

The Official Matchday Programme of

# Sevenoaks Town

## Vs Whitstable Town



Season 2021/2022

Issue 12 - £2

Pitching In Isthmian  
South East Division

Saturday December 11th, kick-off 3pm

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# Sevenoaks Town Info

**Chairman and Director:** Paul Lansdale  
**Secretary and Director:** Sam Lansdale

**Directors:** Kevin Marsh, Ray Miles, Frank Le Sibirel  
**Committee Members:** Dan Thomas, Michael Tapp

**Match Secretary:** As chairman  
**First Team Manager:** Micky Collins

**Coaches:**

Julian Leigh  
Jason Bourne  
Terry Groom

**Physio:** Jade Shaw

**Safety Officer:** Ray Miles

**Club Welfare Officer:** As chairman

**Covid-19 Officer:** As chairman

**Equality and Diversity Officer:** Michael Tapp

**Press Officer/ PA announcer:** Andrew Gidley

**Club Photographer, App and Social Media:** Adam Beaumont

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## Ho! Ho! Ho! It's the Chairman's message

Hello everybody and welcome to Bourne Stadium for today's Pitching In Isthmian League South East fixture against Whitstable Town. We extend the same to their officials, players and supporters, who have made the trip to be here today, and our three match officials.

Last Sunday was International Volunteer Day – giving the opportunity to thank the thousands who give up their time and commitment to help a host of organisations and causes.

The Non League Paper's headline on Sunday "Volunteers are Priceless" summed it up perfectly – something we here at Sevenoaks Town know only too well, possessing a small band of helpers, keeping things ticking over on match-days.

Why not make it your New Years Resolution to join them and offer to increase that number – I am sure we have a role for you.

It was no surprise that our midweek Velocity Trophy trip to Corinthian was postponed after Storm Barra left its mark on the country.

Covid of course continues to play a part in all lives, with news of another new variant Omicron dominating the headlines

Football wise we have made it through to December but once again it caused selection problems last week, with our new goalkeeper Joe Docherty forced out of the side against Whitehawk.

Today is our final home game before Christmas so on behalf of everyone here at Sevenoaks Town may I wish you a happy and peaceful time.

We are back here on Christmas Monday when we entertain Three Bridges (3pm).

Enjoy the game  
**Paul Lansdale**



A photograph showing three men from the waist up, all wearing dark blue zip-up jackets. The man in the foreground has a full grey beard and is looking slightly to his right. Behind him, another man with a beard is looking in the same direction, and a third man with a shaved head is also looking off to the side. They appear to be at a sports stadium.

# Micky's Message

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the Bourne Stadium for this Isthmian League fixture, I would like to extend this welcome to our visitors today Whitstable Town FC.

They have been on a good run recently under new manager Keith McMahon - a good friend of mine - we have enjoyed some good battles against each other down the years.

Both squads have undergone plenty of changes since we won 2-1 on the opening day of the new league season, when both our goals were scored by Jason Thompson.

Last Saturday proved a disappointing afternoon against Whitehawk.

Unfortunately our new goalkeeper Joe Docherty tested positive for Covid the day before the game - so we had to launch a search for a replacement.

It took until the early hours on Saturday morning to land one - Matthew Blendell from Cray Valley PM - and I have to thank them and my coach Terry Groom for helping get it completed shortly before the 11am deadline.

Tuesday sees us travelling to Herne Bay in the Kent Senior Cup which is another tie that has to be completed on the night.

As this is our last home game before Christmas, may I take this opportunity to wish you on behalf of my staff and the players a very happy one.

Thank you for your continued support.

I hope you enjoy the game and have a safe journey home.

**MC**

# Valley pounce on Ashford slip

By Ian Townsend

**Cray Valley PM** hosted **Herne Bay** in a battle of second versus fifth, and the Millers struck first and struck early, Marcel Barrington's eleventh of the season putting them ahead. The advantage was doubled with twenty one minutes left, Connor Dymond with number two, and although Zak Ansah got one back five minutes from time the Millers went back to the summit with victory.

