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VS NEEDHAM MARKET**

**SATURDAY 23RD AUGUST
2025**

3:00 PM KICK-OFF

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Friday	11am-8.00pm
Saturday	11am-7.30pm
Sunday	CLOSED



Bromsgrove Sporting Football Club

The Victoria Ground

BROMSGROVE

Worcs B61 0DR

Incorporated 2009



CLUB DIRECTORS AND OFFICIALS

President: Jeff Rea

Chairman: Rod Brown

Vice-Chairman: Graham Scott

Football Secretary: Dave Stephens

Director of Football: Iain Queen

Operations: Simon Cadwallader

Safety: Rob McLaren

Facilities: David Sheppard

Head of Commercial and Hospitality: Anita Gemmell

Directors: Joe Amess, Beni di Luca Commercial: Matt Foden, Peter Baker

Vice-Presidents: Brian Poole, Steve Smith, Richard Boorn Chaplain: Rev Steve Levett

Safety Officer: Simon Nichol

Crowd Doctor: Dr Jerome Wallington

Maintenance: Joe Ford, Charlie Rudge, Steve Davies, Andrew Stephens, Mark Vardy, Rob Birch, Bob Kyle, Steve Lammas, Tony Swift, Mike Chance

Schools & Community Ambassador: Nirm Bassi

Accountants: Taylor & Co.

Reception: Sarah Lammas, Sandra Cable

Catering: Della Greatbach

Manager: Scott Adey-Linforth

Player/Assistant Manager: Paul McCone

First Team Coach: Karl Fellows

GK Coach: Ryan Pratt

Club Kit Man: Dean Ashford

Sports Therapist: Dan Eyre

Team Captain: Reece King

Vice-Captain: Ash Carter

Social Media & Website: Max Banner, Chris Curtis, James Wattis

Photos & Video: Chris Jepson, Rob Clarke Tannoy: Adrian Fox, Chris Fox

Website: www.bromsgrovesporting.co.uk

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Rouslers Bar Bookings telephone: 07353 862559 Commercial: 07809 836935

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Views expressed in this programme are those of individuals and not necessarily those of Bromsgrove Sporting Football Club

CLUB HONOURS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Season 2010/11	<i>Promoted to The Midland Combination Division One</i>
Season 2011/12	<i>Promoted to The Midland Combination Premier Division</i>
Season 2011/12	<i>Finalists - The Evesham Hospital Junior Cup</i>
Season 2012/13	<i>Champions - The Midland Combination Reserves Division Two</i>
Season 2012/13	<i>Winners - The Worcestershire Football Association Youth Cup</i>
Season 2013/14	<i>Runners-up - The Midland Combination Premier Division</i>
Season 2013/14	<i>Winners - The Smedley Crooke Memorial Challenge Cup</i>
Season 2014/15	<i>Runners-up - The Midland Football League Division One</i>
Season 2014/15	<i>Winners - The Les James Challenge Cup</i>
Season 2015/16	<i>Finalists - The Worcestershire Senior Invitation Urn</i>
Season 2015/16	<i>Finalists - The Smedley Crooke Memorial Challenge Cup</i>
Season 2015/16	<i>Runners-up - The Midland Football League Division One</i>
Season 2016/17	<i>Semi-Finalists - The FA Vase</i>
Season 2016/17	<i>Winners - The Worcs Football Association Senior Invitation Urn</i>
Season 2016/17	<i>Winners - The Worcs Football Association Saturday Under 18s Cup</i>
Season 2016/17	<i>Champions - The Midland Football League Division One</i>
Season 2017/18	<i>Winners - The Worcs Football Association Senior Invitation Urn</i>
Season 2017/18	<i>Champions - The Midland Football League Premier Division</i>
Season 2018/19	<i>Runners-up - The Southern League Division One Central</i>
Season 2018/19	<i>Winners - The Southern League Division One Central Play-off Final</i>
Season 2019/20	<i>Joint Winners - The Worcs Football Association Senior Invitation Cup</i>
Season 2019/20	<i>Joint Winners - The Worcestershire Football Association Youth Cup</i>

BROMSGROVE SPORTING MANAGERS

Myles Day	<i>2010</i>
Stewart Brighton	<i>2010 - 12</i>
Keith Draper Snr	<i>2012-13</i>
Graham Scott	<i>2013</i>
Adrian Mander	<i>2013 - 14</i>
Les Palmer	<i>2014</i>
Paul Smith	<i>2014 - 18</i>
Brendan Kelly	<i>2018 - 21</i>
Gavin Hurren	<i>2021 - 22</i>
Thomas Baillie	<i>2022</i>
Mike McGrath	<i>2022 -2024</i>
Tim Flowers	<i>2024</i>
Paul Smith	<i>2024</i>
Scott Adey-Linforth	<i>2024 -</i>

BROMSGROVE SPORTING CHAIRMEN

John Teece	<i>2009 - 15</i>
Jon Prescott	<i>2015 - 16</i>
Jeff Rea	<i>2016</i>
Mike Burke	<i>2016 - 2023</i>
Brian Seymour-Smith	<i>2023</i>
Graham Scott	<i>2023</i>
Rod Brown	<i>2023 -</i>

From the Boardroom - Rod Brown, Chairman



Firstly, welcome to all the directors, management, players and supporters of our opponents today, Needham Market, to The UK Stadium.

We come into this fixture following a slow start for us over the three games to date, two defeats and a hard earned win.

Last Saturday, we produced our best 30 minutes at the start of the game so far this season, managing to take a two-goal lead against a very good Spalding United side. However, we unfortunately could not hold out losing to a very late goal which equally

leaves us all feeling hard done by after the euphoria of leading.

Our new signing in centre-back Luke Softley, however, equipped himself very well and I'm sure once he settles in properly will add strength to the team.

The highlight from all around the Club has been the excellent condition and presentation of the pitch, certainly the best it's looked for many years. This is credited to Rob (Birch), Joe (Ford) and Brian (Poole) - our pitch maintenance team. Well done lads on behalf of everyone associated with Bromsgrove Sporting.

We are waiting for the first set of "Wall of Fame" bricks to arrive so that we can start on the project, hopefully over the next week or so.

Our early crowds have been slightly down, I guess that holidays are a big factor, equally so results on the pitch have a big bearing but put a couple of wins together back-to-back and those crowds will surely increase.

Hopefully, we can take a good support to Evesham United next Saturday for our FA Cup First Qualifying Round tie. This will be a very difficult game against a team now at our level and playing well. We will need to be at our best to give us the best possible chance. You will find travel details on page 49.

Let's hope we can take a good result today into that game.

Enjoy.

Rod

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Manager - Scott Adey-Linforth



Good afternoon everybody and welcome to the UK Electrical Stadium for our Bank Holiday fixture against Needham Market.

Starting with last week's match against Spalding united; it was obviously disappointing to have lost particularly in the last minute and I would have been happy with a point.

We were brilliant in the first half against an excellent side and I thought we did well to hold out until the last minute but as I said earlier still very disappointing.

Moving on to today's match, we again will be up against difficult opponents. They got related last season after one year in the National League North so they will be desperate to get back again.

On the player front we should have Reece King back today after serving a three-match ban following his red card in the last match of last season.

Ash Carter should be back soon if not today then on Monday and the good news is that I now have a full squad with Jordan Lyden and Aksum White also recovered. Luke Benbow picked up a knock against Spalding last week but he also has recovered and will be in the squad for today.

On Monday we have a local derby against Redditch United and hopefully we will have a good following coming along to that match.

Like Alvechurch, we do not have a good recent record against Redditch so we are long overdue a result let alone a win.

Meanwhile enjoy today's match.

