

# Ryman

football league

**Pre-season Bulletin – Season 2012/13 ... No.1**

**23<sup>rd</sup> July 2012**



MAIDSTONE UNITED return to their home town this season after more than 20 years in exile. Pictured above is their impressive new Gallagher Stadium, with its state-of-the-art synthetic playing surface. There was good news for Stones this week when the FA decided that games could be played on such pitches in the qualifying rounds of the FA Cup, and in the FA Trophy.

## In this issue...



Introducing the newcomers



FA Cup and Trophy draws

## By Peter Butcher – Ryman League Communications Administrator

SIX new clubs join the Ryman League this season, two relegated from Blue Square South and four promoted from Step 5 leagues. Three have played in the Ryman League before, three are complete newcomers.



### Premier

**HAMPTON & RICHMOND BOROUGH:** The Beavers return to the Ryman Premier after departing as champions in 2007. Formed in 1920 as Hampton FC (the borough suffix was added in 1999), they competed in local football until 1959, when they joined the Surrey Senior League. A successful spell in the Spartan League followed, and after winning the title four times in six years they stepped up to the Athenian League in 1971, then became founder-members of the Isthmian League's second division in 1973. They stayed at that level until 1989, usually in mid-table, but since then have moved up or down on a number of occasions. Their championship season was the fifth time they had been promoted in this league but they had never before finished higher than third: two of their promotions came from that position, one from fourth place and one from fifth!

**THURROCK:** The Essex club made rapid progress after their formation as Purfleet FC in 1985, joining the Isthmian League Division Two North after winning the Essex Senior League title in 1988. They won promotion at the first attempt only to be relegated straight back, but after stepping up again in 1992 they achieved Premier Division status two years later. Two fourth-place finishes were their best until they adopted their local borough's name in 2003. Third spot in their first campaign as Thurrock earned them a place in the new Conference South, where they reached the promotion play-offs at the first attempt before losing to Eastbourne Borough in the semi-finals. In 2003 and 2004 they reached the first round of the FA Cup and hosted live TV games, drawing with Luton (before losing the replay) and going down 1-0 to Oldham. Since then they have found success more elusive and were relegated last season, having twice previously been reprieved after finishing in the bottom three.

Of the four clubs promoted to the Premier, three have never played at this level before. **Bognor Regis Town** return after two years in Ryman South, missing the title by a single goal in 2011 before coming through last season's play-offs. **Enfield Town**, formed as recently as 2001, first joined the Ryman League in 2006 while the two clubs promoted as champions have spent even less time with us: Suffolk club **Leiston** won Ryman North at the first attempt and Brighton-based **Whitehawk** took the Ryman South title in their second season.



### North

**WITHAM TOWN:** The Mid-Essex club, formed in 1947, were Essex Senior League founder-members in 1971 and became its inaugural champions. Another title followed in 1986, though they had to wait a further year before joining the Isthmian League. Never able to climb above the two lowest divisions, they were perhaps unlucky to be relegated back to the Essex Senior League in 2009 after finishing 21<sup>st</sup> in Division One North in a year when a relegation reprieve was not forthcoming. Further bad luck followed a year later when, as Essex Senior League runners-up, they found themselves ranked 13<sup>th</sup> of the Step 5 clubs eligible for the 12 promotion places. They made no mistake last season, scoring 117 league goals and winning the title by seven points.

**WROXHAM:** Last season's Eastern Counties League champions become the first Norfolk club to play in the Ryman League. Known as the Yachtsmen because of their position on the famous Norfolk Broads, Wroxham were founded as long ago as 1892. It was 1982, however, before they started to make an impression on the wider football world, winning the first of five Anglian Combination titles in seven years. That earned them a place in the Eastern Counties League and they celebrated their centenary by winning that league for the first time. They went on to achieve a hat-trick of championships, and another treble followed from 1997-99. A seventh title came in 2007 and an eighth last season. Wroxham have also enjoyed some excellent FA Vase runs, topped with a visit to Wembley for the 2010 final, though they were beaten 6-1 by the all-conquering Whitley Bay.



### South

**HERNE BAY:** Formed in 1885, Herne Bay have spent most of their lengthy life in various Kent leagues, including three separate spells in the Kent League itself. They moved on to the wider stage by joining the Athenian League in 1964 and were promoted once. In 1973-74, however, they finished bottom of Division One, winning only once in the league, and chose to return to the Kent League. Had they not done so, perhaps they would have been one of the many Athenian clubs who joined the Isthmians during that period. They were to enjoy great success in the 1990s, winning four Kent League titles, on two occasions collecting more than 100 points and scoring more than 100 goals. Four times runners-up since the turn of the century, Herne Bay claimed their fifth title, and with it promotion, last season, when they also reached the semi-finals of the FA Vase before going out to eventual winners West Auckland.