**Chichester City** shocked leaders **Ashford United** by taking the lead on the half hour, and the shock was even bigger four minutes later when they made it two-nil, Ben Mendoza and Callum Overton doing the damage. More damage was done when Jay May saw red soon after the restart, but the ten men got back into the match when Roberto Ratti scored with twenty one minutes remaining- and then levelled, Ratti with another twelve minutes from time. The Nuts and Bolts fell from the summit, however, when Scott Jones got a winner for the hosts four minutes from time.

Our opponents today, **Whitstable Town** have looked much improved in recent weeks, and they shocked third place **Haywards Heath Town** when Tom Mills put them ahead after seven minutes. The shock got larger when Stephen Okoh made it two, and just after half time Danny Walder got in on the act, making it three as Oysterboys everywhere pinched themselves and travelling fans looked on aghast. Jerson Dos Santos got one back for Heath with twenty five minutes to go- could they? An unlikely comeback looked even more likely when Josh Clack made it three-two with twenty minutes left, but the hosts dug in and held out for three points, climbing to seventeenth.

**Sittingbourne** and **Ramsgate** featured in the only match in the entire league to be goalless at half time, and it was still

goalless at full time. The Rams stay fourth, the Brickies are eighth.

**Hastings United** hosted a Sussex derby, **East Grinstead Town** visiting Pilot Field. The home fans were soon given something to shout about, Lloyd Dawes scoring the first goal on thirteen minutes, and four minutes before the break Ben Pope's twelfth of the season made it two. Finn O'Mara as good as ended the contest with number three on fifty six minutes, but sadly it didn't end there for the Wasps, as Tom Chalmers and Kenny Pogue got numbers four and five in the last two minutes to send United into the top five.

**VCD Athletic** broke the deadlock against **Lancing** right before half time, Youssef Bamba getting a goal for the third match in a row, and doubled their advantage eight minutes after it, Jeff Duah-Kessie, signed from local rivals Phoenix Sports, getting his first goal for the club. Bamba made it three with nineteen minutes left, and Chris Edwards got a fourth soon afterwards, and Vickers end the day in seventh.

**Burgess Hill Town** have been in super form of late, but it was visitors **Corinthian** who struck first, Jack Mahoney with the opener on eighteen minutes, and they struck second, too, Oscar Housego's fifth of the season sealing the points five minutes from time. Corinthian are up to tenth.

**Hythe Town**, facing bottom side **Phoenix Sports**, went ahead on nineteen minutes, Jordan Sarfo getting the goal- but a late equaliser earned Sports their first point since August, Emmanuel Shoderu with the goal.

**Three Bridges** broke the deadlock against **Faversham Town** on nineteen minutes, Tad Bromage with the goal, but the Lilywhites were quickly level, Tyrell Richardson-Brown with a crisp finish. Bridges ninth draw of the season was confirmed with the final whistle, and the two remain level on points.

# Latest table and Results

	16	11	4	1	38	16	+22	37
Ashford United	16	11	2	3	32	12	+20	35
Haywards Heath Town	16	10	2	4	31	16	+15	32
Ramsgate	16	9	4	3	36	19	+17	31
Hastings United	16	10	1	5	37	21	+16	31
Herne Bay	15	9	3	3	25	12	+13	30
VCD Athletic	16	7	3	6	31	21	+10	24
Sittingbourne	16	7	3	6	25	23	+2	24
Chichester City	16	6	5	5	25	18	+7	23
Corinthian	16	6	3	7	17	19	-2	21
Hythe Town	15	6	3	6	14	26	-12	21
Whitehawk	16	6	2	8	20	25	-5	20
Burgess Hill Town	15	5	4	6	16	20	-4	19
Faversham Town	15	5	3	7	16	23	-7	18
Three Bridges	16	3	9	4	18	29	-11	18
<b>Sevenoaks Town</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Whitstable Town</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>14</b>
Lancing	16	3	3	10	13	32	-19	12
East Grinstead Town	16	2	4	10	14	31	-17	10
Phoenix Sports	16	1	2	13	13	35	-22	5