Scott

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Meet the Rouslers (1)

	<p>Scott Adey-Linforth <i>Manager</i> Bromsgrove Dog Walking & Pet Services</p> 		<p>Paul McCone <i>Player/Assistant Manager</i> Sponsored by The Groundforce Team</p>
	<p>Karl Fellows <i>First Team Coach</i> Available for sponsorship</p>		<p>Ryan Pratt <i>Goalkeeping Coach</i> Available for sponsorship</p>
	<p>Dean Ashford <i>Club Kit Man</i> Available for sponsorship</p>		<p>Dan Eyre <i>Sports Therapist</i> Available for sponsorship</p>
	<p>Reece King <i>Team Captain/ Midfielder</i> Sponsored by Kevin Baggott</p>		<p>Adam Harrison <i>Goalkeeper</i> Sponsored by Keaton Troth</p>
	<p>Charlie McNamara <i>Goalkeeper</i> Available for sponsorship</p>		<p>Koby Arthur <i>Midfielder</i> Available for sponsorship</p>

Meet The Rouslers (2)



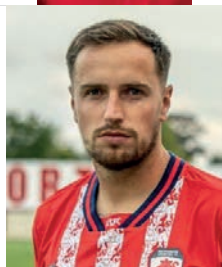
Luke Benbow
Striker
Sponsored by
Marc Pullen and
Edna May
Parker



Josh Burgess
Defender
Available for
sponsorship



Finlay Carson
Midfielder
Available for
sponsorship



Ash Carter
Centre-back and
vice-captain
Sponsored by
James Freeman at
Smiles Turkey UK



Nick Clayton-Phillips
Midfielder
Sponsored by Spartan
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Romehl Critchlow
Midfielder
Available for
sponsorship



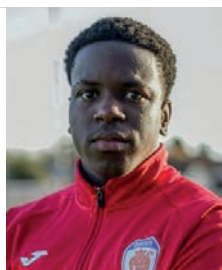
Tom Edge
Midfielder
Sponsored by our
accountant Sarah
Lammas of



Josh Ezewe
Right-back
Sponsored by
Chris Curtis



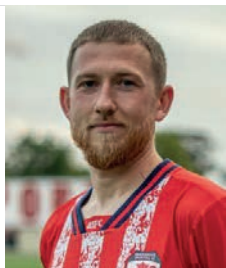
George Gillon
Midfielder
Available for
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Forward
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Meet The Rouslers (3)



Jack Kelly
Defender
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Jordan Lyden
Midfielder
Available for sponsorship



Bo Morris
Defender
Available for sponsorship



Taylor Morrison
Defender
Available for sponsorship



Jack Newell
Defender/Midfield
Sponsored by Kevin Baggott



Gus Sanches
Forward
Available for sponsorship



Billy Shaw
Midfielder
Sponsored by: The Fox family (Margaret, Christopher and Adrian)



Luke Softley
Defender
Available for sponsorship



Aksum White
Defender
Sponsored by Daniel Blythe and Kelly Downing



Rebel Rousler
Club Mascot

Profile:
Koby Owysy Arthur
Midfielder



Birthplace and Date of Birth?	Kumasi, Ghana, 31/1/96 (age 29)
Height, weight?	5' 6", 72 kg
Left or right footed?	Both
Previous Clubs?	Birmingham City, Macclesfield Town, Kidderminster Harriers, Dover Athletic, Maidenhead United, Rushall Olympic, Hereford
Football Honours?	Won promotion with Macclesfield Town. Young player of the year at Birmingham City.
Best moment playing football?	Making my professional debut at 16 for Birmingham City
Biggest influence on your career?	My under 16s coach at Birmingham City, Steve Spooner
Which team do you support?	Manchester United
Favourite all-time player?	Lionel Messi
Best player you have played against?	Fernando Forestieri (former Watford and Sheffield Wednesday player, now at AEL Limassol)
Favourite position on the pitch:	Number 10
What boots do you wear?	Adidas
What football law would you change?	VAR
Nickname in the changing room?	Halesowen Town
Do you play any other sports?	Fan of NFL but no
Relationship?	Single
Kids?	Son Rohan, age 6
Where do you live?	Walsall
Job outside football?	PE teacher at high school
What car do you drive?	Ford Zetec
Favourite food?	Jollof Rice
Favourite drink?	Ginger Beer
Favourite biscuit?	Digestives
Favourite Newspaper	The Times
Favourite TV programme?	America's Got Talent
Favourite Film?	21 & Over (2013)
Favourite actor or actress?	Scarlett Johansson, Denzel Washington
Favourite band or singer?	Westlife, Luke Combs
Favourite Album or Single?	Luke Combs - Fathers & Sons
Guilty Pleasure?	Listening to music
Least like to sit next to on an aeroplane?	My Mom!
Favourite Holiday destination?	Ayia Napa
Top of Bucket List	To score at least 10 goals this season and get a few assists. I don't score many so it would be nice
Top of Bucket List?	Erm, I once met Sir Alex Ferguson and have been in the papers a few times including as the "wonderkid"



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From The Archives, 9 Years Ago

Midland Football League Division One - Tuesday 23rd August 2016 - 7:45 p.m. kick-off

Bromsgrove Sporting 3 (2) Hinckley AFC 0 (0)

Bromsgrove Sporting continued their flawless start to the Midland Football League Division One, as they beat Hinckley AFC 3-0 at the Victoria Ground on Tuesday evening.

A sweetly struck Keenen Meakin-Richards free kick helped put Sporting on the road to victory before a brace of Ahmed Ali headers allowed them to ease to their third league win in as many games.

Both came courtesy of pinpoint Jack Wilson crosses, with the first being glanced across the six-yard box and into the bottom corner and the second an emphatically thumped effort that left Hinckley keeper Haydn Whitcombe helpless.

The evening did not get off to the best of starts for the influential Ali, as his misplaced back-pass gave Sam Agar a glorious chance of giving the visitors the lead. However, the Hinckley forward found his one on one effort expertly saved by the assured Chris Jay.

The opener came seventeen minutes into proceedings after Tony Clarke was upended twenty-five yards out. The resultant free kick was beautifully guided into the net by Meakin-Richards.

The Rouslers could have doubled their lead only a minute after the goal, with Robbie Bunn's firmly hit twenty-yard strike well saved by Whitcombe.

Ali's impact was shown to good effect on the half hour mark, as his header found Tony Clarke, whose lobbed effort ultimately landed well wide of the post.

The two goal cushion came seven minutes from the half time whistle, as Wilson's enticing cross into the box found the head of Ali, who nonchalantly nodded home, much to the elation of the Sporting faithful. Hinckley almost pulled one back not long after, as Agar attempted to lob keeper Jay, who ultimately watched the ball land on top of the net.

Substitute Will Tibbetts hit the ground running as soon as he came on, with his cross on 60 minutes finding Chris Lloyd, whose volleyed shot was kept out by Whitcombe.

Hinckley had chances to get on to the scoresheet but were wasteful with the opportunities that came their way. Former Sporting player Darious Darkin's shot from inside the area sailed over the bar before an Isaac Cooper cross failed to find a visiting attacker, instead being palmed clear by Jay.

Sporting's third saw the potent combination of Wilson and Ali team up once again, as Wilson's cross from the left wing found Ali perfectly, who simply had to confidently head home to seal all three points for Paul Smith's side. Bunn had a chance to add a fourth after being cleverly set up by Clarke but his shot was quickly blocked by a Hinckley defender.

Another consummate victory from Bromsgrove, who put their FA Cup exit on Saturday firmly behind them, retaining their top of the league status and 100% clean sheet league record in the process.

Reflecting on his match winning performance, Ali said: "To be fair, I didn't start too good today. I gave away an early chance but yeah, two goals is good."

"But we've got to work together, only three games in, 35 to go. We know if we don't play well then we can get beat."

"I'm new to the team and the gaffer has told us we're challenging for the title as long as we keep going."

Sporting: Chris Jay (Capt), Aaron Roberts, Jack Wilson, Danny Morris, Jake Willcox (Will Tibbetts 46 mins), Luke Edwards, Ahmed Ali, Robbie Bunn, Tony Clarke, Chris Lloyd (Lucky Nwosu 71 mins), Keenan Meakin-Richards (Chris Conway 60 mins). Subs not used: Dale Edwards, Sean Brain.

Hinckley: Hadyn Whitcombe, Michael Harvey, Lee Thomas, Ryan Paddock, Jean Kalenda, Darious Darkin, Lee Butler, Ryan Seal (Capt.), Sam Agar, Sean Williams, Javia Roberts.

Substitutes: James Williams, Isaac Cooper, Rico Taylor, Tom McCrystal, Tom Cross

Referee: Mr C Thompson (Rednal) Assistants: Mr T Palmer (Droitwich), Mr A Genders (Redditch)

Attendance: 420 (Sporting record for an evening match) Weather: Warm, muggy

Sporting Man of The Match: Ahmed Ali Reporter: Max Banner

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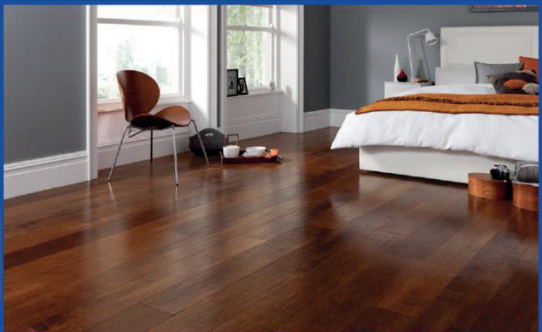
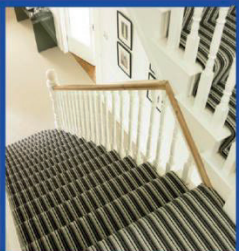
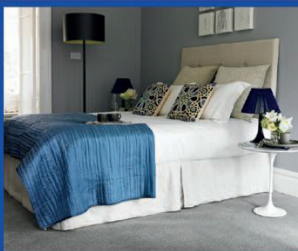
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The Non-League Paper provides a column for club programmes each week. This week's contribution is from Jon Couch. PRECISELY 104 days after Aldershot Town and Whitstable Town lifted the Isuzu FA Trophy and FA Vase respectively at a sun-drenched Wembley Stadium, Non-League's two premier cup competitions are back for another eagerly-awaited campaign.

