough winning 2-1. This set Slough up for a tough visit to National League Premier side Sutton United in the First Round. Arguably amongst the worst draws possible. Slough came away with a 0-0 draw, to set up a replay at Arbour Park. Harry Beautyman's 9th minute goal for long periods looked like it would settle it for the visitors, as Sutton piled on the pressure. However, the longer the game went on, the more Slough gained the upper hand, and Dobson scored a deserved leveller on 81 minutes, so extra time. Although Slough had the better of it in extra time, no goals were scored. Slough had not done well in their last penalty shoot-outs in the FA Cup. This time they held their nerve and emerged winners by 8-7. The visit of

Gillingham was almost an anti-climax setting an attendance record for Arbour Park of 2,084. Slough had the better of it in the first half and probably should have scored more than one goal. After the break, a lack of concentration saw Gillingham score in the 48th minute and despite Slough putting on the better show, they were unable to score. Slough now hold the record for reaching the Second Round of the FA Cup without progressing further.

Slough Town's origins have been taken as 1889, but a report in the Slough Observer records the first fixture being played sixteen years earlier in 1873 against Windsor Albion and documents their continuity to the present time. Slough were named as the Slows, before re-naming as Slough Rangers under the same leadership of Mr Sargeant the Club Secretary in 1876. In 1883 the club merged with the Slough Cricket Club and playing as Slough Athletic. The clubs separated in 1888 and Slough sought to merge with other local clubs to form a stronger club, including Slough Albion, Young Men's Friendly Society and the Ottos. Slough Ramblers were to merge later, but other local clubs including Chalvey never made the plunge, so Slough & District FC never came about. The newly named, Slough F.C. continued to play their home games at the Dolphin, which was shared with the Swifts, F. A. Cup Semi-Finalists. It is likely that The Swifts name influenced the original name of the Slough club (Slows) as they started regular fixtures in Slough in the 1870s. The Swifts can be shown playing games until 1893 when they merged with the Corinthians, now Corinthian Casuals.

Slough entered the first league competition in the South of the country that included Tottenham Hotspurs among others drawing 3-3 at home in the league and losing 5-2 away. Slough tried for membership of the Southern League in the 1800s but were unsuccessful. Slough entered league competition again in 1901 joining the Berks & Bucks Senior League. In 1905 Slough joined the Great Western Suburban League but struggled until 1913. In 1921 the club lost out by a narrow margin of votes to Wycombe Wanderers in an effort to obtain membership of the Isthmian League. The club joined the Spartan League instead where it remained until the outbreak of World War II.

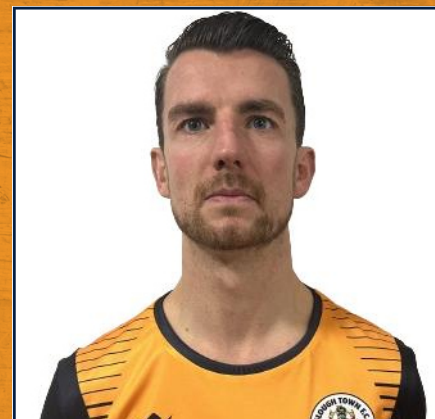
In 1943, Slough amalgamated with Slough Centre F.C. and playing at Belfast Avenue, and became Slough United. During the first post war years the club became the first English club to play a friendly match against European opposition when Hilversum HVV t'Gooi came to the Centre Stadium in 1945, a game that was shown at cinemas all over the land. Slough led a move to create the Corinthian League and because of this became known as the "Rebels" Slough adopted the present style of Slough Town during 1947/48 returning to the Dolphin, after the 'Slough Centre' and 'Slough' went their separate ways over a dispute over home venues. In 1950/51, Slough Town achieved its first league championship when beating second placed Hounslow Town by 2-0 at the Dolphin in front of over five thousand spectators. The Corinthian League merged with the Athenian League in 1963 and the Rebels were promoted into that competition's Premier Division in 1965 after winning the First Division title. At this time Slough Town were one of the strongest