## Saturday 4th December

<b>Burgess Hill Town</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Corinthian</b>	<b>301</b>
<b>Chichester City</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Mahoney 18, Housego 85</b>	
			<b>Ashford United</b>	<b>155</b>
			<b>Ratti 69', 78</b>	
<b>Cray Valley PM</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Herne Bay</b>	<b>147</b>
			<b>Ansah 85</b>	
<b>Hastings United</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>East Grinstead Town</b>	<b>801</b>
			<b>Dawes 13, Pope 41,</b>	
			<b>O'Mara 56, Chalmers 89,</b>	
			<b>Pogue 90</b>	
<b>Hythe Town</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Phoenix Sports</b>	<b>200</b>
			<b>Shoderu 89</b>	
<b>Sevenoaks Town</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Whitehawk</b>	<b>117</b>
			<b>Malins 7, Gregory 54, Clark 86</b>	
<b>Sittingbourne</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Ramsgate</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>Three Bridges</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Faversham Town</b>	<b>85</b>
			<b>Richardson-Brown 28</b>	
<b>VCD Athletic</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Lancing</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Whitstable Town</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Haywards Heath Town</b>	<b>255</b>
			<b>Dos Santos 65, Robinson 70</b>	



# Oaks freeze as Hawks swoop

**Sevenoaks Town 0  
Whitehawk 3**

**By Andrew Gidley**

These two teams boasted identical records and points – ahead of this contest.

Oaks though were unable to continue their recent improved home form, having taken seven points from the three previous games.

Without suspended top scorer Louis Collins, they included recalled youngster Elliott Duncan from a loan spell with Southern Counties East League Crowborough Athletic.

Oaks were also forced to draft in goalkeeper Matthew Blendell as a late replacement for new signing Joe Docherty, ruled out after testing positive for Covid, beating the morning deadline by only half an hour to complete the signing.

Cray Valley PM stopper Blendell was kept busy, settling in with two important saves from Hawks youngster Ollie Munt. He pushed one effort round the post, but Oaks failed to defend the resulting corner, Alex Malins heading in unmarked at the far post as the visitors led after seven minutes.

Hawks dominated things before Jon Pilbeam had the hosts first chance, shooting over the bar at the midway point.

Dean Gunner shot wide from distance, before Stefan Wright went close twice late in the first half.

Oaks were caught out again eight minutes after break, Peter Gregory adding Whitehawk's second with a fine near post finish.

Billie Clark added a late third.

**Sevenoaks:** Matthew Blendell, Danny Devine, Joe Fregene, Steve Smith (Lamin Bah 70 mins), Freeman Rogers, Dean Gunner, Bobby Dunn, Ben Davison (Kweke Ansah (53 mins), Jon Pilbeam (Luke Leppard 54 mins), Elliott Duncan, Stefan Wright



# Sevenoaks Town Fixtures 2021-22 season

All home Saturday games kick off at 3pm. Wednesday games at 7.30pm.

Key: ISE: Isthmian South East - FAC: FA Cup - FAT: FA Trophy KSC: Kent Senior Cup VT = Velocity Trophy  
1 Goal scored - \*Own Goal + Lost 3-1 on penalties 1st sub 2nd sub 3rd sub Sent off

# Meet the opposition ...

## DAN EASON

**Age:** 32, **Goalkeeper**  
**Whitstable debut:** October 2015.

Has since made well over 200 appearances

**Previous clubs:** Herne Bay, Hythe Town  
Very consistent goalkeeper and fans' favourite  
Reached the FA Vase semi-final with Herne Bay

## HENRY DULEY

**Age:** 17, **Goalkeeper**

Whitstable Town Under 18  
Kent Youth League player  
Unused substitute in FA Cup tie, August 2021

## JAMES BROWN

**Age:** 29, **Left Back, Midfield**  
**Whitstable debut:** November 2011 and re-joined for 2019-20 season

**Previous clubs:** Faversham, Herne Bay and also had spells playing overseas  
Former youth player at Gillingham and son of local footballing legend Neil Brown