This afternoon, the 2025-26 FA Trophy kicks off with 32 clubs from Step 4 contesting 16 preliminary round ties.

A record 336 entrants begin the 12-round Road to Wembley and perhaps slightly unfortunate to be made to qualify is Grays Athletic, who have a proud FA Trophy history having won the second of two consecutive finals 20 years ago with victory over Woking, a year after beating Hucknall Town on penalties.

They make the trip this afternoon to Eastern Counties League Premier champions Brantham Athletic, one of four clubs making their FA Trophy debuts.

Rugby Borough, Hassocks FC and last season's FA Vase runners-up, AFC Whyteleafe, are the others with their sights set on a potentially lucrative run into the latter stages and the visit of a National League big gun.

In this week's NLP, our friends at @Non-League Factfile were back with all the facts and figures ahead of this afternoon's ties – and once again there was plenty to mull over.

Four clubs are looking to equal their best FA Trophy run with victory in this preliminary round, namely Garforth Town, Wellingborough Town, Gorleston FC and Westbury United, while ten ties involve clubs that will meet each other in league games this season.

And there's plenty of scores to settle on the field too with three of the 16 ties involving clubs that have met in the FA Trophy before.

Three years ago, Hanworth Villa beat Northwood 3-0 and Bashley defeated Frome Town 4-1, both in the first qualifying round. Margate knocked out Egham Town in the second qualifying round eight years ago.

The Isuzu FA Vase is equally as fascinating with no fewer than 623 having entered – the highest tally for six years.

This weekend, 202 first qualifying round ties take place up and down the country, involving 404 clubs from Steps 5 and 6.

Seven former FA Vase winners are in action: Whitley Bay (four times, 2001-02, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11), Brigg Town (1995-96, 2002-03), Romford FC (2023-24), Thatcham Town (2018), Diss Town (1994), Stansted FC (1984) and Hoddesdon Town, the first club to lift the Vase at Wembley Stadium in 1974-75.

In contrast, 26 clubs are participating in the FA Vase for the first time with four more entering in the next round, on September 6. The tie between Grangetown Boys Club and Leeds Ultra Football Academy guarantees there will be at least five debut clubs in the next round.

Step 6 clubs have enjoyed solid Vase campaigns in recent years and this first qualifying round draw ensured that 61 tenth-tier clubs will progress to the next round (plus Boldon Community Association who have a walkover).

At least 44 Step 5 clubs will exit in this round with a possibility of an upset in 97 ties.

Thirteen clubs will be looking to make history by tasting Vase victory for the first time, while Newcastle Blue Star, Shirehampton FC and Horbury Town are all looking for a first win at their third attempt.

The tie between Club Thorne Colliery and Horbury Town is the only tie to guarantee a club making second qualifying round tie for the first time, while three other ties will see the winners at least equal their best Vase run - Retford FC versus Appleby Frodingham, AFC Aldermaston v Bristol Telephones and St Day v Stoke Gabriel and Torbay Police.

Twenty-three ties involve clubs that have met in FA Vase before, but Stafford Town v Tividale FC is the only one to have occurred more than once before. They have one win apiece in their past Vase meetings.

And talking of grudge matches, Southern Combination side Pagham FC have had to wait 49 years for the opportunity to avenge a 7-0 defeat by Newport (IOW) – the longest of any side in the competition.

So, the first of ten rounds on the Road to Wembley starts here with the four Finals Day contenders contesting Non-League's most prestigious prizes under the arch on Sunday May 17, 2026.

It's an occasion to savour and a fitting finale to two much-loved competitions which grow in stature year on year.

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How Did the Beautiful Game get so Ugly?

As football has come to dominate global culture, it has fallen prey to venal politics and the mindless pursuit of growth

Book review by Rory Smith of The Observer.

Looking back, it has the quality of madness. In the unseasonably warm and unimaginably chilling spring of 2020, with the country and the planet in the teeth of that first, savage bite of the pandemic, the amount of time dedicated and energy expended in ensuring that football could resume as quickly as possible might charitably be described as excessive.

Given how hostile and alien the world felt at that point, maybe we could be forgiven for failing to grasp quite how extreme were the measures put in place to restore the game to our television screens. At five years' remove, in the megawatt beam of hindsight, it is possible to see more clearly.

It is hard to say which element of lockdown football was most extraordinary. The substitutes wearing N95 respirator masks, maybe? The edict that actually banned hugging? The fact that someone came up with the concept of allowing players to train "while maintaining social distancing" and nobody pointed out the absurdity of it? David Goldblatt, the sport's academic historian of choice, offers a less obvious but equally convincing contender: the dedication with which engineers at various TV networks attempted to perfect the artificial crowd noise that provided an uncanny broadcast soundtrack to matches held in silent stadiums. By the time fans were starting to appear in stands once more, he writes, they could "vary the intensity and length" of each sound effect so that a "last-minute missed equaliser" sounded different to a "half-chance in the first 15 minutes". Given how much time, thought and technical expertise would have been required to achieve this; it is easy to think it was all a lot of effort for what is, deep down, just a game.

Except, of course, it isn't just a game. That is why Boris Johnson, then prime minister, could insist that the return of the Premier League would be good for the nation's morale; it is why, while football was an afterthought during both world wars, when a national emergency struck in 2020, 'such was the game's popularity, power and financial heft' that the government 'went out of its way to ensure its continuation'.

It is hard to overstate the role football plays in modern culture. Both Goldblatt and the historian Tom Holland - it is not clear who said it first, so let's credit them both - have described football fandom in the 21st century as the most widely practised pastime in the history of humankind; it is not, in all likelihood, an exaggeration. That sentiment is perhaps better understood on a more personal scale: as the *Athletic's* Jack Pitt-Brooke noted on an episode of the *Libero* podcast, football is now a cultural form that one must opt out of, rather than into. Certainly among men, those who do not care for it often actively declare their lack of allegiance; liking football is almost, now, seen as the default position.

Last month, across the BBC and ITV, some 16.2 million people watched England beat Spain to retain the Women's European Championship. No television event this year will come close to those figures. More people in the UK watched the broadcast of the final of Euro 2020 - in which England's men lost to Italy - than the wedding of Charles and Diana (31 million compared with 28 million), despite the fact the distractions of Netflix and YouTube did not exist in 1981. Football, almost alone, stands exempt from the breakdown of communal consumption that has afflicted almost every other part of the media landscape.

The thesis Goldblatt unspools in *Injury Time* is therefore a convincing one: football, as the dominant cultural form in modern Britain, has not only become the "central metaphorical space" in which the country addresses itself, but it has also come to provide a perfect reflective surface. It is in the game, he believes, that we might most clearly see ourselves.

Football is hooked on get-rich-quick schemes and willing to sell anything for the right price to the wrong buyer

This approach is not new; a whole canon of football literature has emerged in the last few decades that springs from the same realisation. Most of the world's major footballing nations have been explored through the lens of their football cultures. Franklin Foer and Simon Kuper are among those writers who have used football to explain the whole planet. Most of the time - if not quite all - the basic idea holds up. Goldblatt's twist, however, is that his mirror is distorting, the reflection unflattering - a portrait in the attic. His assessment of the state of football's soul, and by extension, Britain's, falls somewhere between sombre and downright grim: the game, as he depicts it, is unable to rid itself of racism, hooked on get-rich-quick schemes and willing to sell anything and everything for the right price to the wrong buyer.

It is, in truth, impossible to defend football against the majority of charges levelled by Goldblatt. Too often the sport's attempts to deal with prejudice border on tokenism. Its governing bodies have, frequently, been too venal and craven to protect what is, in effect, a mass social institution. It has too willingly embraced the idea of eternal growth for its own sake - what the author Jasper Fforde once described as "the philosophy of cancer" - regardless of either the source of the money or the cost attached.

And yet the picture is a little more complex than it first appears. The other major event in football's summer - along with the glorious, uplifting coda provided by the Lionesses - was the inaugural FIFA Club World Cup, an ersatz tournament that, at times, seemed largely to exist so that the body's oleaginous president, Gianni Infantino, might ingratiate himself with Donald Trump.

