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# TAUNTON TOWN V WESTON SUPER MARE

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## CONTACT DETAILS

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# THE GAFFER

Good evening everyone and fingers crossed you are reading these welcome notes from me tonight and we have a home game of football to play as we welcome Weston-super-Mare to Wordsworth Drive for tonight's Vanarama National League South game. My welcome extends to the fans and also the match officials.

We all know it hasn't been the easiest couple of months for the club, with many players coming and going and it was always going to take some time for the new players coming in to find their feet. We have also been hampered with the amount of games we have had postponed due to the wet weather in this part of the country.

We are now looking over our shoulder, with Welling United starting to pick up some vital points, but we do still have those games in hand and we need to begin to turn those draws into wins if we are to maintain our National League South status. I have every faith in the players we have at the club right now that we will do just that.

Peacock's fans we will need you in full voice tonight to get behind the team and to be that 12<sup>th</sup> man that we really do need at present.

*Rob*

Rob Dray  
Head of Football, Taunton Town FC

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## THE AWAY END



# WESTON SUPER MARE

The club's first site was known as the Great Ground at the junction of Locking Road and Hutton Moor Road, this has now since been developed as a private housing estate. The Football Club came into being after players in the former Weston Aircraft side had suggested at their AGM that a team bearing the town's name should be formed.

Mr Ted Recardo, who was running the Aircraft Side, approached a member of the then Borough Council Mr George Cooper, who responded enthusiastically to the idea and became the founder chairman. At first, friendly matches were played and players changed at the rear of a garage opposite the Locking Road Ground. The first record of a Weston-super-Mare side in a competitive match was in the 1887/88 season when they lost to local rivals Clevedon Town 2-1 in a Medal Competition organised by the Somerset FA. The following year Weston were members of a County Committee of the Somerset FA.

Weston's first cup win was in March 1911 when they beat Clevedon 3-0 in the Weston Charity Cup. In 1913/14 they finished third in the Bristol Charity League behind Bath City and Bristol Rovers Reserves.

In 1922/23 they played in a Bristol and District League coming second behind Bristol Leather Trades, winning 17 and drawing six of their 28 games. That season they also won the Bristol Charity Cup beating Clevedon 8-2 in the final on the 5th May 1923 at Yatton's football ground.

The third Cup victory was in the 1926/27 season when they won the Somerset Senior Cup, defeating Paulton Rovers 3-2 in the semi-finals

after starting with only nine men because two players had been sent bogus telegrams advising that the match was off. They went on to defeat Welton Rovers in the final in front of a 6,000 crowd.

They were also finalists that year in the Clevedon Charity Cup, losing 5-1 to Clevedon. In those days Weston players were paid half a crown (12p) to play. Clevedon again beat Weston in the replay of the 1936/37 Somerset Senior League knock-out cup after drawing 1-1 in the first match.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, the club was sadly disbanded.

Following the Second World War, the present club reformed in 1948. A meeting at the Town Hall decided to form a semi-professional Club. A committee was formed to look into the possibility of buying the Locking Road Ground, which at the time it was thought could be acquired for around £4,000.

In the following months the club were elected into the Western League Division 2 alongside Barnstaple Town and a new club, Chippenham United.

Weston played their home matches at the Great Ground in Locking Road where they regularly attracted attendances of over 1,000, and even for a friendly against local side Langford Rovers over 600 turned up. The first league game at home attracted some 1,500 fans, with the changing accommodation for players taking place in a large marquee. There was no cover for spectators but enthusiasm ran high and crowds rolled in regardless of the

weather. The first league match was away to Chippenham United, a side that included seven professionals, some of them former Football League players. Weston were beaten 6-1, but it should be noted that the Chippenham side proved too strong for most opponents in that season and were a really formidable outfit.

The first Weston win at Locking Road came against Cinderford Town, and that was followed by the first away win at Stonehouse. A further boost came with the formation of the Supporters Club in 1948, with Mr Sam Wooding becoming its first Secretary. The club spent most of the 1950s in the Second Division, going close to promotion on a couple of occasions before the division was disbanded.

The move to the Langford Road Ground came in time for the 1955/56 season and the first game saw Weston defeat Peasedown 7-0.

In 1960/61, along with Trowbridge Town, Exeter City Reserves and Welton Rovers, Weston were elected to Division 1 of the Western Football League, Weston held the unique distinction of never winning promotion or suffering relegation, a record that would remain intact for many more years to come.

The first modern taste of cup glory came in 1961 when Weston reached the First Round Proper of the FA Cup. Unfortunately, it ended in bitter disappointment as they were beaten by local rivals Bridgwater Town in the replay before a home crowd of 2,500. It was not Weston's day, as after having what looked like a good goal disallowed on a hairline offside decision, Weston went down by a goal scored minutes from the end. They missed a plum home tie against Crystal Palace, who were then in Division 3 of the Football League.

At Langford Road the set up was a great improvement of that at the Great Ground. Apart from the changing accommodation for the players, a licensed Social Club was eventually established in what had been a large Nissan Hut.