non-league clubs in the south of England under Bob Gibbs. During the season 1967-68, total home attendances exceeding more than sixty three thousand when winning the Premier Division title. Tommy Lawrence took over the reins at the Dolphin in 1970 and the "Rebels" were able to field eight amateur internationals on a regular basis winning the Athenian title in 1971-72 and 1972-73 (also winning the League Cup and Premier Midweek League title). They were semi-finalists in the Amateur Cup in 1971 and then finalists in 1973 losing to a very late goal at Wembley. In 1973 the club joined Division One of the Isthmian League, winning promotion in the first season. In 1974 Slough moved to a new ground, Wexham Park Stadium, which was hastily built by the members and supporters. Slough won the Isthmian League title for the first time in 1980-81 and again in 1989-90, having regularly finished in the leading positions.

Thus the club was promoted to the GM Vauxhall Conference. In 1992-93 season, under the management of Dave Kemp, Slough chased Wycombe Wanderers to the championship but in the final weeks the club fell away to finish fifth. At the end of that campaign Kemp left to take over at Crystal Palace. At the end of the following season Slough Town were relegated. Slough's stay in the Isthmian (Diadora) League saw their immediate return to the Conference as runners up. At the end of 1997-98 the Rebels were semi-finalists in the FA Trophy for the second time losing 2-1 on aggregate to Southport. Finishing in eighth place after completing the double over Kidderminster Harriers, the consortium decided that they could not support the ground requirements for Slough Town to maintain their position in Step One.



ONES TO WATCH



Elliott Benyon

Elliott Benyon joined the club from Oxford City in June 2022 having spent three successful seasons there. Will bring leadership skills to the changing room and on the pitch is a hard-working competitive player. Benyon began his career as a trainee at Bristol City and after loan spells at St Albans City and Crawley Town, signed for Torquay United where he made a substitute appearance at Wembley in their defeat to Ebbsfleet United in tOgohe 2008 FA Trophy Final.



Johnny Goddard

Midfielder Johnny Goddard joined the club from St. Albans City in June 2022. Johnny began his career at Reading, progressing through the youth system before signing his first professional contract in 2011. Has also represented Hayes & Yeading and was a fans favourite at Woking with 25 goals in 116 appearances for the Cards, a spell which earned him a move to Swindon Town. Later played for Stevenage, Aldershot and Ebbsfleet before returning to Woking in 2020.

www.sloughtownfc.net

VIEW FROM THE STANDS - by Dave Webster

Taunton Town 1-0 Concord Rangers

At last, a home win! Having not won at the Cygnet since our 2-0 win over Havant & Waterlooville in January, [10 home games ago!] this was a very much needed and indeed massive victory! I am sure all of the 665 in attendance would agree that this match was light years away from being a classic. But hey, in this nitty-gritty stage of the season, the quality of the game is forgotten when we consider just how important to Taunton Town the 3 points are. The disappointment of Saturday 1st April is now history.

This was a very cautious game between 2 bottom of the league clubs that appeared to be desperate not to concede, with both defences playing like their life depended on it. Jake Wannell was the first in claret n blue to have a go, when his effort went just wide. Lee Lucas was having the game of his life before his suspension kicked in, causing Concord all sorts of problems, and shooting on sight at every opportunity. Indeed it was Lee, that scored our winner, after Guesty had done fantastically well in beating his man on the by line to put in a perfect cross for unmarked Lee to blast into the open goal. The keeper was not happy at all, as he sprinted to the referee to complain about god knows what!!! There was certainly no foul or offside that occurred.

We didn't have it all our own way mind. Concord had a glorious opportunity to score, when their man, from very close range, walloped the ball with force onto the underside of the crossbar, for the ball to fall safely into the hands of Jack. And so the first half ended with the Peacocks 1-0 up and in control.

The 2nd half was pretty much the same, with both clubs going for it. Again though, it was Taunton that had the better chances. Ross Stearn almost getting on the score sheet when his effort from close range was parried onto the post by the keeper, which went off for a definite corner. Strangely the ref decided to give a goal kick instead!!! Then there was another attack, with Lee Lucas once again heavily involved, crossing the ball to Zac Smith whose effort was brilliantly saved by the Concord keeper. Concord upped the pressure in the last 10 minutes or so, as Taunton held on doing what they had to do, mainly heading for the corner flag, slowing the game down.

