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Saturday 2nd March 2024
Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands

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CLUB HONOURS

United Counties League Premier Division South
Winners 2023

Midland Alliance League Cup
Winners 2010

Midland Combination Premier Division
Champions 2007
Runners-up 1996, 2002, 2005, 2006

Midland Combination Challenge Cup
Finalists 1999
Winners 2002, 2005

Coventry Evening Telegraph Cup
Winners 1966, 2005, 2006

Coventry Charity Cup
Winners 2007

BCFA Midweek Floodlit Cup
Winners 2007

Tony Allden Cup
Winners 2007

FA Vase
Quarter Finalists 2008

OTHER HONOURS

United Counties League Programme of the Year
Winners 2023

Midland Alliance Programme of the Year
Winners 2008
Runners-up 2009

Midland Combination Programme of the Year
Runners-up 2005
Winners 2006, 2007

Midland Combination Hospitality Award
Winners 2006 (Division 3)
Winners 2007 (Division 2)



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Vice-Chairman: Joseph Fletcher
Finance Officer: Neil Buswell
Club Secretary: Sharon Taylor
Matchday Secretary: Sharon Taylor
Youth Secretary: Sharon Taylor
Pitch Allocator: Dave Bull
Welfare Officer: Joanne Bull
Ticket Manager: Mandy Seddon
Programme Editor: Chris Nee

FIRST TEAM STAFF

Joint Manager: Shaun Thomas
Joint Manager: John Woodward
First Team Coach: Nigel Starkey
Goalkeeping Coach: Damian Morgan
Goalkeeping Coach: Michael Taylor
First Team Physio: Kirk Holland
Kit Manager: Paul Seddon
Chief Scout: Jim McClean

GROUNDS TEAM

Paul Wright, Martin Sutton

MEDIA TEAM

Chris Nee
Liam Cook

PHOTOGRAPHY

Marcus Robinson
Stuart Guest

MATCHDAY HOSPITALITY

Leanne Talbot & Donna Crouch

MATCHDAY VOLUNTEERS

Martin Sutton, Dave Bull, Alan Townsend

Coventry Sphinx Football Club

Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena, Sphinx Drive, Coventry, CV3 1WA
024 7645 1361

Coventry Sphinx Football Club is a non-for-profit organisation



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Upcoming fixtures

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Loughborough Dynamo

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Tuesday 5th March 2024 | 7.45pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Harborough Town

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 9th March 2024 | 3.00pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Cambridge City

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 16th March 2024 | 3.00pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

AWAY



Loughborough Dynamo v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 23rd March 2024 | 3.00pm
The Newton Fallowell Stadium
2 Watermead Lane, Loughborough, LE11 3TN

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Sutton Coldfield Town

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 30th March 2024 | 3.00pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive



CoventrySphinx



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Welcome to the Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena for this afternoon's Pitching In Northern Premier League Midlands match between Coventry Sphinx and Shepshed Dynamo.

I'd like to begin by extending our condolences to our visitors on behalf of everyone at the Sphinx before the funeral of Pete Bull next week. Non-league clubs can't exist without people like Pete and our thoughts are with you all.

On the pitch, last weekend was a bit of a bruiser for the Sphinx. After a respectable draw in our last game here, we went to Northamptonshire to face Corby Town and suddenly found ourselves short of personnel.

With a number of players absent for various reasons, and with a few of those who were there not match-ready in any way, shape or form, I thought the team acquitted themselves well.

It wouldn't be right to say that 3-0 flattered Corby because they were emphatic in front of goal and controlled the match for a spell after their first, but the result really was only part of the story on this occasion.

Sphinx battled through illness and injury for 90 minutes despite being two goals down at half time, and the attitude of those present was impeccable. It's the same old tale: these boys never, ever let us down for character.

As we now embark upon a run of four consecutive home fixtures in the month of March, we need to dig deep into our reserves of another trait that's served our club well in the last few years.

The ability to shake off a setback and get back on track is essential and we are approaching the

business end of the season. March and April will be big months in the history of this football club and every point must be hunted down and scrapped over until the end of next month.

We'll be back here — hopefully — to face Loughborough Dynamo on Tuesday night. After three postponements, our first meeting of the season will only be two and a half weeks before the second.