But that was not quite the extent of its purpose. Football, in its modern state, is caught between the competing interests of two distinct factions. On one side are the private equity investors, the mainly American finance houses that have descended on the game with the aim of squeezing every last drop of money from its pores. On the other are the nation states - Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, in particular - who have been drawn to the sport, like moths to the very brightest of flames, because of the unparalleled soft power it offers. The Club World Cup was where the two sides met: a tournament designed to swell the coffers of a handful of teams by packing an already overstuffed calendar yet tighter, bankrolled (indirectly) by Saudi money, embedding the kingdom as the game's financial engine.

Football has, in effect, outgrown itself; increasingly, the game - its clubs, its competitions, its organisers, and its executives, all of them its theoretical guardians - is at the mercy of forces it cannot resist. It has grown so large, so fat and so influential that even as a pandemic raged it became a matter of national importance that games should be played. Goldblatt concludes his dissection of football's rottenness by examining the sport's refusal to confront the climate crisis. It is a pressing issue, without question, but also provides the perfect symbol of where the game finds itself in 2025: swept inexorably along to a disaster of its own making, buffeted on all sides by powers now beyond its control.

Injury Time: Football in a State of Emergency by David Goldblatt is published by Mudlark (£22). Order a copy from The Observer Shop for £19.80.

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Season 2025/26

The Pitching In Southern League - Premier Division Central Table

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

Table as at Saturday 16th August 2025

Bromsgrove Sporting - Fixtures and Results - Season 2025/26

Day	Date	K/O	V	Opponents	Competition	Result	Att	Pts	Lgue Pos	MoM
Tue	08-Jul	7:45 PM	A	Romulus	Friendly	W 2 - 0	~85	-	-	-
Fri	11-Jul	7:45 PM	A	Stourport Swifts	Friendly	W 4 - 1	~130	-	-	-
Tue	15-Jul	7:45 PM	A	Coleshill Town	Friendly	L 0 - 3	88	-	-	-
Sat	19-Jul	3:00 PM	A	Sporting Khalsa	Friendly	L 1 - 4	~100	-	-	-
Tue	22-Jul	7:45 PM	H	Birmingham City U21	Friendly	L 1 - 3	330	-	-	-
Sat	26-Jul	3:00 PM	H	WBA U21	Friendly	L 0 - 1	~300	-	-	-
Tue	29-Jul	7:45 PM	H	Solihull Moors	Friendly	W 4 - 1	~230	-	-	-
Sat	02-Aug	3:00 PM	H	Hungerford Town	Friendly	W 4 - 1	~280	-	-	-
Sat	09-Aug	3:00 PM	H	Bishop's Stortford	Southern League	L 0 - 2	551	0	18	Adam Harrison
Tue	12-Aug	7:45 PM	A	Alvechurch	Southern League	W 2 - 1	482	3	11	Jack Kelly
Sat	16-Aug	3:00 PM	H	Spalding United	Southern League	L 2 - 3	460	3	15	Billy Shaw
Sat	23-Aug	3:00 PM	H	Needham Market	Southern League					
Mon	25-Aug	3:00 PM	A	Redditch United	Southern League					
Sat	30-Aug	3:00 PM	A	Evesham United	FA Cup Q1					
Sat	06-Sep	3:00 PM	H	St Ives Town	Southern League					
Tue	09-Sep	7:45 PM	H	Banbury United	Southern League					
Sat	13-Sep	3:00 PM			FA Cup Q2					
Sat	20-Sep	3:00 PM	A	Barwell	Southern League					
Tue	23-Sep	7:45 PM	A	Quorn	Southern League					
Sat	27-Sep	3:00 PM			FA Cup Q3					
Sat	04-Oct	3:00 PM			FA Trophy Q3					
Sat	11-Oct	3:00 PM	H	Bury Town	Southern League					
Tue	14-Oct	7:45 PM	H	Stamford	Southern League					
Sat	18-Oct	3:00 PM	A	Harborough Town	Southern League					
Tue	21-Oct	7:45 PM	A	Worcester City	Southern League					
Sat	25-Oct	3:00 PM			FA Trophy R1					
Sat	01-Nov	3:00 PM	H	Leiston	Southern League					
Sat	08-Nov	3:00 PM	H	Royston Town	Southern League					
Sat	15-Nov	3:00 PM	A	Stourbridge	Southern League					
Tue	18-Nov	7:45 PM	A	Banbury United	Southern League					
Sat	22-Nov	3:00 PM	H	Kettering Town	Southern League					
Tue	25-Nov	7:45 PM	H	Quorn	Southern League					
Sat	29-Nov	3:00 PM	A	AFC Sudbury	Southern League					
Sat	06-Dec	3:00 PM	H	Stratford Town	Southern League					
Sat	13-Dec	3:00 PM	A	Real Bedford	Southern League					
Sat	20-Dec	3:00 PM	A	Bishop's Stortford	Southern League					
Sat	27-Dec	3:00 PM	H	Redditch United	Southern League					
Sat	01-Jan	3:00 PM	A	Halesowen Town	Southern League					
Sat	10-Jan	3:00 PM	H	Alvechurch	Southern League					
Sat	17-Jan	3:00 PM	A	Bury Town	Southern League					
Sat	24-Jan	3:00 PM	H	Barwell	Southern League					
Sat	31-Jan	3:00 PM	A	Stamford	Southern League					
Sat	07-Feb	3:00 PM	H	Harborough Town	Southern League					
Sat	14-Feb	3:00 PM	A	Leiston	Southern League					
Sat	21-Feb	3:00 PM	H	Worcester City	Southern League					
Sat	28-Feb	3:00 PM	H	AFC Sudbury	Southern League					
Sat	07-Mar	3:00 PM	A	Kettering Town	Southern League					
Sat	14-Mar	3:00 PM	H	Stourbridge	Southern League					
Sat	21-Mar	3:00 PM	A	Royston Town	Southern League					
Sat	28-Mar	3:00 PM	A	Spalding United	Southern League					
Fri	03-Apr	3:00 PM	A	Needham Market	Southern League					
Mon	06-Apr	3:00 PM	H	Halesowen Town	Southern League					
Sat	11-Apr	3:00 PM	A	St Ives Town	Southern League					
Sat	18-Apr	3:00 PM	A	Stratford Town	Southern League					
Sat	25-Apr	3:00 PM	H	Real Bedford	Southern League					

Bromsgrove Sporting FC - Appearances / Goalscorers

Season 2024-2025

	League								Cups								Season Total				Sporting Career				
Name	App	Sub	Bench	Capt.	Yellow	Reds	Assts	Goals	App	Sub	Bench	Capt.	Yellow	Reds	Assts	Goals	App	Sub	Tot	Assts	Goals	App	Sub	Tot	Goals
Koby Arthur		3			1												3	3					3	3	
Luke Benbow	3				1		2	1									3		3	2	1	3		3	1
Josh Burgess																									
Finlay Carson																									
Ash Carter																						33		33	1
Nick Clayton-Phillips	2	1															2	1	3			2	1	3	
Romehl Critchlow		1	2															1	1				1	1	
Tom Edge	3				2												3		3			3		3	
Josh Ezewele	3																3		3			13		13	
George Gillon																									
Kobe Hall	1	2					1	2									1	2	3	1	2	4	6	10	2
Adam Harrison	3				1												3		3			3		3	
Jack Kelly	3				2		1										3		3	1		3		3	
Reece King																						47		47	5
Jordan Lyden																						5	13	18	
Paul McCone	3				1	1											3		3			3		3	
Charlie McNamara																						1		1	
Bo Morris	3				1												3		3			4	3	7	
Taylor Morrison	1		2														1		1			1	3	4	
Lewis Neal																									
Jack Newell	3																3		3			96	26	122	6
Ryan Pratt																									
Gus Sanches		2	1															2	2				14	14	2
Billy Shaw	3				3	1		1									3		3	1		52	11	63	5
Luke Softley	1																1		1			1		1	
Aksum White	1		1														1		1			64	17	81	

Up to and including Saturday 16th August 2025

Bromsgrove Sporting - Player Profiles

Name: Scott Adey-Linforth	Squad Number: n/a	DoB: 6/9/94, Birmingham
Position: Manager	Height: 6' 0"	Weight: 75kg
Previous Clubs: Stourbridge, (Current) Aston Villa 1st Team Performance Analyst		

Scott was promoted as 1st Team manager in November 2024 following a successful spell as first team coach and interim manager. A manager, who despite his young age has a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Name: Karl Fellows	Squad Number: n/a	DoB: 22/4/85, Solihull
Position: Coach	Height: 6' 1"	Weight: 86kg
Previous Clubs: Aston Villa		

A former Bromsgrove Sporting player, Karl is well known to manager Scott Adey-Linforth following their time together at Aston Villa.

Name: Ryan Pratt	Squad Number: 25	DoB: 17/1/02, Stourbridge
Position: Player/Goalkeeper coach	Height: 6' 1"	Weight: 75kg
Previous Clubs: Redditch United, Aston Villa, Coventry City, Lye Town, Darlaston Town, Sporting Khalsa, Bedworth united, Rushall Olympic, Stourport Swifts.		