A period of success began in the 1975/76 season with the arrival of Kim Book as team manager. During the seven seasons under his control and

that of his successor Dave Stone, Weston reached second place in the league, won the League Cup and also won the Western Senior Cup on five occasions. Only once did they finish lower than the top ten and in 1980/81 they reached the Western League Goldliner Cup Final, only to lose 2-1 to Dawlish Town.

In the 1983-84 season, Weston moved to a new ground at Woodspring Park, which was built almost entirely by supporters. The Woodspring Park ground was greatly developed over the years, with a clubhouse costing £100,000 and floodlights installed in 1986.

In 1989, John Ellener was appointed manager. In three seasons he took the club to two cup finals and, for the first time since they were reformed, Weston won the Western League Championship in 1991/92 to earn promotion to the Southern League Midland Division.

In 1993, team coach Peter Amos replaced Ellener as manager and guided the club to 11th position in their first season in the Midland Division. A club record was set at the beginning of the 1993/94 season with an undefeated run of 10 matches. The run also included an appearance in the First Round proper of the FA Cup for only the second time in the club's history, being drawn against non-league Woking. After drawing 2-2 at Woking, Weston lost in the replay at Woodspring Park in front of a crowd of 2,623 supporters, a new ground record attendance. A new record was also achieved that season by getting into the First Round proper of the FA Trophy. In that same season, the league record attendance was broken with a 1,260 attendance against Clevedon Town. 91 points were collected in the league but promotion was missed out on by one point, as Rushden & Diamonds and VS Rugby were promoted ahead of Weston.

The 1994/95 season saw the recruitment of Len Ashurst as the club's new manager, and he steered the side to sixth place in his first season. Ahead of this season, Weston were transferred to the Southern League Southern Division. The success of the club was affected in the following season due to an enforced budget cut. The sale of Danny O'Hagan to Dorchester Town and Stuart Jones to Sheffield Wednesday



for a club record fee of £20,000, left the need for team rebuilding. Despite this process, Weston had some more good seasons until eventually finishing in 19th place in the 1997/98 season.

The start of the 1998-99 saw the appointment of John Relish as manager and a move back to the Midland Division. The season started poorly, but did however see a run in the FA Trophy to the 4th round against Hitchin Town. Defeat saw the club miss out on an exciting home tie against Conference side Forest Green Rovers.

In the league, the side plunged to the bottom three of the table, but an improvement in consistency from Christmas 1998 produced a string of good results which could have resulted in a top six finish if the run had started earlier in the season. During this campaign, Weston made yet another sale, this time Ryan Souter went to Football League side Bury.

In the year 2000, Weston secured the purchase of the Westlands Site, only a stone's throw away from Woodspring Park. The plans were to create a new purpose-built stadium incorporating a 250 seater stand with integral bar and entertainment facilities, with a first class pitch and dressing rooms.

At the end of October 2001, the board decided that to achieve their ambitions of being promoted to the Dr. Martens League Premier Division, it was time for a new progressive management team. As an interim measure, Director of Football Alan White took over first-team affairs from John Relish and his staff.

The board then appointed Frank Grogan in November, although due to his contract commitments with Aberystwyth Town, he did not take up the position until 23rd February 2002. In the meantime his assistant Chris Smith took control of first team affairs.

In the 2002-2003 season, the club made history when they won promotion to the Dr. Martens League Premier Division, finishing runners up in the Western Division behind Merthyr Tydfil. Weston went up following a 1-0 win at local rivals Clevedon Town at the Hand Stadium.

In the 2003-04 season, the club had a successful first season in the higher division as they finished high enough to gain entry into the newly formed Nationwide Conference South. The team also reached the Second Round proper of the FA Cup

for the first time in their history, eventually losing 4-1 at Northampton Town. A tremendous run in the FA Trophy also ended when the team lost 4-2 to Telford United away in the 4th Round.

August 14th 2004 saw the opening game at the current Woodspring Stadium in a momentous match against Hornchurch, which ended in a 1-0 victory for The Seagulls. In Weston's first season in the new division they finished a credible 11th with 58 points.

After the 2006-07 season The Seagulls seemed doomed for relegation, the first time in their history. However, Farnborough Town were relegated and Hayes and Yeading merged to form Hayes & Yeading United, leaving the Conference South one team short, earning a reprieve for Weston.

The 2007/08 season ended in a similar way. A 20th placed finish meant the club was eligible for relegation, only to be spared by the enforced demotion of Cambridge City, who failed a ground inspection.

In the 2008/09 season Weston finished a more respectable 17th after an impressive start to the season. But from around November onwards, The Seagulls' campaign took an uneasy dip towards the relegation zone. Tony Ricketts departed the club and it was left to caretaker-manager Andy Gurney to lift the team to 17th position.

The 2010/11 season began with renewed hope as Craig Laird was appointed First Team Manager, and he brought with him Jon Haile as his assistant. In Laird's first season, Weston achieved a 12th placed finish with 53 points, whilst going on to win the Somerset Premier Cup for the first time with a 1-0 victory against Yeovil Town at Huish Park, courtesy of a goal from Ben Kirk.