## OLLIE GRAY

**Age:** 30, **Centre Back, Right Back, Midfield**  
**Whitstable debut:** August 2014 and re-joined for 2020-21 season

**Previous clubs:** QPR (youth), Margate, Ramsgate, Sittingbourne and Eastbourne Town  
Versatile player in his second spell at Whitstable

## SIMON KABAMBA

**Age:** 22, **Right Back**  
**Whitstable debut:** October 2020

**Previous club:** Herne Bay  
Currently out with a knee injury sustained in pre-season

## JAKE MACKENZIE

**Age:** 27, **Right Back**

**Whitstable debut:** August 2012 and re-joined for 2019-20 season

**Previous clubs:** Gillingham, Ramsgate  
Local player who originally joined Whitstable after leaving Gillingham, then played for Ramsgate before returning to the Belmont

## JACK MILES

**Age:** 26, **Centre Back**

**Whitstable debut:** October 2020

**Previous clubs:** Sevenoaks Town, Ashford United  
A home grown player at Sevenoaks, who was a part of their team that won promotion to the Isthmian League, before having a short spell at Ashford

## TOM MILLS

**Age:** 30, **Defender, Left Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** September 2020

**Previous clubs:** Maidstone United, Margate  
Made 341 appearances for Maidstone as they won several promotions to reach the National League

## WILL THOMAS

**Age:** 23, **Centre Back**

**Whitstable debut:** October 2020

**Previous clubs:** Maidstone Academy, East Grinstead Town, Hythe Town, Sheppen United, Canterbury City, Ramsgate

Played for a number of clubs after leaving Maidstone Academy, before joining Whitstable in 2020

## VICTOR AIYELABOLA

**Age:** 20, **Attacking Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** September 2020

**Previous clubs:** Herne Bay, Erith & Belvedere, Holmesdale, K Sports  
A young midfielder who made six appearances for Whitstable in the 2020-21 season and returned after starting the 2021-22 season in the SCEFL Premier Division

## TOM CARLTON

**Age:** 23, **Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** August 2021

**Previous clubs:** Herne Bay, Hythe Town  
A youth player with Chelsea, West Ham and Colchester United, before joining Herne Bay  
Signed for Whitstable in November 2020, but Covid delays meant waiting nine months for his debut

## MONTRELL DESLANDES

**Age:** 19, **Defensive Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** October 2021

**Previous clubs:** Whitstable Town Academy  
Promising midfielder, who has progressed to the first team squad after a number of good performances for the academy and reserve teams

## LUKE GRIFFITHS

**Age:** 22, **Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** October 2021

Previous clubs: Faversham Town, VCD Athletic, Sheppen United  
Played youth football locally and has developed into a goal scoring midfielder

## LUKE ILLSLEY

**Age:** 31, **Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** November 2021

**Previous clubs:** for Enfield Town, Cheshunt, Hertford Town, Chalfont St. Peter, East Thurrock, Herne Bay  
A hard-working central midfielder who joined Whitstable after a short spell with Herne Bay

## LEO MAZZONE

**Age:** 24, **Midfield, Right Back**

**Whitstable debut:** September 2019

**Previous clubs:** Ebbsfleet United, East Grinstead Town  
Part of the Ebbsfleet Academy before featuring for their first team and signing a two year contract  
Moved to East Grinstead, where he made over 150 appearances

## GEORGE MCILROY

**Age:** 18, **Central Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** August 2021

**Previous team:** Whitstable Town U18  
A promising, young midfielder who has joined the first team squad for the current season

## FREDDIE OLIVER

**Age:** 17, **Central Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** September 2021

Whitstable Town Under 18 Kent Youth League player, who made his first team debut at Chichester in the FA Trophy

## PATRICK UNDERHILL

**Age:** 17, **Left Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** September 2021

Whitstable Town Under 18 Kent Youth League player, who made his first team

debut at Chichester in the FA Trophy

## DANNY WALDER

**Age:** 32, **Central Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** August 2021

**Previous clubs:** Ramsgate, Dover Athletic, Tonbridge Angels, Herne Bay, Sheppen United, Faversham Town, Ashford United.  
Part of the Tonbridge team that won the Isthmian League Premier Division play-offs in 2011

## LUCA WOODHOUSE

**Age:** 17, **Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** November 2021

**Previous clubs:** Tonbridge Angels, East Grinstead Town

A promising young midfielder who has joined Whitstable on dual registration from Tonbridge Angels. He is a product of the Tonbridge academy and has also featured for East Grinstead this season.