Our player/goalkeeper coach Ryan is a passionate coach who has great knowledge and experience in non-league football. Now into his second spell with the club.

Name: Dan Eyre	Squad Number: n/a	DoB: 18/5/03
Position: Sports therapist	Height: 5' 8"	Weight: 90kg
Previous Clubs:		

Dan joined Sporting at the start of the 2024/25 season. He is the Head Sports therapist at the club and outside of football is the head of medical for the Worcester Royals American football team.

Name: Dean Ashford	Squad Number: n/a	DoB: 22/2/67
Position: Kitman	Height: 5' 7"	Weight:
Previous Clubs: Austin Ex-apprentices		

An invaluable member of the backroom staff 'Deano' joined the club at the start of the 2024/25 season and is a popular member of the squad.

Name: Koby Arthur	Squad Number: 11	DoB: 31/1/96, Kumasi, Ghana
Position: Attacking midfield	Height: 5' 6"	Weight: 72kg
Previous Clubs: Lincoln City, Birmingham City, Cheltenham Town, Macclesfield Town, Kidderminster Harriers, Dover Athletic, Maidenhead United, Hereford, Stourbridge, Rushall Olympic, Barwell.		

Joined Sporting in August 2025, the former Birmingham City player is a fast and tricky player who likes to get on the ball. Comfortable in a variety of positions and his versatility is a big asset to the squad.

Name: Luke Benbow	Squad Number: 9	DoB: 21/8/91, Birmingham
Position: Centre forward	Height: 5' 10"	Weight:
Previous Clubs: Redditch United, Solihull Moors, Hednesford Town, Nuneaton Borough, Stourbridge.		

Joined at the start of the season from Stourbridge, Luke is well regarded centre-forward with extensive experience of Step 3 football. A strong and powerful forward with an eye for the spectacular.

Name: Ash Carter	Squad Number: 6	DoB: 12/9/95, Birmingham
Position: Centre-back	Height: 6' 2"	Weight: 91 kg
Previous Clubs: Wolves, Chesterfield, Tamworth, Kidderminster Harriers, Alvechurch, Nuneaton Borough, Stourbridge, Halesowen Town, Coalville Town, Walsall Wood.		

Vice-Captain Ash joined us last season following a spell with Walsall Wood and made a huge impact in our upturn in results. A natural leader with valuable experience Ash offers a strong and physical presence to our backline.

Name: Nick Clayton-Phillips	Squad Number: 10	DoB: 23/9/95, Birmingham
Position: Left midfield	Height: 5' 8"	Weight:
Previous Clubs: WBA, Braintree Town, Kidderminster Harriers, Solihull Moors, Stourbridge, Alvechurch, Walsall		

Wood, Halesowen Town, Redditch United.

Known as NCP, the creative midfielder with an eye for the spectacular. Comfortable playing as a striker or number 10, Nick has the ability to score and create goals.

Name: Romehl Critchlow	Squad Number: 14	Age 21, b. West Bromwich
Position: Centre Midfield	Height:	Weight:

Previous Clubs: Solihull Moors, Hednesford Town.

An exciting young player with bags of energy. Romehl impressed during pre-season and joined the club in August 2025. A hard-working player who covers plenty of grass and likes to get on the ball.

Name: Tom Edge	Squad Number: 8	DoB: 8/11/98, Wolverhampton
Position: Centre midfield	Height: 5' 11"	Weight:

Previous Clubs: Leek Town, Alvechurch, Boston United, Rushall Olympic

The box-box midfielder is known for his no-nonsense style of play. A leader who has experience of playing Step 2 and abroad, Tom has made a big impact since he arrived at Bromsgrove Sporting.

Name: Josh Ezewele	Squad Number: 2	DoB: 21/1/97, Birmingham
Position: Right-back	Height: 5' 11"	Weight: 80 kg

Previous Clubs: WBA, Yeovil Town, Kidderminster Harriers, AFC Fylde, Alvechurch, Stourbridge, Spalding United, Halesowen Town.

A strong and attacking full back, Josh Ezewele rejoined us last season, before injury prematurely ended his season. Now fully fit, Josh's energy down the right-hand side of the pitch is a big asset for the club.

Name: Kobe Hall	Squad Number: 20	DoB: 25/8/06, Birmingham
Position: Centre forward	Height: 6' 2"	Weight:

Previous Clubs: Kidderminster Harriers, Coleshill Town, Stourport Swifts, Quorn, Alfreton Town, Rushall Olympic.

Returning to the club after a brief spell in 2023, Kobe is a player with big potential. Despite his young age he has good experience at the level. A powerful forward with an eye for goal.

Name: Adam Harrison	Squad Number: 1	DoB: 19/2/99, Nuneaton
Position: Goalkeeper	Height: 6' 1"	Weight:

Previous Clubs: Leicester City, Bedworth United, Tividale, Worcester City, Redditch United, Bedford Town, AFC Rushden & Diamonds.

Joined the club at the start of the season following a spell with AFC Rushden & Diamonds. A highly regarded keeper who had a successful spell with local rivals Redditch United.

Name: Jack Kelly	Squad Number: 3	DoB: 1/1/96
Position: :Left back	Height: 5' 11"	Weight:

Previous Clubs: Nottingham Forest, Hemel Hempstead Town, Kettering Town, Newtown AFC, Shifnal Town, Hednesford Town, Walsall Wood, Sporting Khalsa, Redditch United.

An energetic left back who joined Sporting from Redditch United in June 2025. Jack has good experience at Step 3 and is a threat from set pieces with both his hands and feet.

Name: Reece King	Squad Number: 4	DoB: 29/7/95, Worcester
Position: midfield and team captain	Height: 6' 3"	Weight:

Previous Clubs: Stourbridge, Buxton Town, Malvern Town.

Club captain, Reece joined us at the start of the 2024/25 season and impressed with his all-action style of play and scored some vital goals. Naturally a centre midfielder but also comfortable playing in centre defence.

Name: Jordan Lyden	Squad Number: 18	DoB: 30/1/96, Perth, Australia
Position: Centre midfield	Height: 5' 11"	Weight: 79 kg

Previous Clubs: Aston Villa, Oldham Athletic, Swindon Town, Leyton Orient, Hereford.

Former Australia U20 international, Jordan has spent the majority of his career in the professional game. A technical player with an excellent touch and range of passing.

Name: Paul McCone	Squad Number: 5	DoB: 28/9/91, Stourbridge
-------------------	-----------------	---------------------------

Position: Centre back and assistant mgr	Height: 6' 1"	Weight: 82½kg
Previous Clubs: Wolves, Leamington, Stourbridge, Hednesford Town, AFC Telford United, Halesowen Town, Stratford Town.		
Paul is an experienced and strong centre half who reads the game well, alongside being a real threat in both boxes. Signed from Stratford Town at the start of the season as a player/assistant manager.		
Name: Charlie McNamara	Squad Number: 13	DoB: 4/2/07
Position: Goalkeeper	Height:	Weight:
Previous Clubs: Bromsgrove Sporting Under 21s, Cradley Town, Gornal Athletic		
Talented young goalkeeper who made his debut in the Worcestershire Senior Cup against Droitwich Spa in October 2024. Only 18 years old and currently out on dual registration gaining valuable experience.		
Name: Bo Morris	Squad Number: 16	DoB:
Position: Defence	Height:	Weight:
Previous Clubs: Bromsgrove Sporting Under 21s, Pershore Town		
A young player who impressed with our U21 team and broke into the first team at the end of the 2024/25 season following a successful loan spell with Pershore Town. Comfortable playing at right back or centre half.		
Name: Taylor Morrison	Squad Number: 17	DoB: 7/6/99
Position: Left back	Height: 6' 0"	Weight:
Previous Clubs: WBA, Alvechurch, Stratford Town, Evesham United, Redditch United, Worcester City, Tamworth, Littleton, Walsall Wood.		
Taylor joined the club towards the end of 2024/25 season. A versatile player who can play in multiple positions, and will be a big asset to the club throughout the season.		
Name: Jack Newell	Squad Number: 15	DoB: 22/1/01, Kingston-upon-Thames
Position: Midfield	Height: 6' 0"	Weight: 80 kg
Previous Clubs: Northampton Town, Barwell, Highgate United.		
Now into his 5th season at the club, and with over 100 appearances to his name for the club, Jack continues to impress in the centre of midfield. A player who reads the game well and specialises in breaking up play.		
Name: Gus Sanches	Squad Number: 19	DoB: 23/2/04
Position: Forward	Height: 5' 10"	Weight: 72kg
Previous Clubs: Boldmere St Michaels		
Returned to Sporting following a brief spell in the 2023/24 season. A player with pace to burn, Gus can turn a game in an instance and has a fantastic work ethic.		
Name: Billy Shaw	Squad Number: 7	DoB: 17/12/01, Stourbridge
Position: Midfield	Height: 5' 8"	Weight: 70 kg
Previous Clubs: Halesowen Town, Worcester City, Redditch United.		
A versatile player who is a big fan favourite at the club. Returned to Sporting after a brief spell away in 2024. Known for his all-energy style of play, an excellent dribbler who has the ability to score and create goals.		
Name: Luke Softley	Squad Number: 5	DoB: 21/4/05
Position: Centre Back	Height 6' 1½"	
Previous Clubs: Aston Villa (youth), Hungerford Town		
A local lad who impressed when playing against us in pre-season. Luke is a centre back who loves defending and getting on the ball, and is comfortable playing anywhere across the backline.		
Name: Aksum White	Squad Number: 12	DoB: 21/12/00
Position: Right back	Height: 5' 11	Weight: 77kg
Previous Clubs: WBA, Tamworth, Sporting Khalsa, Worcester Raiders, Coleshill Town, Stratford Town, Barwell.		
Returned to Sporting in August 2025 for his 3rd spell at the club. A solid full back who is good in the 1 v 1 and likes to get forward and support higher up the pitch.		