The 2012/13 season saw the highest ever finish for The Seagulls in seventh place and 67 points, a record highest-ever position in the pyramid that remains to this day. Weston only missed out on a play-off place on the penultimate game of the season, a great achievement considering the lowly finishes in previous seasons.

After Laird and Weston parted company in 2014, Mickey Bell was appointed First Team coach ahead of the 2014-15 season, with Clayton Fortune becoming Player/Assistant First Team Coach. Bell brought in a number of the Weston Academy youngsters who had been on the fringes of the first

team squad.

However, after a string of poor results, Bell was replaced by Director of Football Ryan Northmore at the end of November 2014 with The Seagulls at the bottom of the table. Despite the disappointing start to the league season, Bell managed to steer Weston into the First Round proper of the FA Cup, where they hosted Doncaster Rovers. In front of a record attendance at the 'new' stadium of 2,949, Weston were defeated by four goals to one.

Northmore took the team on a string of unbeaten games, taking them to promotion challenging form. Unfortunately, this didn't continue and after defeating Bath City at home 4-1 in a rearranged fixture, The Seagulls didn't win another league game and saw them finish 17th.

The 2015/16 season saw the side struggle to gain a win throughout August in the League, earning just one point from 18, with that point coming at home in the Somerset derby against Bath City.

During the last month of the season, The Seagulls once again turned on the style and ended the season with six unbeaten games from seven, with Wilson and Grubb netting in a 2-0 win over Maidenhead to spark manic celebrations from the home fans at the Woodspring, knowing that the Seagulls had avoided relegation.

The 2016/17 league season started off promisingly, with three wins and a draw from the first four games, putting Weston at the top of the table. Shawn McCoulsky, who joined The Seagulls on loan from Bristol City days before the season began, scored four goals in the opening four games to see Weston start off stronger than ever expected.

Then, a run of seven league games and a 2-1 defeat to North Leigh in the Second Qualifying Round of the FA Cup saw the sacking of Northmore. His replacement was former Weston player Scott Bartlett, with Chris Barker joining the club as Player/Assistant Manager.

Bartlett and Barker were given the task of keeping The Seagulls in the National League South, and a tricky November saw things look bleaker than before, despite a 4-3 win away to Eastbourne Borough. The defensive signing of Rollin Menayese in December saw an upturn in Weston's form, with new signing Gethyn Hill poking home away to Truro on Boxing Day for a vital three points.

As we entered 2017, Weston got into their stride thanks to Grubb's two trademark free-kicks against Truro on New Year's Day, with the team going on a good run of form to start off the second half of the season, a 3-2 loss away to Dartford in January being the only blemish to their good form.

March saw the games come thick and fast, with the majority of the fixtures against teams at the top end of the table. Weston lost out to Bath 2-1 thanks to McCoulsky's 88th minute winner for the Romans, but Weston still had survival to secure after the trickiest month the club endured all season.

In the 2018-2019 season, Weston suffered their first-ever relegation, bringing their 15-year tenure in the National League South to an end. Manager Marc McGregor left the club in March, with coach Mark McKeever taking caretaker charge for the final games. Weston reached the FA Cup First Round proper and faced Wrexham at home, losing by two goals to nil. In the latter half of the season, the Woodspring Stadium name was changed to the Optima Stadium as Optima Care took over as stadium sponsors.

At the start of the following season, Weston made another hugely significant signing as Dayle Grubb also returned to the club. The 2020/21 campaign proved to be even more short-lived than the previous one as further lockdowns meant that the season was curtailed in the autumn.

However, the following two seasons were to prove to be far more fruitful for The Seagulls. The 2021/22 season saw Weston qualify for their first-ever end of season play-offs, but Weston were sadly defeated in the semi-final at Hayes & Yeading.

But Weston went one better in the 2022/23 season, winning the Southern League Premier South championship, the first time The Seagulls had won a league since topping the Western League in 1991/92. Weston went into their final home game of the 2022/23 season knowing a win against Hendon would see them crowned as champions. A goal from Jason Pope and a hat-trick from Marlon Jackson ensured the three points and a much coveted return to Step 2 football. The celebrations at the final whistle then continued long into the night for Bartlett's talented side.



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# THIS SEASON AT A GLANCE



PLAYED **30**

WON **7**

DRAWN **13**

LOST **10**

+/- **-14**

POINTS **34**

LGE POS **20<sup>TH</sup>**



**32** PLAYED

**12** WON

**6** DRAWN

**14** LOST

**-4** +/-

**42** POINTS

**16<sup>TH</sup>** LGE POS



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## DAVE WEBSTER *View from the stands*

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Vanarama National League South



Its now official! Taunton are the draw specialists, with more drawn league matches than any other club, not only in the National League South, but also the N.L North! In fact, there is only one other club in the top 3 non-league divisions, York City, who have drawn more! A whopping 15!!!!

Make no mistake, Taunton were the better club yesterday, where the victory would have been truly justified for the Peacocks. But not for the first time this season the clinical final touch was missing. Terrell in the Dartford goal, the far busier of the keepers.