## GUS BARNES

**Age:** 17, **Striker**

**Whitstable debut:** August 2021

Whitstable Town Under 18 Kent Youth League player, who broke into the first team at the start of the 2021-22 season, playing as a wide forward

## MUHAMMED CHAM

**Age:** 19, **Winger or Centre Forward**

**Whitstable debut:** November 2019

**Previous clubs:** Whitstable Town Academy, Margate Sports  
A prolific goal scorer for Whitstable Town Academy and Reserve teams  
Had a trial with Fleetwood Town

## KEMO DARBOE

**Age:** 29, **Centre Forward**

**Whitstable debut:** November 2021

**Previous clubs:** Woking, Dulwich Hamlet, AC Oulu (Finland), VCD Athletic, Barking, Greenwich Borough  
Gambian striker who made an appearance for Norwich City u21 when on trial and had a spell playing in Finland

## ALEX GAGGIN AGE 26

**Attacking Midfield**

**Whitstable debut:** November 2021

**Previous clubs:** Margate, East Grinstead, VCD Athletic, Phoenix Sports  
An Australian born quick and experienced winger who can score goals

## HARRY GOODGER

**Age:** 36, **Striker**

**Whitstable debut:** August 2017

**Previous clubs:** Norton Sports, Newbury, Hungerford Town, Wealdstone, Faversham Town, Sittingbourne, Hollands and Blair  
Experienced striker who scored three goals in a short spell at Whitstable in 2017 and returned in October 2021

## STEPHEN OKOH

**Age:** 27, **Winger**

**Whitstable debut:** November 2021

**Previous clubs:** Leatherhead, Lewes, Stranraer, Margate, Bromley, Hythe Town, Whitehawk  
A pacy attacking player, who spent one season with Stranraer in Scotland

# Sevenoaks Town FC



**History:** Sevenoaks Town were originally formed in 1883, one of the founding members of the Kent League.

In April the same year, the club played Royal Arsenal, then the only professional club in the South East of England in front of around 1000 spectators at Knole Paddock.

They combined with St Johns United in 1951, and joined the Western section of the Kent Amateur League.

Division 1 League Cup winners in 1965–66, they were twice winners of the Premier Division in 1968–69 and 1975–76.

They won the Kent County League – three times – 1984–85, 1995–96 and 2002–3.

The club were Kent Intermediate Challenge Shield and Inter-Regional Challenge Cup winners twice, and lifted the Sevenoaks Charity Cup on 12 occasions.

**Recent successes:** Southern Counties East League Cup champions: 2016–17  
Southern Counties East League champions: 2017–18

**Best FA Cup Performance:** Second Qualifying Round: 2016–17

**Best FA Trophy Performance:** First Qualifying Round: 2018–19

**Best FA Vase Performance:** Third Round Proper 2017–18.

A new state of the art 3G pitch was installed in June 2017, and plans are in place to construct a brand new stadium in the next two years.

# 2021 Squad Pictures



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**DRAKES**

# Grow the Oaks!

Since 1883, Sevenoaks Town FC has provided playing opportunities for footballers of all ages and abilities. As our club seeks to take each step of the Government's Covid 19 roadmap and beyond with care, we are determined to find our feet as quickly as possible, making sure Greatness Park returns to becoming a safe, friendly hub of footballing activity for the local community and our football family.

It is now over a year since the global pandemic was declared, it is poignant to reflect on the things we've learned from these, tough, strange and unprecedented times. With our lives changed beyond recognition, we have learnt to appreciate all the things we enjoy – football being one of them. All the people who dedicate hours of time to helping Sevenoaks Town FC run are providing a selfless service we all appreciate goes beyond supplying physical benefits. It's the social elements of being part of a team; the mental health release of being active and empowered; its feeling and being a part of something unique, constructive and valuable.