And so it ended 1-0 to the Peacocks. I spoke to the Concord manager briefly after the game who was convinced his team ought to have been awarded a penalty for a hand ball incident. But on the whole he took defeat gracefully. I have certainly seen much worse clubs than Concord in this division, so maybe, with their games in hand and their fighting spirit, they may just avoid the drop. As for us, survival was never in doubt. We are now back in our favourite position of 17th, a position we have held more than any other. Sitting 7 points clear of the bottom 4 with one or two games in hand over many, its looking very healthy. We have 2 clubs just above us Dover and Hampton & Richmond, both of whom got the double over us, and both certainly catchable. To leapfrog these 2 and end the season in 15th position must be a realistic target.



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THIS SEASON
AT A GLANCE



38
GAMES PLAYED

12
WON

10
DRAWN

16
LOST

46
POINTS



41
GAMES PLAYED

11
WON

11
DRAWN

19
LOST

44
POINTS



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Last Time Out

TAUNTON TOWN CONCORD RANGERS

1 0

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH - TUESDAY 4th APRIL 2023

VENUE: CYGNET HEALTHCARE STADIUM - ATTENDANCE: 665

The Peacocks brought an end to their five match losing streak at the Cygnet Health Care Stadium with a crucial win over the bottom placed Essex side. Much like having to take a large spoon of foul-tasting medicine to get better, the 90 minutes was a pretty unpleasant watch, but the overriding focus was on securing the three points, not how it was achieved, and to that effect the medication worked.

With Nat Jarvis starting a three game ban, Rob Dray rotated the side again with Jake Wannell and Ross Stearn back in the starting line-up and Dylan Morgan on the bench. It soon became apparent that this wasn't going to be a classic. A scrappy opening spell was interspersed with two bouts of treatment for the Beach Boys' loanee from Ipswich Town Alfie Cutbush which eventually forced him to retire after only eight minutes before the Peacocks were mighty fortunate not to find themselves a goal down four minutes later. Nana Kyei released Quentin Monville down the left and his centre was perfect for the unmarked Lewis Manor who thankfully fired against the underside of the crossbar, keeper Jack Bycroft claiming the loose ball.

The hosts recovered from that lucky escape to start making inroads at the other end. Wannell blazed a shot high over the top while appeals for handball from an Ollie Chamberlain cross fell on deaf ears. A throw-in then contentiously went Town's way which led to the only goal of the night,

Cam Evans pass putting Joe Guest in space on the right and his low cross was drilled home by Lee Lucas past former Chelsea Under 18 goalkeeper Mitch Beeney.

The remainder of the half saw the Peacocks carve out a few more opportunities without being able to add to their tally. Zac Smith's forward ball found Dave Sims-Burgess inside the box, the Town striker opting to take the ball around Beeney who managed to claim. Stearn was caught on the edge of the box by Tosan Popo but Lloyd James' free kick found the clutches of the Concord custodian before Stearn blasted over the bar from close in following Chamberlain's burst into the box.

An unassuming first half continued in the same vein after the break although Town were close to adding a second a few minutes in when Chamberlain's cross reached Smith who found Stearn at the far post but his shot smacked off the bar and over despite protestations that Beeney had managed to touch the effort onto the woodwork. In response Concord sub Ricky Modeste tried his luck from distance but Bycroft had it well-covered while the Town keeper showed a safe pair of hands when catching an Alex Hernandez free kick at full stretch, however there were generally no good vibrations from the Beach Boys.

Town persevered attacking the Showtime

Attractions End knowing a second goal would surely settle matters. Morgan who had replaced Sims-Burgess eight minutes into the half scurried to the byeline but could only find Beeney with the cross before the Rangers' keeper touched over a fierce left-footed strike from Lucas, the ensuing corner being headed wide by Wannell. Smith then had a shot blocked before Beeney held his drive held at the near post as the Concord defence dug in.