Taunton went 1-0 up, courtesy of a rare penalty strike from Nick Grimes, after Zac Smith had been brought down. Nick smashed it straight down the middle, as Terrell dived to his left. The lead was not to last long, when 5 minutes later the scores were level, which has to be said, was due to a lapse of concentration from the Peacocks defence, with either of the 2 unmarked Dartford players on the far post, left free to smash home, after an inch-perfect cross.

This was to be Dartfords only serious attack on the Taunton goal, until the 92nd minute, such was Tauntons dominance! The Peacocks had chance after chance! One such chance came after a good run from Rabby, ended with him putting the ball on a plate for Smith. Unfortunately Zacs effort was aimed straight to the keeper. Cam Evans had two headed attempts calmly collected by Terrell, and that was it for the action packed first half, that appeared to zoom by at the blink of an eyelid!

Taunton continued to run things in the 2nd half, with our control of both wings visible to all, as they tried their damndest to find a winner. Bell found a loose ball, down the centre, but the keeper read it well, as he was out like a flash of lightening to thwart the chance of a shot. Dolman forced Terrell

into his first decent save. Chambo tried one from the edge of the box, which again the keeper read well after a slight deflection.

Then with just over 20 minutes remaining, Taunton made their only substitution, when Ross came on for Nat Jarvis. It didn't take Ross long to get in on the action, as he broke through the Darts defence, to hit a rocket destined for the back of the net, only to witness Terrell pull off a quite fantastic save. As the game reached its climax, it so easily could have gone so wrong for Taunton, with the referee having a very odd 5 minutes. First, Smith was carded after being sandwiched by 3 Darts players in the box, for supposedly taking a dive. Then., at the other end, we saw Lavercombe make the save of the game, keeping out a thunderbolt of a shot. And finally, right at the death we saw Captain Nick receive his 2nd yellow, for what? i don't have a clue! Nick certainly protested his innocence!.

The resulting free kick on the edge of the Taunton box, fortunately for us, all came to nothing. And that was that, on an afternoon when partly because of games that had been cancelled, not a single club in the bottom 12 mustered up a win!!! Dan Ball was named player of the match for Taunton, although he was pushed all the way by Chambo and Rabby, who were quite superb. We played some good football today, it was one of them games where either club could have nicked it in the end, so on that conclusion, the point apiece was a fair reflection.

And so on to Tuesday, where our home clash verses Weston-Super-Mare is looking unlikely to happen by the hour, as the rain continues to torment us. Which leaves next Saturdays away clash verses Truro. Will we be in the away changing rooms/dugout? Who knows in this very much strange season! UTP.

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# THE NON-LEAGUE PAPER

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The role of Non-League football club chairman is an unforgiving one at the best of times.

Making sure the manager is happy, the fans are satisfied and the hard-working staff or volunteers have got all they need, it's all about keeping the ship sailing on the right course.

Well, for Oldham Athletic chairman Frank Rothwell that has quite literally been the case.

By the time you read this, the 73-year-old – yes SEVENTY THREE – should have completed his epic row across the Atlantic Ocean from the Canary Islands to Antigua.

It's all to raise money for Alzheimer's Research UK – as he told The NLP last week, while stranded 400 miles off the Antigua coast waiting for change in the weather!

"We've had terrible conditions for ocean rowing," Rothwell reported back.

"Three years ago, I completed this journey in 56 days. This time I expected to finish in 49 days but we're now on day 51 and I've still got 400 miles to go!

"I'm going backwards now because the wind has changed direction and is

blowing me the wrong way. I'm in a big current which is very contrary to the direction I was going, which is a bit of a pain."

Indeed, it's been far from an easy ride for the Latics chief, who has lost personal items at sea, capsized no fewer than three times and suffered both nausea and motion sickness.

However, for a man who left school aged 14 to repair tractors, then built a multi-million-pound business, has overcome prostate cancer and rescued his hometown club Oldham from bankruptcy after their relegation from the Football League in July 2022, he will not let these problems deter him.

"It's hard on the body, and really hard on the mind, particularly when you start going backwards," he adds. "The boat has rolled over three times! Hopefully the wind will change, but at the moment I'm 400 miles from Antigua sat here on an anchor.

"I throw a parachute and 100m of rope in the sea that holds the boat in this position against the sea."

It's in those moments Rothwell can think of the difference he is making in undertaking his mission.

Rothwell is raising money for Alzheimer's

Research UK in their bid to fund research to combat dementia.

It's a cause close to Rothwell's heart having lost his best friend, brother-in-law, and several close friends and relatives to dementia in recent years.

Last year, he raised £1.1 million and has so far collected £220,000 of his £1 million target with the football club backing his bid from the confines of Boundary Park.

"Dementia is becoming far more prevalent as we're becoming older nations," Rothwell explained.

"I'm 73 and rowing an ocean solo at an age where our parents' generation died, so more people are living to old age and catching dementia.

"My best friend Phil died of Alzheimer's, my brother-in-law Roger died when I was at sea last time, there's five people in the last four years who are friends or relatives who have died from it.