With lots of people impacted economically, whether that be by being placed on furlough, losing employment or having planned opportunities postponed or cancelled, we are aware there may be individuals and groups out there who want to seize opportunity

once lockdown eases. Opportunity to give back. Opportunity to contribute to their local community. Opportunity to reignite with the game they love and have most probably sorely missed.

We want to #GrowTheOaks with a specific push to recruit volunteers to be a part of our team at Sevenoaks Town FC. However, no specifics are required for you to be a part of it. Whatever your skills, whatever your experience; if you want to get involved, if you'd like to contribute some hours and if you'd like to give up your free time, then you'd be most welcome.

Every volunteer at Sevenoaks Town FC is supported and given guidance around their role and responsibilities. We pride ourselves on looking after our players, coaches, officers and wider community. As a volunteer at our FA Charter Standard Community club, you will be a part of a club that prides itself on meeting and exceeding standards. You'll have opportunity to improve both yourself and the club in turn.

We are looking forward to a continued safe and positive return to football and if you want to be a part of it you can explore volunteering options and be a part of #GrowTheOaks by emailing [info@sevenoakstownfc.co.uk](mailto:info@sevenoakstownfc.co.uk)

## Zero tolerance for racism

"The Isthmian Football League strongly supports the FA statement that there should be a zero-tolerance approach against racism and all forms of discrimination. Accordingly, any form of discriminatory abuse whether it by reason of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex and sexual orientation or any other form of abuse will be reported

to The Football Association for action by that Association." (The FA 0800 085 0508 / Kick it Out 020 7253 0162). The Isthmian League and all Member Clubs in the League are committed to promoting equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and providing access and opportunities for all members of the community."

## Sevenoaks Town Women and Girls' Strategy

Sevenoaks Town FC are currently in the exciting process of putting together three-year plan for the women and girls' section of the club, in which they are aiming to help the team move from tier 7 (b) to tier 4 within the next 3 years. This is an ambitious jump to a high standard of football which STFC are confident they can achieve.

In order to help Sevenoaks Town accomplish this, the club has been working with two consultants who both have a lot of first-hand experience in women's football: Natalie Curtis, a Football Development Officer for Women & Girls Football at the Kent FA who has also played for a pro club and managed and coached at the same level, and Charlotte Richardson, an FA Club Consultant who has been involved in the Women's Sport & Leadership Academy.

Both Natalie and Charlotte have experience of working with clubs and taking their Women's and Girls' teams up a few tiers, which is what Sevenoaks Town aspires to achieve. Natalie and Charlotte have begun to map out this three-year plan to help STFC achieve our goals.

Furthermore, Sevenoaks Town have also appointed Paul McDonagh who will be a great addition to the Women's and Girls section at Sevenoaks Town. Paul is a UEFA A Coach, and has also been Technical Director for Women's and Girls football at Charlton Athletic for two years.

Paul will take on and oversee STFC's Women and Girls' section, and he will also manage the Women's First Team for the upcoming 21/22 season supported by Maddie Smith and Dan Thomas who bring a wealth of experience and have been instrumental in our progress so far.

We at Sevenoaks Town FC are confident that with the addition of Natalie, Charlotte and Paul to STFC's Women and Girls' section, as well as

the foundation we have built since our first girls' team in 2012, we will be able to really push on and increase the profile and exposure of women's football at the club. The ultimate aim is to have our women's and men's teams run in the same way and be on the same level, and we hope to achieve this starting with the three-year plan which is being put in place.



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# Whitstable Town FC History

Whitstable Town was established in **1885** and in **1909** joined the Kent League, where they remained for many years, apart from a couple of short spells elsewhere. In the **1996/97** season, the team reached the fifth round of the FA Vase.

They were champions of the Kent League Premier Division in the **2006/07** season and were promoted to the Isthmian League.