Nick McCootie took over from Stearn for the final 13 minutes as Town kept the visitors at arms' length. Bycroft caught a couple of crosses but Concord failed to create anything of note as the hosts wound down the clock, although unsuccessful appeals for a handball two minutes into stoppage time did have home fans' hearts in mouth temporarily. It was ugly but the Peacocks had done what they needed to and there is no doubt they deserved the victory. All being well the Easter period will





VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH 2022-23 LEAGUE STANDINGS

as at 5th April 2023

P	Team	GP	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	PTS
1	Ebbsfleet United	41	29	7	5	95	41	+54	94
2	Dartford	39	22	7	10	74	42	+32	73
3	Oxford City	41	19	14	8	73	48	+25	71
4	Chelmsford City	40	20	8	12	55	40	+15	68
5	St Albans City	41	19	9	13	64	46	+18	66
6	Braintree Town	41	17	13	11	57	50	+7	64
7	Farnborough	40	18	9	13	53	42	+11	63
8	Worthing	40	17	12	11	75	67	+8	63
9	Havant & Waterlooville	40	18	8	14	71	59	+12	62
10	Eastbourne Borough	41	19	5	17	67	61	+6	62
11	Tonbridge Angels	41	18	8	15	62	64	-2	62
12	Bath City	40	16	10	14	55	50	+5	58
13	Hemel Hempstead Town	41	15	12	14	46	49	-3	57
14	Chippenham Town	41	13	15	13	50	56	-6	54
15	Hampton & Richmond Borough	40	13	8	19	54	63	-9	47
16	Dover Athletic	40	12	11	17	40	55	-15	47
17	TAUNTON TOWN	38	12	10	16	39	43	-4	46
18	Welling United (-1)	40	11	13	16	47	58	-11	45
19	SLOUGH TOWN	41	11	11	19	48	72	-24	44
20	Cheshunt	40	10	10	20	45	64	-19	40
21	Dulwich Hamlet	40	11	6	23	56	86	-30	39
22	Hungerford Town	38	9	8	21	41	55	-14	35
23	Weymouth	40	10	5	25	48	73	-25	35
24	Concord Rangers	36	8	7	21	33	64	-31	31

- P - Position GP - Games Played W - Won L - Lost D - Drawn F - For A - Against PTS - Points -

Today's Other Fixtures - Monday 10th April

3pm	Braintree Town v Ebbsfleet United
3pm	Cheshunt v Worthing
3pm	Chippenham Town v Hampton & Richmond Borough
3pm	Concord Rangers v St Albans City
3pm	Dartford v Dover Athletic
3pm	Farnborough v Tonbridge Angels
3pm	Hemel Hempstead Town v Dulwich Hamlet
3pm	Hungerford Town v Havant & Waterlooville
3pm	Oxford City v Chelmsford City
3pm	Taunton Town v Slough Town
3pm	Welling United v Eastbourne Borough
3pm	Weymouth v Bath City

Upcoming Fixtures - Thursday 13th April

7.45pm	Concord Rangers v Hungerford Town
7.45pm	Dartford v Taunton Town

Upcoming Fixtures - Saturday 15th April

3pm	Bath City v Concord Rangers
3pm	Chelmsford City v Hungerford Town
3pm	Dover Athletic v Oxford City
3pm	Dulwich Hamlet v Taunton Town
3pm	Eastbourne Borough v Hemel Hempstead Town
3pm	Ebbsfleet United v Cheshunt
3pm	Hampton & Richmond Borough v Weymouth
3pm	Havant & Waterlooville v Chippenham Town
3pm	Slough Town v Farnborough
3pm	St Albans City v Welling United
3pm	Tonbridge Angels v Dartford
3pm	Worthing v Braintree Town

NEXT UP

At The Cygnet Healthcare Stadium

Tuesday 18th April 2023
Kick Off 7.45pm

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2022-23 FIXTURES & RESULTS

AUGUST '22

Date	Venue	Opposition	Competition	KickOff/Score	Attendance
6th	HOME	WELLING UNITED	VNLS	0-0 D	813
13th	AWAY	CONCORD RANGERS	VNLS	1-0 L	285
16th	AWAY	FARNBOROUGH	VNLS	1-0 L	501
20th	HOME	DARTFORD	VNLS	2-1 W	743
27th	AWAY	ST ALBANS CITY	VNLS	0-0 D	766
29th	HOME	CHIPPENHAM TOWN	VNLS	3-1 W	1,148