"There's more people dying of dementia than of any other disease in the UK, we all want to do some good if we can do for a cause.

"I've found a cause that I'm attached to and people are supporting me and donating very heavily."

Rothwell helped save his hometown National League club from the brink of extinction in 2022 and the fanbase, in turn, have rallied behind his charitable work.

Players wore Alzheimer Research UK's logos during Oldham's recent victory against Hartlepool United with the club also raising £12,000 through a kit auction.

And on February 24, the Latics are opening their doors for just £1 a ticket for their game against Kidderminster Harriers in order to give Rothwell a hero's welcome.

"I can't wait to come and meet all the fans and have a pint in the bar, and say hello to everyone," he smiles. "One thing I'm missing is my wife's dinner, all my family, and all of the supporters, and I can't wait to see you all again, give you a wave and shake hands."

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# OFFICIAL MATCH REPORT

## DARTFORD I

## TAUNTON TOWN I

24.2.2024 | VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH | ATT: 1018

The Peacocks made the trip to Princes Park with a seemingly easy task of improving upon their previous journey. Three changes were made from the side that had lost at St Albans, with the experienced first teamers Zac Smith, Nat Jarvis and Ollie Chamberlain coming in for Ross Stearn, Marley Rose and Louie Slough. The Peacocks knew the task ahead and the stage was set for what would become a fiery encounter in Kent.

Taunton started like a team that was determined to stay in the Vanarama South and a side with renewed fire in the belly. The two Zacs, Bell and Smith, were out to cause problems from the off with darting runs down the flanks, and crosses from wide were coming in thick and fast in the first ten minutes. Nick Grimes was getting firmly into the action (and would find himself in the action for most of the 90) and he sought out an early goal with a sumptuous ball forward for the head of the electric Bell, but his cross to Jarvis was turned behind.

A heavy challenge from the Dartford winger Elliott Romain would send Bell flying into the dugout, causing Grimes and Head of Football Rob Dray to fly into a heated exchange with both Romain and the referee, ending with all three men entering the referee's book for the incident

in the 16th minute.

It was indeed the one of the wing-backs that would earn Town the opener, as Zac Smith won the ball back in our penalty area and as the referee waved away shouts for a Dartford penalty he drove down the left flank and was fouled by Maxwell Statham as he tried to drive deep into the opposition box, one thing led to another and the referee pointed to the spot much to the dismay of the Dartford fans. Step up captain Grimes, who in lieu of the designated taker Ross Stearn, slammed the ball to the keeper's left and put the Peacocks 1-0 to the good in the 18th minute.

Whilst Taunton may have had the stronger start, it was Dartford who were on the ascendancy from the 20th minute onwards. The Darts had some weak chances turned behind or cleared away but their plugging away paid dividends in the 34th minute with a Luke Coulson cross that the Taunton backline failed to clear, leading to a back post header being converted by Fumnaya Shomotun to bring Dartford back level.

The two sides exchanged further blows, the closest effort for the Peacocks coming in the 44th minute with a clever pass from Rabby Tabu-Minzamba finding its way to

Zac Smith whose shot from the edge of the box found its way into the gloves of Dartford keeper Billy Terrell. Ultimately though, neither side could gain any advantage over the other heading into the half time whistle. Both sides re-emerged from the interval with unchanged teams for the second 45 and the two sides were ready to do battle again, both searching for three precious points in an attempt to secure their place in the Vanarama South for the 24/25 season.

It was Taunton who thought they had struck first, with a well worked free-kick routine seemingly paying dividends on the 48th minute, as Lloyd James played a clever pass to Dan Ball and a flick from the defender found Ollie Chamberlain who put the ball in the back of the net. However, the joy of a second goal was short lived as the referee brought it back after a foul from Ball in the buildup. Taunton were still firmly in the ascendancy as they looked for their first win in the calendar year and Chamberlain thought that he might have broken the duck in the 59th minute with a shot that cannoned off a Dartford defender, but ultimately Terrell would have had an easy save to make.

Ross Stearn was introduced in the 68th minute, replacing Nat Jarvis who had another much improved game, and it took him nine minutes to make an impact. In the 77th minute a beautiful pass from Minzamba found Stearn in acres of space, he cut inside and unleashed a shot filled with venom towards goal, however a fantastic save from Terrell denied Taunton their second goal of the afternoon.

Dartford looked to mount a brief comeback in the final ten minutes, with two attack minded substitutions of Alex

Wall and Taylor Maloney, bringing forth a tactical change with it. With these alterations it was now Dartford who looked the most likely to go on and win it, with a nice move in the 81st minute leading to a well claimed cross from Dan Lavercombe. The Taunton 'keeper would be called into action just 10 minutes later with a sensational save to deny the aforementioned substitute Wall.

Wall was the shining light for Dartford going forwards as the game moved deep into injury time, the experienced striker with nearly 400 National League appearances knew how to pull a defender around, with a penalty shout for a well manufactured foul from Dan Ball waved away on the 93rd minute. But the more controversial decision came five minutes into added time, with the same manoeuvre pulled on Nick Grimes. This time the referee wouldn't wave the shouts away and showed the skipper his second yellow card and, subsequently, his marching orders.