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"A family concern"

Thanks to Steve Richards for doing the quizzes again this season

Here is the number three, a few more general questions

1. Who received the only red card of the opening round of Premier League fixtures?
2. After three matches, which two Southern League Premier Central clubs have a 100% record?
3. At the other end of the table, which Midlands club are the only side without a point?
4. Going into the weekend, Isaac Price is the top scorer in the EFL Championship. Which club does he play for?
5. Which Aston Villa player picked up the PFA young player of the year award this week?
6. Which four players scored twice on the opening weekend of the Premier League season?

Answers: 1) Ezri Konsa 2) Bishop's Stortford and Kettering Town 3) Stratford Town 4) West Bromwich Albion 5) Morgan Rogers 6) Erling Haaland, Richarlison, Antoine Semenyo and Chris Wood.

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Today's Visitors - Needham Market FC - Club History



Founded in 1919, one of the club's most notable early successes came in the form of Suffolk & Ipswich Football League Senior Division Champions in 1995/96, before earning promotion as runners up from the Eastern Counties First Division in 2004/05. The Marketmen's maiden season in the Eastern Counties Premier Division also proved to be successful, finishing in 6th place. The club then won its first ever FA Cup tie in a home win over Desborough Town in 2006/07, before going on to finish fourth in the Eastern Counties Premier division and beating Concord Rangers 2-1 to win the East Anglian Cup.

The club then finished runners up in the league the following season, while also making the semi-finals of the FA Vase and bowing out to eventual winners Kirkham & Wesham, and winning the League Challenge Cup in the same season. The club then finished 3rd in the Eastern Counties Premier Division in 2008/09, before reaching the Quarter-Finals of the FA Vase in 2008/09.

The following season saw the club achieve a league and cup double for the first time in the league's previous 15 seasons after being crowned Eastern Counties Premier Division Champions and League Challenge Cup winners. Step 4 football followed in 2010/11, with the club proudly finishing 2nd in their maiden season in the Isthmian League Division One North before losing to Brentwood Town in the semi-finals. The club again achieved a play-off spot in 2011/12, but lost to Enfield Town in the play-off final following a 4th place finish, scoring 104 goals along the way.

The club then reached the 4th Qualifying Round of the FA Cup in 2013/14, which drew the club's record attendance to Bloomfields as 1,784 spectators witnessed a 1-0 defeat to higher league Cambridge United, while the club again reached the play-off semi-finals in the Isthmian North Division after a 5th place finish.

The club then won promotion to step 3 for the first time in 2014/15 as Isthmian League North Division Champions, securing promotion to the Isthmian Premier Division. A 20th placed finish was followed by a 9th placed finish in the club's first two seasons in the division before being moved sideways into the Southern League Central Division in 2018/19 when the club finished 11th.

The club however sat second and unbeaten after 7 games, in the table when the 2020/21 season was declared null and void, while also reaching the Second Round Proper of the FA Trophy for the first time that same season, losing out 4-2 to National League North leaders Gloucester City.

Kevin Horlock's side then extended their record FA Trophy run to the Quarter-Finals in 2021/22, knocking out St Ives Town 2-0 away, Margate 3-2 at home, Welwyn Garden City 3-1 at home, National League Wealdstone 2-1 at home, National League side Yeovil Town away 8-7 on penalties, in arguably one of the most memorable games of the club's history, following a 1-1 draw, and National League South side Dartford 1-0 at home, before bowing out to National League Champions Stockport County 3-0 at home. A 12th place league finish followed, while the 2022/23 season saw the club finish 17th in the league despite reaching the First Round Proper of the FA Cup for the first time in the club's history following a 1-0 home victory over National League side Maidstone United in the 4th Qualifying Round, with a valiant performance despite a 2-0 defeat at EFL League One side Burton Albion. The club then became only the second Suffolk Non-League team ever to get promoted to step 2 in the 2023/24 season, as part of a historic double, as Southern League Central Premier Division Champions - going unbeaten at home before sealing the league title, scoring 74 goals across the league campaign, keeping 21 clean sheets. The Marketmen also went close to matching the previous season's FA Cup run, falling short in the last minute to York City in the 4th Qualifying Round Replay, before retaining the Suffolk Premier Cup for the fourth successive season in April.

Last (2024/25) season however saw the Marketmen relegated (21st) in their inaugural step 2 season, but did however record notable wins over Hereford, Chorley and Alfreton picking up 22 points from 46 games in the Vanarama National League North, with Tom Rothery replacing Kevin Horlock as manager in February 2025.

Needham Market - Profiles

Management Team:

Tom Rothery - Manager

Previous clubs: Rowhedge, Brightlingsea Regent

Tom took over as Manager following the resignation of Kevin Horlock in early February, after playing an important part as Assistant Manager in the club's recent record runs in the FA Trophy (Quarter-Finals), FA Cup

(1st Round Proper), League title win and Suffolk Premier Cup triumphs, since returning to the club in October 2019. Tom's eye for detail is second to none, as well as having in-depth knowledge of the non-league scene.

Nathan Munson MBE – Assistant Manager

Previous clubs: Colchester United, Wivenhoe Town, Billericay Town, AFC Sudbury, Leiston, Harwich & Parkeston, Stanway Rovers, Brantham Athletic, Stowmarket Town

'Munno' was a professional at Colchester United in the early 90's before moving into non-league football, and is no stranger to Needham having previously been at the club between 2013-22, during which time the club won promotion to step 3, before serving as Joint Assistant Manager from 2019 until spending a couple of seasons away, returning in November 2023, recently reprising his role as Assistant Manager. He has also represented the English and British Police sides.

Patrick Brothers – Head Coach

Previous clubs: Colchester United, Leiston, Brantham Athletic

'Patch' joined the club in Mid-January 2022 as a midfielder and has since become an invaluable part of the management team, playing a crucial part in last season's league title win, having assisted as First Team Coach while recovering from injuries last season.

Darren Oxbrow - Kit Manager

Darren joined the club in the summer, boosting the management team with his experience as a former professional footballer at clubs such as Ipswich Town and Colchester United and also taking on vital responsibilities behind the scenes as Kit Manager.

James Lambert - Physio

James joined the club in February from Woodbridge Town as a qualified physiotherapist with his calm and reassured approach making him a key part of the team.

James Bradbrook - Goalkeeper

Previous clubs: Bury Town, Stowmarket Town, AFC Sudbury, Brightlingsea Regent

Bradders re-joined the Marketmen in the summer, having previously progressed through the Academy, before making a name for himself as one of the best 'keepers in the area at Stowmarket Town, after working with current manager Tom Rothery at Brightlingsea, helping them to a club historic promotion to step 4 in 2021. Bradders has since played a key part in Sudbury surviving relegation at step 3 in both of the last two seasons.

Jake Dye - Defence

Jake was one of the first few to progress through the very successful Needham Market Academy, into the First Team, surpassing 400 appearances last season, while only being in his mid 20's. A natural defender, Jake works hard to improve his game every season and has added goals to his repertoire and has a very bright future ahead of him, winning three club awards at the end of the 2022/23 season, to demonstrate his continuing growth in the game.

Tommy Smith – Defence

Previous clubs: Ipswich Town, Bury Town Stowmarket Town

Tommy was at Ipswich Town from the age of 9 up until 21, signing his first professional contract in February 2020. A full-back with a lot of potential, Tommy is a key figure at both ends of the pitch and has been virtually ever present since signing in summer 2023.