SEPTEMBER '22

3rd	AWAY	HUNGERFORD TOWN	VNLS	0-1 W	377
13th	AWAY	SLOUGH TOWN	VNLS	1-0 L	452
17th	HOME	LAVERSTOCK & FORD	FAC 2Q	1-0 W	645
24th	HOME	CHELMSFORD CITY	VNLS	0-0 D	928
27th	HOME	BATH CITY	VNLS	1-1 D	958

OCTOBER '22

1st	HOME	WALTON & HERSHAM	FAC 3Q	1-0 W	731
4th	HOME	ODD DOWN	SPC	7-0 W	184
8th	AWAY	EBBSFLEET UNITED	VNLS	5-0 L	1,474
15th	AWAY	YEOVIL TOWN	FAC 4Q	0-0 D	3,093
18th	HOME	YEOVIL TOWN	FAC 4QR	1-0 W	2,347
22nd	AWAY	WORTHING	VNLS	1-1 D	1,295
25th	AWAY	OXFORD CITY	VNLS	2-1 L	374
29th	HOME	TONBRIDGE ANGELS	VNLS	4-1 W	872

NOVEMBER '22

5th	AWAY	MILTON KEYNES DONS	FAC 1	6-0 L	2,739
12th	HOME	CHESHUNT	VNLS	1-0 W	720
19th	HOME	DULWICH HAMLET	FAT 2	2-1 W	661
26th	AWAY	HEMEL HEMPSTEAD TOWN	VNLS	1-1 D	452

DECEMBER '22

3rd	HOME	BRAINTREE TOWN	VNLS	0-0 D	624
6th	AWAY	YEOVIL TOWN	SPC	2-1 L	441
20th	AWAY	SLOUGH TOWN	FAT 3	0-1 W	299
26th	AWAY	WEYMOUTH	VNLS	1-3 W	1,488

JANUARY '23

Date	Venue	Opposition	Competition	KickOff/Score	Attendance
10th	AWAY	DOVER ATHLETIC	VNLS	1-0 L	502
17th	AWAY	TORQUAY UNITED	FAT 4	4-2 L	1,411
28th	HOME	ST ALBANS CITY	VNLS	0-1 L	807
31st	HOME	HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE	VNLS	2-0 W	551

FEBRUARY '23

4th	AWAY	EASTBOURNE BOROUGH	VNLS	0-3 W	1,013
7th	HOME	DULWICH HAMLET	VNLS	1-1 D	687
14th	HOME	FARNBOROUGH	VNLS	0-2 L	690
18th	AWAY	HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE	VNLS	3-2 L	1,148
21st	HOME	OXFORD CITY	VNLS	1-1 D	521
25th	HOME	DOVER ATHLETIC	VNLS	0-1 L	787
28th	HOME	EASTBOURNE BOROUGH	VNLS	1-2 L	510

MARCH '23

4th	AWAY	TONBRIDGE ANGELS	VNLS	2-3 W	933
7th	HOME	HAMPTON & RICHMOND BOROUGH	VNLS	1-2 L	456
11th	AWAY	CHESHUNT	VNLS	0-0 D	431
14th	AWAY	CHIPPENHAM TOWN	VNLS	3-1 L	612
18th	HOME	HEMEL HEMPSTEAD TOWN	VNLS	1-2 L	718
21st	AWAY	WELLING UNITED	VNLS	0-1 W	485
25th	AWAY	BRAINTREE TOWN	VNLS	0-2 W	820
28th	AWAY	HAMPTON & RICHMOND BOROUGH	VNLS	3-1 L	433

APRIL '23

1st	HOME	EBBSFLEET UNITED	VNLS	0-1 L	958
4th	HOME	CONCORD RANGERS	VNLS	1-0 W	665
7th	AWAY	BATH CITY	VNLS	3:00pm	-
10th	HOME	SLOUGH TOWN	VNLS	3:00pm	-
13th	AWAY	DARTFORD	VNLS	7:45pm	-
15th	AWAY	DULWICH HAMLET	VNLS	3:00pm	-
18th	HOME	HUNGERFORD	VNLS	7:45pm	-
22nd	HOME	WORTHING	VNLS	3:00pm	-
25th	HOME	WEYMOUTH	VNLS	7:45pm	-
29th	AWAY	CHELMSFORD CITY	VNLS	3:00pm	-