This decision was perhaps a perfect characterisation of The Peacocks' afternoon, with the team on and off the field incurring a total of six yellow cards, in what was otherwise a very tame game of football. However, that is not what the record will show, and the Peacocks now move into two local derbies against Weston-super-Mare and Truro, without their captain for the latter, but nevertheless one point closer to survival.





## VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH 2023-24 LEAGUE STANDINGS

P	Team	GP	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	PTS
1	Yeovil Town	34	23	6	5	64	35	+29	75
2	Chelmsford City	34	18	9	7	54	31	+23	63
3	Worthing	35	19	5	11	77	54	+23	62
4	Bath City	33	16	9	8	55	36	+19	57
5	Braintree Town	33	16	8	9	48	33	+15	56
6	St Albans City	35	17	5	13	61	49	+12	56
7	Hampton & Richmond	33	15	9	9	50	43	+7	54
8	Maidstone United	33	15	9	9	47	42	+5	54
9	Slough Town	35	15	8	12	65	56	+9	53
10	Aveley	34	15	8	11	51	44	+7	53
11	Torquay United	34	14	5	15	54	57	-3	47
12	Chippenham Town	34	11	12	11	45	46	-1	45
13	Tonbridge Angels	36	12	9	15	50	52	-2	45
14	Farnborough	33	11	11	11	52	54	-2	44
15	Hemel Hempstead Town	35	12	8	15	45	53	-8	44
16	<b>WESTON-SUPER-MARE</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>42</b>
17	Weymouth	33	10	11	12	45	52	-7	41
18	Dartford	34	10	8	16	46	51	-5	38
19	Truro City	29	10	5	14	40	45	-5	35
20	<b>TAUNTON TOWN</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>-14</b>	<b>34</b>
21	Welling United	33	7	12	14	41	58	-17	33
22	Eastbourne Borough	33	8	6	19	37	61	-24	30
23	Havant & Waterlooville	34	7	4	23	40	68	-28	25
24	Dover Athletic	35	3	12	20	35	64	-29	21

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

### TONIGHT'S FIXTURES

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

7.45pm	Bath City v Braintree Town
7.45pm	Dartford v Aveley
7.45pm	Farnborough v Chelmsford City
7.45pm	Hampton & Richmond v Havant & Waterlooville
7.45pm	Taunton Town v Weston-super-Mare
7.45pm	Welling United v Truro City
7.45pm	Weymouth v St Albans City

### UPCOMING FIXTURES

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024**

3pm	Chelmsford City v Aveley
3pm	Chippenham Town v Weston-super-Mare
3pm	Dartford v Worthing
3pm	Dover Athletic v Maidstone United
3pm	Farnborough v Yeovil Town
3pm	Hemel Hempstead v Havant & Waterlooville
3pm	Slough Town v Bath City
3pm	St Albans City v Hampton & Richmond Borough
3pm	Tonbridge Angels v Eastbourne Borough
3pm	Truro City v Taunton Town
3pm	Welling United v Braintree Town
3pm	Weymouth v Torquay United

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

7.45pm	Aveley v Yeovil Town
7.45pm	Chelmsford City v Worthing

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

7.45pm	Farnborough v Welling United
7.45pm	Hampton & Richmond v Eastbourne Borough
7.45pm	Maidstone United v Bath City
7.45pm	Taunton Town v Slough Town

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## NEXT UP AT HOME

**TUESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024**

**KICK OFF - 7:45PM**



**VANARAMA  
NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH**

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Adult: £14  
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# It is selfie time again





# The Untold Game

## Superstars of the Subcontinent

One of football's great mysteries is the struggle of the subcontinent to make an impact on the global game. India now has the biggest population in the world, nearly 1.5 billion people, and yet the nation has been unable to find 11 individuals to get them to a level where they can even take part in a World Cup, let alone compete for one. Of course, football fights a losing battle for popularity with cricket in India, but perennial underachievement didn't have to be the expectation. There was a time when the future of Indian football looked bright, and they reached the summit of their continent's elite.

The Asian nation had shown promise in the previous decade, taking on France in an infamous barefooted performance at the 1948 Olympics and losing by a single goal. The appointment of Syed Abdul Rahim brought a focus on tactics rather than endurance. As the 1950s progressed, he adopted the successful Hungarian style that brought them so close to the World Cup in 1954, and saw his team grow in stature.

India reached the semi-finals of the 1960 Olympics with impressive victories against Hungary and France. But the 1962 Asian Games in Jakarta were nearly missed altogether. The Indian government almost didn't provide the finances for the team to travel to Indonesia, and then, under

pressure from some countries, the Indonesian government refused to provide visas for Israeli and Taiwanese athletes. Guru Dutt Sondhi, the Indian member of the International Olympic Committee, suggested the games be renamed the Jakarta games, if not every nation in Asia were able to compete. There was uproar.

India's team arrived in Indonesia to jeers that would continue throughout the tournament. Players had to sit on the floor of the team bus to avoid missiles. The offices of the Indian High Commission were ransacked by baying mobs. Not the best preparation for a talented team.