Kyle Hammond – Defence / Midfield

Previous clubs: Ipswich Town, Maldon & Tiptree, Leiston

Kyle, formerly of Ipswich Town, joined the club in June 2021 and quickly established himself as a key figure in midfield, and has also rarely missed a match since signing. Kyle, who can also play in defence, notably won the club's 'Goal Of The Season Award' for the 2023-24 season and scored the club's first ever goal at step 2 last season.

Keiran Morphew – Defence

The first Needham player to progress through the club's Academy, and is currently the club's second longest serving player and club captain. Keiran, who chipped in with a handful of league goals last season - including a brace v South Shields, is rapidly approaching 500 club appearances, and has been a key feature in the Marketmen's defence over the last decade, having been one of three current players who were part of the squad

that earned promotion to step 3 in 2015. Into his fifth season as captain, he has also been instrumental in the club's impressive defensive record, which even included having one of the best defensive records in the league over the previous two step 3 seasons, notably making the National League North team of the week last season after scoring twice v South Shields. No relation to Dan.

Daniel Morphew – Defence/Midfield

Dr. Dan Morphew, having completed his Doctorate, is the club's vice-captain. With over 300 club appearances, Dan is a no nonsense defender, and is elegant on the ball, yet rugged in the tackle. Dan is also a threat at set pieces having scored 15 goals in his first two seasons from defence, scoring 7 times in the club's title winning season. He is no relation to Keiran, who he has formed a solid partnership in the centre of defence over the last decade.

Ollie Saunders – Midfield

Previous Club: Norwich City Academy, Grimsby Town Academy, Braintree Town, Leiston.

Ollie signed in the summer from Leiston with plenty of experience at step 3 and step 2 at Braintree Town, with previous Academy experience at Norwich City and Grimsby Town. A very good technical midfielder that reads the game well and has a keen eye for a pass.

Luke Ingram – Attacking Midfield/Forward

Previous clubs: AFC Sudbury, Bury Town

Having made over 500 club appearances, Luke not only holds the record for the most club appearances but is the club's all time joint-record goalscorer, having notably scored the winning goals against Dartford in the FA Trophy to advance to the Quarter-Finals, and Maidstone United to book his side's spot in the FA Cup first round proper in season 2022/23. A winger by trade, Luke has scored at least 15 goals in each season of the last four seasons.

Seth Chambers – Forward

Seth is one of the latest products of the club's very successful Academy Scheme and was given regular first team opportunities three seasons ago following his impressive and consistent displays in the U18 and Reserve Teams respectively. With over 100 NM appearances, he is developing his game all the time, finishing the 23/24 season as our top goalscorer (20), and has the ability to go far in the game, proven by many professional clubs having given him trials.

Joe Neal – Forward

Previous Clubs: Cambridge United, AFC Sudbury

Joe returned to the club in the summer after being top scorer at AFC Sudbury in both of the last two seasons, after a previous loan spell at Bloomfield in 2019 while at Cambridge United. Joe possesses a keen eye for goal and hit the ground running, hitting five goals in his first three pre-season friendlies.

Jamie McGrath – Midfield/Forward

Previous clubs: Brantham Athletic, East Bergholt United

Jamie was another 2022 Summer Signing after scoring 53 goals for East Bergholt United in the Suffolk & Ipswich football league, comfortably winning the Golden Boot. Jamie showcased his goalscoring attributes, scoring 14 goals in the league in 23/24, including the sensational league title winning hat-trick against Royston in April, also netting some important match-winning goals at step 2 last season. Another player who reached 100 appearances for the club last season.

Ben Hunter - Midfield

Previous clubs: AFC Sudbury, Stowmarket Town, Leiston

Having signed last season, Ben has quickly become a fans favourite, like at his previous club AFC Sudbury, where he rapidly accumulated 300 senior appearances. A box to box midfielder that can turn defence into attack within seconds and has swiftly made himself a key part of the midfield.

Matty Tricker - Defence

Previous clubs: Colchester United, South Carolina United, Salem City

Matty is our most recent signing having been on trial in pre-season, as well as previous occasions, while studying abroad in America. A strong defender that is also comfortable in possession having gained plenty of experience in the USL 2 at South Carolina United & Salem City in America on a scholarship at Croker University as well as Colchester United's Academy. Matty was recently named Defensive player of the year & Scholar Athlete of the

year in his conference, alongside being named Male Athlete of the year at Coker.

Eddie Barker - Midfield

Eddie is another player to have progressed through the club's Academy, who has a keen eye for a pass. The young midfielder made the step up into the first team two seasons ago, playing a part in the club's double winning season and featured last season.

Reggie Lambe - Midfield

Previous clubs: Ipswich Town, Toronto FC, Mansfield Town, Carlisle United, Cambridge United, Stowmarket Town, Braintree Town

Reggie signed for the Marketmen last September from National League side Braintree, having won promotion at his last two clubs. A skilful midfielder who has plenty of League 2 and MLS experience with just under 300 professional appearances, is also a record making Bermuda international.

Myles Cowling - Midfield

Previous Clubs: Cambridge United, St Ives Town, AFC Sudbury

Myles also joined in the summer, having impressed at AFC Sudbury last season picking up 15 goals from attacking midfield. Another who was given a professional contract at Cambridge United with exciting potential.

Ryan Miles - Forward

Previous Clubs: Brightlingsea Regent, Maldon & Tiptree, FC Clacton

Ryan signed in the summer after scoring 15 goals at step 4 last season, following up on 31 goals at step 5 to help Wroxham to promotion. A direct, quick thinking, winger.

Olly Reynolds - Defence

Olly earned his maiden First Team call up in February after impressing as captain for the Reserves and Under-18's, skipping the latter to a Suffolk U18 Midweek Cup triumph. A solid centre-back with an eye for a pass, Ollie is certainly one for the future.

James Coton - Forward

James spent pre-season with the First Team after impressing in the club's Under-18's and Reserves last season, notably picking up a goal and an assist in the Under-18's Suffolk Midweek Cup triumph showcasing his potential.

Luca Savill - Midfield

Luca made his First Team debut in early February after impressing in his first season with the club's Reserves and Under-18s. A box to box midfielder who is another for the future.

The Record against Needham Market

Sporting have played Needham Market nine times since joining the Southern League Premier Division Central in 2019 though the match played in season 2020/21 was expunged by the Southern League owing to the COVID pandemic.

The record is as follows:

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against
Home	4	3	0	1	6	1
Away	5	3	0	2	6	5
Overall	9	6	0	3	12	6

The last time Sporting played Needham Market was 25th March 2024 when Sporting won 3 - 0.

Aaron Roberts gave Sporting the lead on the 43rd minute with Finn Howell doubling the tally in the second half. Billy Shaw. Luke Rowe completed the scoring with a penalty shortly before the end.

Needham though went on to win with league title with 85 points from 40 matches.

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Photos from the Recent Match against Spalding United



Another excellent display from Kobe Hall and his second goal in two matches.



Luke Benbow in action and unlucky not to get on to the score sheet.

Photos: Chris Jepson

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Recent Results

The Emirates FA Cup - Preliminary Round, Friday 16th August

Lye Town	0 - 2	Racing Club Warwick
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The Pitching In Southern League Premier Division Central, Saturday 16th August

Alvechurch	2 - 0	AFC Sudbury	160
Banbury United	1 - 1	Leiston	551
Bishop's Stortford	1 - 0	Stamford	378
Bromsgrove Sporting	2 - 3	Spalding United	460
Bury Town	1 - 3	Harborough Town	746
Halesowen Town	3 - 2	Real Bedford	1,127
Kettering Town	2 - 1	Barwell	1,141
Needham Market	1 - 0	Worcester City	381
Quorn	5 - 2	Stratford Town	341
Redditch United	2 - 2	Royston Town	591
St Ives Town	2 - 2	Stourbridge	228

The Emirates FA Cup - Preliminary Round, Saturday 16th August

Bedworth United	0 - 2	Atherstone Town	380
Coventry Sphinx	3 - 0	Dudley Town	126
Malvern Town	2 - 4	Worcester Raiders	303
Pershore Town	0 - 3	Colehill Town	193
Sporting Khalsa	5 - 1	Sporting Club Inkberrow	100
Sutton Coldfield Town	2 - 0	Newcastle Town	144

Today's Matches

The Pitching In Southern League Premier Division Central, Saturday 23rd August

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

Forthcoming Matches

The Pitching In Southern League Premier Division Central, Monday 25th August

Alvechurch	v	Stratford Town
Banbury United	v	Stourbridge

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

The Emirates FA Cup - First Qualifying Round, Saturday 30th August

AFC Sudbury	v	Mildenhall Town
Alvechurch	v	Barwell
Boston Town	v	Sporting Khalsa
Coleshill Town	v	Worcester Raiders
Corby Town	v	Gainsborough Trinity
Evesham United	v	Bromsgrove Sporting
Halesowen Town	v	Stratford Town
Hanley Town	v	Stourbridge
Harborough Town	v	Leek Town
Hednesford Town	v	Basford United
Ilkeston Town	v	Spalding United
Kidsgrove Athletic	v	Racing Club Warwick
Long Eaton United	v	Kettering Town
Mangotsfield United	v	Banbury United
Needham Market	v	Tilbury
Quorn	v	Sherwood Colliery
Real Bedford	v	Bishop's Stortford
Redbridge	v	Royston Town
Redditch United	v	Skegness Town
Rushall Olympic	v	Atherstone Town
Stamford	v	Coventry Sphinx
Sutton Coldfield Town	v	Abbey Hulton United
Worcester City	v	Chasetown

The Pitching In Southern League Premier Division Central, Saturday 6th September

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

Sporting on the Road

Monday 25th August, 3:00 p.m.