March will be historic off the field too. You will see this afternoon that our work towards meeting Step Four ground grading requirements has moved forward significantly even in the last couple of weeks.

That work will be completed by the deadline at the end of this month and the place will look a little different. We thank you for your patience and co-operation.

As we continue to evolve as a club and develop as a team, our sincere hope is that we're able to bring a few new faces through the turnstiles. Winning the title last year and competing in the eighth tier in 2023/24 warrant better attendances.

Everyone thinks their football club is special and everyone is right. The experience of being a part of Sphinx's highest heights has been the proudest involvement I've had in football and I'd love for more people to have the same honour.

For now, I'll settle for four cracking home fixtures and, all being well, some points to add to the tally as we look to finish in the best possible position. That approach worked last year. It'll work again.

It's crunch time. We have a group of players willing to stand up and be counted. Up the Sphinx!



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OUR HISTORY

The history of Coventry Sphinx began in 1946. Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft FC had been highly successful in the city before and during the Second World War and changed their name to Sphinx FC.

AWA's legacy was replicated by the new club. Sphinx won a number of league and cup competitions throughout the 1950s and 1960s before playing a major role in the formation of the Coventry Alliance and continuing to win trophies in the following decades.

Coventry underwent significant socioeconomic change in the 1990s. The recession led to the closure of factories in the city and surrounding areas, which in turn led to the dissolution of many of Coventry's football clubs. Sphinx needed a new challenge and joined the Midland Combination Football League in 1993.

In our first season in the Midland Combination we were promoted from Division 2 and reached the semi-finals of the Birmingham Sunday Vase. A second consecutive promotion followed thanks to a second-placed finish in Division 1 the next season.

With promotion to the top division of the Midland Combination secured it was decided that the club should be linked more closely to our city. We became Coventry Sphinx and the first match under our new name was against a Coventry City XI at our home ground.

Throughout its history, our club has been served by countless loyal and hard-working local people who've contributed enormously to Coventry Sphinx on and off the field. Through their dedication we

have achieved some unbeatable highs. There have also been times of great tragedy.

In November 2001, Sphinx manager Willie Knibbs was killed in a car accident on the way home from a cup match at Meir KA. Willie was a former Sphinx player in his second spell as manager. His death was a terrible loss to our club and to local football in Coventry.

After a painful season, Sphinx went on to win the Midland Combination Challenge Cup and it was renamed the Willie Knibbs Cup as a mark of respect. Our main stand is also named in Willie's honour.

Sphinx became one of the leading teams in the Midland Combination Premier League, finishing as runners-up in our first season and again in both 2005 and 2006. We reached the final of the Endsleigh Challenge Cup on three occasions, losing to Alveston at Villa Park in 1999 but beating Coventry Marconi in 2003 and Feckenham in 2005.

We also won the Coventry Evening Telegraph Cup in successive seasons, making Sphinx the last winners of the competition at Highfield Road and the first at the Ricoh Arena.

Although first team success is a driving force, the heartbeat of our club is the thriving junior section. Formed in 1997, it started with just three teams and has grown ever since. There are now hundreds of players representing Coventry Sphinx and we were the first club in Coventry to achieve the FA Charter.

Our youth team started competing in the Midland Floodlit Youth League in 2003 and one of the

biggest successes to date came in the 2014/15 season, when they won the double after suffering only one league defeat and beating Stourbridge 3-0 in the Birmingham County FA Midweek Floodlit Youth Cup.

Under manager Paul Charnley, Coventry Sphinx's men's first team completed a remarkable treble achievement in May 2007.

In addition to finally becoming champions of the Midland Football Combination – achieving promotion to the Midland Football Alliance in the process – Sphinx won the Coventry Charity Cup and the BCFA Midland Floodlit Cup.

The 2007/08 season saw Sphinx enjoy our best ever run in the FA Vase, reaching the quarter-final for the very first time and losing controversially to Kirkham & Wesham, the eventual Wembley winners, in a replay at Sphinx Drive.

We made a run to the semi-finals of the League Cup in the same season and went on to win the Midland Alliance Polymac League Cup by beating Westfields in the final in 2009/10.

In 2014/15 the club was honoured to become a founder member of the Midland Football League Premier Division. After a top ten finish under Stuart Dutton, Lee Knibbs took over as manager in the autumn of 2017.