And the team was talented. Peter Thangaraj had been voted the best goalkeeper in Asia just a few years before. Jarnail Singh was a powerful centre-back who had won international acclaim in the Olympics. Yusuf Khan was a beautifully versatile midfielder who gave the team whatever they needed. And Chuni Goswami, the best footballer India has ever produced, and a prolific inside-forward. He turned down a trial with Tottenham to stay at home, such was his talent. The omens were promising.

But the atmosphere was not. India wilted under the Indonesian pressure in their first game, against South Korea, who they had

never beaten. They slumped to a disappointing 2-0 defeat, with nobody doing themselves any credit. The only superstar who avoided criticism was Thangaraj; the goalkeeper was absent with 'flu.

The second match required a response, and after some harsh words from Rahim, India certainly provided it. Goswami opened the scoring in a 4-1 victory, but Jarnail Singh picked up a head injury toward the end of the match. India's confidence was up, though, and they cruised to a fairly comfortable 2-1 victory over Japan in their final group game, despite a late scare.

In the semi-finals, India would have to overcome a South Vietnam side who were quietly having a very good tournament, having scored 9 and conceded just 1 in the group stages. Rahim brought Jarnail Singh back into the team after missing out against Japan, but decided to reintroduce him as a striker.

India took the lead in the 12th minute, and ran riot in the first half, hitting the post before Jarnail Singh added a second just before half time. But South Vietnam were not overawed, and came out for the second half fighting. They reduced the deficit with a penalty, and then equalised just past the hour. India responded, and upped their attack again. On 75 minutes, Goswami scored a cheeky lob to reestablish their lead. It would turn out to be the winner.

In the final, India's opponents would be South Korea once again. The night before, unable to sleep, the squad went for a walk. They encountered Rahim, smoking in the darkness. With quiet calm, he asked them to win the gold for him.

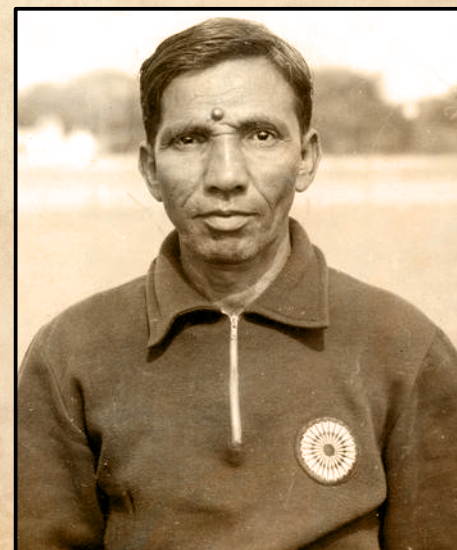
India flew out of the blocks, and on 17

minutes Goswami danced around a couple of defenders to set up PK Banejee for the lead. Three minutes later, Jarnail Singh - playing as a forward again - headed home a free kick. His move forward confounded the Koreans.

But India didn't extend their lead, and near the end of the game South Korea found a consolation. But the Indian defence held firm, and gave Rahim the gold he had wanted so desperately. As the players celebrated, and the disappointed crowd booed, they found their inspirational manager sitting quietly in the dressing room, crying with joy.

The country and the government were ecstatic, but that joy was short. Having achieved his gold, Rahim - a chain smoker - passed away from lung cancer the following year. His replacements, ever since, have focussed on the physical side of the game, to India's detriment.

As one of his players said, Rahim took Indian football with him to the grave.







# 2023-24 FIXTURES & RESULTS

Date	Competition	Opponents	KO/Score	Att	Lge Pos
<b>AUGUST</b>					
Sat 5th	League	BRAINTREE TOWN (H)	2-1 W	801	4th
Sat 12th	League	Aveley (A)	4-1 L	372	15th
Tues 15th	League	Weymouth (A)	1-1 D	1,252	14th
Sat 19th	League	WELLING UNITED (H)	1-0 W	727	9th
Sat 26th	League	ST ALBANS CITY (H)	3-2 W	642	5th
Mon 28th	League	Maidstone United (A)	1-1 D	2,014	6th
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>					
Sat 2nd	League	DARTFORD (H)	1-0 W	902	5th
Tues 5th	League	Chippenham Town (A)	3-3 D	634	6th
Sat 9th	League	Tonbridge Angels (A)	0-3 W	852	5th
Fri 15th	FAC 2Q	Merthyr Town (A)	1-1 D	1,583	N/A
Tue 19th	FAC 2QR	MERTHYR TOWN (H)	1-2 L	774	N/A
Sat 23rd	League	HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE (H)	0-0 D	877	4th
Sat 30th	League	EASTBOURNE BOROUGH (H)	2-1 W	670	3rd
<b>OCTOBER</b>					
Tue 3rd	SPC1	PORTISHEAD TOWN (H)	5-2 W	273	N/A
Sat 7th	League	Dover Athletic (A)	2-2 D	617	2nd
Sat 21st	League	HAMPTON & RICHMOND (H)	0-1 L	843	3rd
Tues 24th	League	Bath City (A)	3-0 L	1,537	5th
Sat 28th	League	Chelmsford City (A)	0-0 D	645	5th
<b>NOVEMBER</b>					
Tues 7th	SPC2	STREET (H)	2-2 (4-3W Pens)	298	N/A
Sat 11th	League	Hemel Hempstead Town (A)	1-0 L	491	13th
Tues 21st	League	Truro City (A)	2-2 (8-7L Pens)	-	15th
Sat 25th	League	WORTHING (H)	1-1 D	765	15th