THE UNTOLD GAME

- Gundi: The Bulgarian Hero -

At first it seems a simple question. Who is the greatest Bulgarian to have ever played the game? The nation boasts just one Ballon d'Or winner, and that man, Hristo Stoichkov, became a legend both for his country and for Barcelona, one of the giants of the European game. He is rightly regarded as one of the finest footballers of his generation. So why is it that if you ask the question in Bulgaria, you'll likely get a different answer?

Georgi Asparuhov - Gundi - was born in the middle of the Second World War, in Sofia, and spent most of his childhood in the post-war chaos demonstrating his prodigious talent in the city's youth league. As he turned 15 in the late 1950s, he was invited for a trial at city heavyweights Levski Sofia, and duly taken on as a member of their under 16 side. It wasn't long before he made his mark there as well, with his manager Konstantin Georgiev reporting to the first team that 'there is nothing we can do with him' to make him better. 'The boy is a born footballer.'

Gundi didn't stick around in the youth teams for long, and he was in the first team, at just 17, against Botev Plovdiv. Tall and imposing, the Levski coaches thought he was a natural centre back, despite Gundi's belief in his attacking talents. Grateful, however, he lined up at the back, but he couldn't contain his own talents. He quickly became known for both goalscoring and for dribbling out of defence, often embarrassing his opponents. When he was called up for Bulgaria's youth

teams, and excelled. In a tournament in Austria, he jinked past two players and scored from almost the halfway line. Everyone agreed, he was an attacker, and that's where he played from then on.

National Service threatened to stall Gundi's career just as he made his breakthrough, but he was allowed to continue playing for the club nearest to where he was stationed; Botev Plovdiv. In his two seasons, he transformed them from mid-table fodder to genuine title contenders, finishing third and then second. But his heart was in Sofia, and when he was released from the military he went back to Levski. By now he had become an imposing striker. Tall, strong, fast, he was a defence's nightmare. In 1965 Levski won their first title in 12 years, with Gundi scoring 27 in 29. He then went off with the national team to a difficult World Cup qualifier against Belgium, which Bulgaria were expected to lose. In a performance described as 'divine' he scored twice to send his country to the finals, and would be nominated for the Ballon d'Or, ahead of Franz Beckenbauer and Ferenc Puskas.

With Levski in now European Cup action, it was inevitable that some European giants would come knocking. After three goals against Benfica, the Portuguese champions made an approach, with Eusebio declaring that he craved to play alongside the Bulgarian. Milan were the most persistent though, making repeated offers. Bulgaria, under strict communist control refused to let him leave the country.

The 1966 World Cup was a disappointment for Bulgaria, but Gundi flourished. In a group of death with Brazil, Portugal and Hungary (with Ballon d'Or winner Florian Albert). Gundi scored his side's only goal, but was unable to carry the team himself with so much talent against him. He left disappointed, but with his reputation further enhanced.

Unfortunately, his heroics just made him more of a target in what was an increasingly violent Bulgarian league. Injuries threatened to finish his career early, but it was to end in far more tragic circumstances.

Having been injured once too often, and unable to play for Levski, Gundi was invited to a celebration by Botev Plovdiv, who still loved him from his two season spell there a decade earlier. He took his international teammate Nikola Kotkov with him for the ride, and picked up a hitchhiker on the road. As he made his way down the Hemus motorway, his Alfa Romeo lost control and smashed into a truck. The car was set alight, and all three men died. Kotkov was 32, Gundi was 28.

In 1999, he was voted (ahead of Stoichkov) as Bulgaria's greatest ever player. He was placed 40th on FIFA's list of the greatest players of the twentieth century. It is impossible to guess how his reputation might have changed had he moved to Western Europe, but one suspects he might be much more readily remembered. For Gundi, though, he achieved his dream. One audacious attempt by Milan to lure him across the Iron Curtain, with the promise of \$500,000, a contract level with the highest paid player in Italy, and most importantly, safe passage out of the Communist bloc, he responded by saying 'there is a country called Bulgaria, and in this country there is a team called Levski. You may not have heard of it, but I was born there and there I shall die.' Tragically, he was right.