After nine seasons they suffered relegation and played in the Southern Counties East League Premier Division for the next two, but in **2017/18** they won both the Kent Senior Trophy and League Cup, whilst also finishing runners-up in the league, which was enough to gain promotion back to the Isthmian League, where they are currently members of the South-East Division.

Although the first recorded football match in Whitstable was in **1885**, the first record of Whitstable Town's existence was the following year. After a couple of years playing in a field behind the railway station, the club relocated to The Belmont Ground in **1888**, where they play to this day.

In **1909** the Oystermen joined the original Kent League, where they played until it folded in **1959**, winning the Division Two title three times. They also lifted the Kent Amateur Cup (now Kent Senior Trophy) in **1929**.

After the collapse of the Kent League, the club played for a while in the Aetolian League, but this meant long trips to play London teams as opposed to the earlier money-spinning East Kent derbies, and this was a period of financial struggle for the club, which dropped into the amateur leagues for a number of years.

In the late **1960s** the Kent League reformed, with the Oystermen among the founder members, moving back from the Greater London League.

Trophy success was rare although they did reach cup finals on several occasions and lifted the Kent League cup in **1979-80** when they beat Chatham 4-3 after extra time, having trailed 3-1 late in the second half. They also attracted national publicity in **1989** when striker Gerry Allen scored a goal after just 4 seconds of a match. A dramatic penalty shootout involving 26

spot kicks brought the Kent Senior Trophy to Whitstable in **2000-01** when VCD were eventually beaten 10-9 on penalties after the teams finished level at 1-1 after extra time.

Whitstable remained members of the Kent League until their promotion to the Isthmian League in **2007**. The **2006/07** season marked the best in the club's history when supporter Tony Rouse took over as chairman from long time servant of the club Joe Brownnett. Rouse appointed first team captain Marc Seager as the club's manager, taking over from Matt Toms. Under Marc Seager's leadership the team won the Kent League and the Kent Senior Trophy.

In **2012** former local referee Gary Johnson took over as chairman from Joe Brownnett (after his second spell in the chair) who stepped down after many years at Whitstable Town.

The club's best finish in the Isthmian League was eighth under managers Jim and Danny Ward in **2014/15**, while Nicky Southall led them to the last 32 of the FA Trophy in **2013/14**, before losing 2-1 to Ebbsfleet United in front of 742 supporters at the Belmont Ground.

Towards the end of a turbulent 2015/16 season that saw the chairman resign and the club relegated, Joe Brownnett again returned as chairman and Scott Porter took over as Manager for the last few games in the Isthmian League before relegation was confirmed. The club rebuilt off the pitch and after two seasons in the Southern Counties East League, promotion back into the Isthmian League was achieved with a second placed finish during a season that also brought cup final wins in the Kent Senior Trophy and the SCEFL Challenge Cup.

The club launched a football academy at the start of the **2017/18** season and then joined together with Whitstable Town Junior Football Club on 1st June **2019**, when the club ownership was also transferred to a new limited company. With chairman Joe Brownnett and manager Scott Porter both deciding to stand down to take up alternative roles within the club, the **2019-20** season heralded a fresh start for Whitstable Town. The junior club chairman Steve Clayton took



## THE LAST TIME WE MET

Saturday August 14:

**Whitstable Town 1**

**Sevenoaks Town 2**

**Scorers:** Jason Thompson 2 (36, 53 mins)  
**HT:** 0-1

**Attendance:** 315:

**Sevenoaks Town:** Ben Bridle-Card, Danny Divine, Tommy Cooney (Hayden Skerry 86 mins), Charlie Holmes, Joe Tennant, Dean Gunner, Max Walsh, Stefan Wright (Bradley Schafer 84 mins), Jason Thompson (Reece Deakin 74 mins), Louis Collins, Emmanuel Dasho.

up the position of overall club chairman and Lloyd Blackman became the new first team manager. There are now opportunities for children under the age of eighteen to train, play football and be part of the town's senior club and with a thriving academy and new reserves team, there is a clear pathway to senior football in the town.