Date	Competition	Opponents	KO/Score	Att	Lge Pos
<b>DECEMBER</b>					
Sat 2nd	League	Eastbourne Borough (A)	A-A	N/A	15th
Sat 9th	League	FARNBOROUGH (H)	4-0 W	680	14th
Sat 16th	League	Havant & Waterlooville (A)	3-0 L	766	16th
Sat 23rd	League	TONBRIDGE ANGELS (H)	2-2 D	768	17th
Tues 26th	League	Yeovil Town (A)	4-1 L	6,301	19th
<b>JANUARY</b>					
Sat 6th	League	Slough Town (A)	3-0 L	947	19th
Tue 9th	League	YEOVIL TOWN (H)	0-1 L	3,001	19th
Sat 13th	League	DOVER ATHLETIC (H)	1-1 D	847	20th
Tues 23rd	League	WEYMOUTH (H)	0-2 L	661	20th
Sat 27th	League	AVELEY (H)	2-2 D	766	20th
Tue 30th	SPC QF	BRIDGWATER TOWN (H)	1-1 (5-4W Pens)	579	N/A
<b>FEBRUARY</b>					
Sat 3rd	League	Welling United (A)	0-0 D	484	20 <sup>th</sup>
Tues 6th	League	TRURO CITY (H)	0-0 D	489	20 <sup>th</sup>
Sat 10th	League	St Albans City (A)	0-6 L	1,663	20 <sup>th</sup>
Sat 24th	League	Dartford (A)	1-1 D	1,018	20 <sup>th</sup>
Tues 27th	League	WESTON-SUPER-MARE (H)	7:45pm	-	-
<b>MARCH</b>					
Sat 2nd	League	Truro City (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Tue 5th	League	SLOUGH TOWN (H)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 9th	League	Worthing (A)	7:45pm	-	-
Tues 12th	League	Torquay United (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 16th	League	Eastbourne Borough (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 23rd	League	CHELMSFORD CITY (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Fri 29th	League	Weston-Super-Mare (A)	3:00pm	-	-
<b>APRIL</b>					
Mon 1st	League	BATH CITY (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 6th	League	Hampton & Richmond (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Tue 9th	League	Braintree Town (A)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 13th	League	Farnborough (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 20th	League	HEMEL HEMPSTEAD TOWN (H)	3:00pm	-	-
TBA	League	TORQUAY UNITED (H)	TBA	-	-
TBA	League	MAIDSTONE UNITED (H)	TBA	-	-
TBA	League	CHIPPENHAM TOWN (H)	TBA	-	-





## STADIUM RULES & 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.

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**Mya Graham,**  
UCFB graduate, Assistant Producer at **talkSPORT**



I really enjoyed my time at GIS where I gained valuable analysis knowledge and additional coaching experience. This is definitely the place to go if working in football is your long term aim.

**Dene Field**  
GIS graduate, First Team Analyst and Coaching Assistant at **Watford FC Women**



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# THE TEAMS

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH | TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2024 | KICK-OFF 7:45PM



**HEAD OF FOOTBALL:** ROB DRAY

- DAN LAVERCOMBE (GK) 1
- ZAC BELL 2
- NICK GRIMES 4
- DAN BALL 5
- OLLIE CHAMBERLAIN 7
- LLOYD JAMES 8
- NAT JARVIS 9
- RABBY TABU MINZAMBA 12
- ROSS STEARN 13
- PHIL MENDONCA 15
- ZAC SMITH 16
- CAMERON EVANS 17
- MARCUS DAY 18
- CALLUM DOLMAN 19
- LLOYD IRISH (GK) 21
- MARLEY ROSE 22
- LOUIE SLOUGH 23
- EVANDER GRUBB 32



**MATCH OFFICIALS**

- REFEREE:**  
LEWIS SANDOE
- ASSISTANT REFEREE:**  
JAMES GOULD
- ASSISTANT REFEREE:**  
ANDREW GLANVILLE

**MANAGER:** SCOTT BARTLETT

- MAX HARRIS
- FREDDIE BUTCHERS
- KEIRAN THOMAS
- SAM AVERY
- JASON POPE
- BAILEY KEMPSTER
- LLOYD HUMPHRIES
- JAMES DODD
- JACOB JAGGER CANE
- DAYLE GRUBB
- JORDAN BASTIN
- ROBBIE WILLMOTT
- OPI EDWARDS
- REX MANNINGS
- MARLON JACKSON
- REUBEN REID
- JAMIE SOULE
- ALEX FLETCHER