**THREE BRIDGES:** It has been a long wait for Three Bridges, who have been keen to move up from the Sussex County League for many years but, until last season, had never quite managed to lift the title. They finally made it when they beat Rye 1-0 in their last game of the season to clinch the championship. Had the result been reversed, Rye would have been champions and Bridges would have finished third, thus missing out on promotion although neither Rye nor runners-up Lancing were eligible for the step up. Last season was also their first for 56 years as the top non-League club in their home town of Crawley, thanks to Crawley Town's promotion to the Football League. Bridges won promotion to Division One of the Sussex County League in 1955 while Crawley (then without the Town suffix) dropped to Division Two, but they changed places again a year later (or would have done had Crawley not joined another league). Founded in 1901, Bridges joined the Sussex County League as founder-members of Division Two in 1952 and thus their promotion season was their 60<sup>th</sup> in that league.

The league bids farewell to Billericay Town and AFC Hornchurch, both promoted to Blue Square South, relegated clubs Whyteleafe (to the Kent League) and Great Wakering (Essex Senior League), and Godalming Town, who have been transferred to the Southern League.



# FA Cup – Preliminary Round Draw

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August

AFC Dunstable or Ampthill Town	v	Redbridge
AFC Sudbury	v	Ilford
Arundel or Epsom & Ewell	v	Three Bridges
Barkingside or Great Yarmouth Town	v	Witham Town
Biggleswade United or Cranfield United	v	Ware
Burgess Hill Town	v	Littlehampton Town or Molesey
Chatham Town	v	Peacehaven & Telscombe or Banstead Athletic
Cheshunt	v	Potters Bar Town
Chipstead	v	Chichester City or Crowborough Athletic
Crawley Down Gatwick	v	Tooting & Mitcham United
Debenham LC or Whitton United	v	Aveley
Dorking or VCD Athletic	v	Whitstable Town
Dulwich Hamlet	v	Hythe Town
Eastbourne Town	v	Chessington & Hook United or Warlingham
Faversham Town	v	Erith Town or Ringmer
FC Clacton or Halstead Town	v	Brentwood Town
Felixstowe & Walton United or Team Bury	v	Heybridge Swifts
Godalming Town	v	Ramsgate
Grays Athletic	v	Takeley or Newmarket Town
Hanwell Town or Haringey & Waltham Development	v	Waltham Abbey
Harlow Town	v	Ipswich Wanderers or Hadleigh United
Herne Bay	v	Folkestone Invicta
Horley Town or Holmesdale	v	Leatherhead
Horsham	v	Raynes Park Vale or Horsham YMCA
Maidstone United	v	Shoreham or Colliers Wood United
Maldon & Tiptree	v	London APSA or Long Melford
Merstham	v	Walton & Hersham
Needham Market	v	Gorleston or Stanway Rovers
Redhill or Whyteleafe	v	Corinthian-Casuals
Romford	v	Waltham Forest
Sittingbourne	v	Burnham
Soham Town Rangers	v	Walsham Le Willows or Burnham Ramblers
Tilbury	v	Brantham Athletic or Mildenhall Town
Walton Casuals	v	Thamesmead Town
Worthing	v	St Francis Rangers or Rye United
Wroxham	v	Woodbridge Town or Great Wakering Rovers



## FA Trophy – Preliminary Round

**Saturday 15th September**

Brentwood Town	v	Harlow Town
Chertsey Town	v	Tilbury
Cheshunt	v	Waltham Forest
Chipstead	v	Waltham Abbey
Corinthian-Casuals	v	Potters Bar Town
Crawley Down Gatwick	v	Witham Town
Faversham Town	v	AFC Sudbury
Folkestone Invicta	v	Merstham
Grays Athletic	v	Aylesbury
Herne Bay	v	Chatham Town
Heybridge Swifts	v	Worthing
Hythe Town	v	Ware
Needham Market	v	Maidstone United
North Greenford United	v	Tooting & Mitcham United
Northwood	v	Leatherhead
Romford	v	Dulwich Hamlet
Royston Town	v	Aveley
Sittingbourne	v	Horsham
Thamesmead Town	v	Burgess Hill Town
Walton & Hersham	v	Maldon & Tiptree
Walton Casuals	v	Ashford Town (Middx)
Wroxham	v	AFC Hayes

Visit the New Ryman League Website for more up to date news as it arrives at:

[www.isthmian.co.uk](http://www.isthmian.co.uk)

Please send any news items for the Website to the League's Communications Administrator

Peter Butcher ([peter@isthmian.co.uk](mailto:peter@isthmian.co.uk))