The Pitching In Southern League Premier Division Central

Redditch United vs Bromsgrove Sporting

Address: The Valley Stadium, Bromsgrove Road, Redditch, B97 4RN, Phone: 01527 67450



Directions: From the Victoria Ground, take the A448 out of town towards Redditch, exit at the junction for

Tardebigge/Batchley/Enfield/Webheath. Take the third exit from the roundabout and go over the bridge turning right on to Birchfield

Road. After ¼ mile turn left on to Bromsgrove Road. Ground is about 1 mile on the left (6 miles, 12 minutes).

Nearest Railway Station: Redditch, ½ mile.

Admission Prices: Adults: £12 (£11 on-line) Concessions (65+): £9 (£8 on-line)

14 - 17 years or students with ID £5 Under 13s: Free

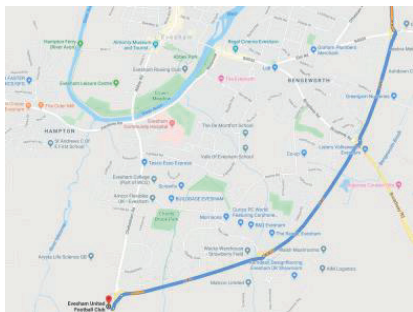
Buy on-line at: <https://redditchunited.co.uk/tickets/>

Saturday 30th August, 3:00 p.m.

The Emirates FA Cup - First Qualifying Round

Evesham United vs Bromsgrove Sporting

Address: The Spiers & Hartwell Jubilee Stadium, Address: Cheltenham Road, EVESHAM WR11 2LZ (for SatNavs use WR11 2LS), Phone: 01386 442303



Directions: Leave M5 motorway at Junction 7 and follow B4084 through Pershore onto Evesham. At traffic lights in Evesham with River Avon and Bridge on left, take RH lane and turn right into Cheltenham Rd signposted A46, M5 Southbound, Oxford and Cheltenham. Continue through 2 sets of traffic lights passing Tesco Garage and Ambulance Station on left before reaching roundabout. Ground situated on right at the roundabout. This route avoids Evesham town centre. Because of road works on the A44, it may

be quicker to travel via Redditch; the ground is signposted on the Evesham by-pass.

Distance: 28 miles from the Victoria Ground. About 55 minutes.

The ground is 1.8 miles from Evesham Railway Station (30/40 minutes walk)

Admission Prices

Adults; £12 Concessions (60 and over); £8 Juniors: £3

Parking free on site, programmes: £2-00

Bromsgrove Sporting Girls



Bromsgrove Sporting Girls: 24-25 Season Review

Last season the Girls section went from strength to strength as part of the wider initiative to develop a full pathway for girls to the Ladies first team. The establishment of the female football pathway is an integral part of Bromsgrove Sporting Football Club's vision for our female section.

24-25 season saw two new teams join the Girls section.

Firstly, new for the 24-25 season was the Bromsgrove Sporting Girls Development (aka the Devs) who played their inaugural season in the Midwest Counties League (Tier 7) for girls 16+. This is a mixture of experienced players, supported by younger girls, who are looking to take the next step into adult Ladies football hoping to function as an ideal preparation for the first team.

Starting out with only a few players and growing to a full squad by the end of the season, they grew from strength to strength and finished strongly in midtable in an extremely competitive league which was a testament to all the Devs hard work.

For 25-26 they have exciting new additions and are hoping to improve on their already impressive first season performance. They play Sundays 2pm at Studley Sports Club, Eldorado Close B80 7HP.

Also new for this season was the debut season of the U13's, they were a new team under Manager Paul Mansell & Tom Harris. Made up of a mixture of experienced girls and girls brand new to football. They finished mid table in an extremely competitive Mercian Junior development league which was a fantastic achievement.

For 25/26 they have added a couple of new girls to bolster the squad and they are eager to get going and improve on last season. They play Saturday Morning at Studley

Sports Club, Eldorado Close B80 7HP.

The under 18 girls had a successful 2nd season at Sporting last year despite having to rebuild the side from the previous season as players left as they reached open age football. We have recruited well this year and look forward to a good season. We play in the Central Warwickshire division 1 and play at Studley Sports Club, Eldorado Close B80 7HP. Please note we still have 1 or 2 spaces available to fill in this year's squad.

The U10's started their second season under Sporting, however it was a bit of a hard reset after the coach and several girls from the previous campaign left. Sean Bullock and Sam Curson took over, new girls have come in to complement the existing girls. All the girls have worked incredibly hard, and this has resulted in them growing increasingly competitive over the course of the year, gradually improving consistently to the point where they are looking to be a force as U11 in the Mercian league playing on Saturday Morning at Barnsley Hall, B61 0TX

In other news, we held our first Inaugural Bromsgrove Sporting Girls Tournament this year, it took place at Barnsley Hall on Sunday the 22nd of June and was a tremendous success featuring 26 Girls teams in both the U10 & U13 age groups. Both U10 & U13 did well in their tournaments and progressed to the later stages of the tournaments giving a good account of themselves. Next year the plan is to go improved with more age groups.

For coming 25-26 season we have two new additional sides joining the setup, this will be the U10 Under Sean Bullock & U9's Under Tommy Thompson embark upon their first season, both playing on Saturday mornings in the Mercian League at Barnsley Hall B61 0TX.

These two teams are the result of the Foundation programme which we run on a Monday night for Girls aged 4+ designed to get girls into Football. If any girls would like to get involved, please get in touch as we are keen to get girls playing football. Details below:

24-25 was a fantastic season of growth for the Girls section and 25-26 will see us grow even more. This would not be possible without the support and engagement of all our volunteer parents, coaches, players that go above and beyond and generous sponsors so on behalf of the Girls section, a huge thank you for all your support.

Our season starts 6th of September however before that, dads, coaches, partners from across the Girls section will take part in a fundraiser game on 24th August at Studley Sports Club, Eldorado Close B80 7HP. Entry is £5 per adult on the door, U16's are free. We have competitions, a BBQ and much more to raise money for the Girls section.

Follow us on Facebook Bromsgrove Sporting Girls FC and keep up to date with how we get on this season.

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Today's Teams

Bromsgrove Sporting		Needham Market	
red & white striped shirts, navy blue shorts and navy blue & red socks		navy blue shirts, navy blue shorts, navy blue socks	
Teams to be chosen from the following:			
1	Adam Harrison (GK)	1	James Bradbrook (GK)
2	Josh Ezewele	2	Eddie Barker
3	Jack Kelly	3	Seth Chambers
4	Reece King (Capt)	4	James Coton
5	Luke Softley	5	Myles Cowling
6	Ash Carter	6	Jake Dye
7	Billy Shaw	7	Kyle Hammond
8	Billy Shaw	7	Ben Hunter
8	Tom Edge	8	Luke Ingram
9	Luke Benbow	9	Reggie Lambe
10	Nick Clayton-Phillips	10	Jamie McGrath
11	Koby Arthur	11	Ryan Miles
12	Koby Arthur	11	Keiran Morphew (Capt)
12	Aksum White	12	Dan Morphew (Vice-Capt)
13	Charlie McNamara (GK)	13	Joe Neal
14	Romehl Critchlow	14	Olly Reynolds
15	Jack Newell	15	Ollie Saunders
16	Bo Morris	16	Luca Savill
17	Taylor Morrison	17	Tommy Smith
18	Taylor Morrison	17	Matty Tricker
18	Jordan Lyden	18	
19	Gus Sanches	19	Manager: Tom Rothery
20	Kobe Hall	20	Asst Mgr: Nathan Munson
21	Paul McCone	21	Coach: Patrick Brothers
25	Ryan Pratt (GK)	22	Kit Man: Darren Oxbrow
			Physio: James Lambert

Match Officials

Referee:	Mr H Price
Assistant 1:	Mr D Lane
Assistant 2:	Mr J Brookland

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