Manager Lloyd Blackman resigned in September **2021** and was replaced by for-

mer Thamesmead Town and VCD Athletic manager Keith McMahon.

The Belmont Ground has a large car park, but please note its entrance is on Grimshill Road, CT5 4LN. The ground has a seated stand along one side as well as covered terracing behind each goal. There is a clubhouse that can be hired for private functions, when not in use for matches.





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# Boxing Day break?

By Sam Emery

MANY football supporters hope their favourite Christmas present arrives on Boxing Day – in the shape of three points.

Two Non-League sides Sheffield FC and Hallam FC – the world's oldest and second oldest clubs – are the reason the game is played over the festive period.

Hallam hosted their neighbours in the first ever inter-club match on Boxing Day 1860, also known as St Stephen's Day.

The Football League helped continue the tradition in their inaugural 22-game season in 1888-89 when Preston North End defeated Derby County 5-0 on December 26th.

The ceasefires during World War I, particularly on Christmas Day in 1914 when British and German troops played football together, are also said to have strengthened the game's festive legacy.

Matches were even played on December 25th until 1965 when Blackburn beat Blackpool 1-0 in the First Division and Coventry beat Wrexham 5-3 in the Third.

In 1913, Liverpool beat Manchester City 4-2 on Christmas Day, lost the return game 1-0 on Boxing Day, before drawing 3-3 at home with Blackburn Rovers the next day!

In Europe, it is common to have a winter break over the festive period. The Premier League has recently introduced a winter break which this season takes place in January.

The top-flight has maintained its

Boxing Day fixture schedule as has the Football League – but the picture is slightly different within Non-League.

The National League, North and South will play on Sunday, December 26th this year and then on Tuesday 28th before playing again on Sunday, January 2nd.

The Isthmian League, Northern Premier League and Southern League – at Steps 3 and 4 – will not play on Boxing Day, competing on Monday, December 27th instead.

They will, however, play on New Year's Day and then on the Bank Holiday Monday, January 3rd.

With the majority of clubs at Steps 3 and 4 part-time, and given the difficulties faced over the past two seasons, having a Boxing Day off seems a sensible decision.

Clubs at these levels and below rely on volunteers with players and managers balancing their playing commitments with full-time work.

The differing schedules across the National League System will be welcome news to groundhoppers too, who will almost be able to watch a match-a-day during the winter period, while crowd sizes are likely to receive the usual boost with matches taking place on Bank Holidays.

I wouldn't feel right if Boxing Day football was completely abandoned but it's a good move from leagues to be looking after those who keep the game going.

*The Non-League Paper will be published as usual throughout the Christmas period.*



# Today's team sheet

## Sevenoaks Town

- 1: Joe Docherty
- 2: Danny Divine
- 3: Jason Fregene
- 4: Stefan Wright
- 5: Freeman Rogers
- 6: Dean Gunner
- 7: Bobby Dunn
- 8: Ben Davisson
- 9: Stephen Smith
- 10: Jon Pilbeam
- 11: Kweke Ansah
- 12: Charlie Holmes
- 14: Lamin Bah
- 15: Ben Davisson
- 16: Elliott Duncan
- 17: Harvey Welford

## Whitstable Town

- 1: Dan Eason
- 2: Jake Mackenzie
- 3: James Brown
- 4: Junior Baker
- 5: Will Thomas
- 6: Tom Mills
- 7: Gus Barnes
- 8: Danny Walder
- 9: Kemo Darboe
- 10: George McIlroy
- 11: Stephen Okoh
- 12: Victor Aiyelebola
- 14: Harry Goodger
- 15: Muhammed Cham
- 16: Rodney Eruotor
- 17: Tom Carlton



Saturday December 11th 3pm. Pitching In  
Isthmian South-East Division, Sevenoaks v Whitstable

**Referee:** Peter Wilson

**Assistant Referee 1:** Mark Gidman

**Assistant Referee 2:** Peter Dingle

**Next home match:** Monday December 27th 3pm. Pitching In  
Isthmian South-East Division, Sevenoaks v Three Bridges