Enjoy the game.

Martyn

Martyn Green





CYGNET HEALTHCARE STADIUM REGULATIONS

Persons entering this stadium must abide by the Stadium Regulations as printed in the matchday programme and displayed on posters inside the stadium. Failure to do so may result in ejection from the premises, a ban from attending any future events and also be the subject of a football banning order. Admission to and the right remain within the stadium is strictly on condition that any person attending will adhere to the Stadium Regulations as detailed below.

1. All persons must comply with any directions given by a Steward, Club Official or Police Officer.
2. Encroachment onto the playing area, sterile area, or its adjoining parts is prohibited.
3. Climbing on any building, wall, fence or any other structure is prohibited.
4. Persons must not throw any object onto the pitch or within the spectator areas.
5. Persons must not be in possession of, and/or lighting any firework or flare.
6. Chanting or singing of an obscene, indecent, discriminatory or offensive nature is not permitted.
7. Persons must not use obscene, indecent, discriminatory, offensive or threatening language.
8. Persons must not use obscene, indecent, discriminatory, offensive or threatening gestures.
9. Persons must not damage or deface Club and Stadium property.
10. Persons must not damage, deface or obstruct any notice or advertisement.
11. Alcohol must not be brought into the stadium.
12. Persons must not consume alcohol that has not been purchased at Taunton Town FC.
13. Persons must not consume alcohol in any alcohol free designated areas.
14. There will be zero tolerance to alcohol abuse/misuse.
15. There will be zero tolerance to drug possession, use and abuse.
16. Smoking is permitted in the stadium except in areas designated as a No Smoking area.
17. Umbrellas are permitted within the stadium but must not be used if obstructing the view of other spectators.

Spectators must also note the following:

- A) The Club does not accept any responsibility or liability whatsoever for any loss or damage to vehicles or their contents, or any other personal property brought onto the Clubs premises and stadium.
- B) The Club is unable to accept any additional responsibility for minors attending matches beyond those matters covered by the Stadium Regulations.
- C) Photography and use of video including CCTV is in operation at all matches and events and may be used in any of our media channels as well as press releases.
- D) Dogs on a lead are permitted in the Stadium but they remain the sole responsibility of their owner at all times.

THE CLUB RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CARRY OUT PERSONAL SECURITY SEARCHES AND/OR REFUSE ADMISSION TO ANY PERSON AT ANY TIME, WITHOUT EXPLANATION.

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MEET THE TEAMS

Monday 10th April 2023 - KickOff 3:00pm



Head of Football: Rob Dray

Player/Manager: Scott Davies

Jack Bycroft (GK)	1	●
Jay Foulston	3	●
Nick Grimes	4	●
Dan Ball	5	●
Jake Wannell	6	●
Ollie Chamberlain	7	●
Lloyd James	8	●
Nat Jarvis	9	●
Nick McCootie	10	●
Joe Guest	11	●
Ross Stearn	13	●
Zac Smith	16	●
Cameron Evans	17	●
Dave Sims-Burgess	20	●
Lloyd Irish (GK)	21	●
Dylan Morgan	22	●
Lee Lucas	31	●
		●
		●
		●
		●

1	Will Dennis (GK)
2	Josh Jackman
3	Luca Woodhouse
4	Shane Bush
5	Joe Dandy
6	Lee Togwell
7	Francis Amartey
8	Matt Lench
9	Ogo Obi
10	Elliot Benyon
11	Johnny Goddard
12	George Hunt
14	Scott Davies
15	Temi Eweka
16	Gabe George
17	Louis Walsh
18	Tyrese Owen
19	George Alexander
20	Matt Burgess
	Imran Kayani
	Matt Hall
	James Dobson

Match Officials

Referee: Ross Martin

Asst Referee: Thomas Anstice-Mitchell Asst Referee: Gareth Dunn

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