Lee is the son of Willie Knibbs and returned to the club after an earlier spell as assistant manager to Danny McSheffrey.

He guided Sphinx to some of our most memorable results of the decade before deciding to step aside in November 2019.

Knibbs was succeeded by his assistants, John Woodward and Shaun Thomas, who became the club's joint managers and ended the truncated 2019/20 season on a long unbeaten run, the foundation of Sphinx's greatest achievement to come.

Sphinx made a sideways move as part of FA restructuring ahead of the 2021/22 season, competing in a newly formed Premier Division South in the United Counties League.

In our first season we finished in fourth place, losing only twice in the second half of the season, and enjoyed a long run in the FA Vase, narrowly missing out on another quarter-final.

The following season saw Sphinx lose on penalties again in the same round of the FA Vase but 2022/23 was the best season in our history.

In the space of one week in April, our club acquired the freehold to the Sphinx Drive ground for the very first time and secured the United Counties League Premier Division South title with a 7-0 win against Eynesbury Rovers.

Sphinx won all of the last eleven league matches to close a big gap at the top and become champions. We scored 106 goals and ended the season three points clear of runners-up Rugby Town to confirm promotion to the Northern Premier League Midlands Division. 2023/24 is our first ever season at Step 4.

Football never stands still. Local football in Coventry has declined over the years, so to be playing at our highest ever level after more than seventy years is an achievement of which the players, officials and supporters of our club can be proud.

The structure in place at senior, youth and junior levels for both men and women promises a bright future for Coventry Sphinx as we work towards the progress Willie Knibbs' memory deserves.



Stuart Guest



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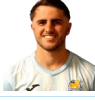














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MEET THE SQUAD

	James Bryson	Strong and steady central defender with a knack for a goal. A crucial part of the title-winning Sphinx team in 2022/23.	Sponsored by MANDY SEDDON		Jordan Hayward	Former Long Buckby wide player who scored on his debut in August 2022 and went on to win the UCL Premier Division South in his first season.	Sponsored by IAN AND PAULINE MCINTOSH
	Kyle Carey	Incisive and creative attacker who returned to Sphinx in March 2023 to help secure the league title.	Sponsored by STUART GUEST		Alex Lock	Highly rated midfield player signed from Rugby Town in October 2023.	Sponsorship available
	Antonio Cristofaro	Skilful former Walsall youth midfielder with dribbling ability, sharp creative instincts and an eye for goal.	BLOCK109 ALWAYS THERE.		Callum Martin	Pacy former Coventry City junior full back who loves a tackle and causes opponents problems in the attacking third.	DESIGN RIGHT Windows & Doors
	Ashton Demulder	A former Sphinx junior player who rejoined the club on loan from Solihull Moors after a spell with Coleshill Town.	Sponsorship available		Dawid Peplinski	Future Pro Academy scholar and former Sphinx youth central defender who joined the first team ranks after playing Step 5 football in 2022/23.	
	Jack Downes	Versatile, battling midfielder with a tremendous engine. Outstanding since returning to Sphinx Drive and a league winner in 2022/23.			Leigh Phillips	Experienced wide player who returned to Sphinx ahead of 2023/24 after a successful career in armed forces football.	 024 7644 2838
	Luke Downes	Creative midfield player who returned to Sphinx in 2021 after countless impressive performances here as a youngster.	PARTY PROPS		Joe Pursey	Sturdy defender who came in late in 2022/23 and had an instant impact in Sphinx's title quest.	 024 7644 2838
	Jamie Draper	Defender who emerged from the Sphinx youth team and has become a regular starter in our best ever team.	KA KITS ACADEMY		Jac Redhead	Creative midfield player with experience at Barwell and Halesowen Town.	Sponsorship available
	William Edjenguele	Experienced former Coventry City central defender who joined from Bedworth United after spells with Barwell and Nuneaton Borough.	JUST4KEEPERS HELPING GOALKEEPERS SINCE 1999		Matthew Shipman	Physical and mobile striker who led the line in the UCL Premier Division South title season after signing from Long Buckby in 2021/22.	Sponsored by BF ESSENTIALS 07927 649288
	Sam Ellis	Entertaining attacking midfielder who joined Sphinx after spells with Sutton Coldfield Town and Hinckley in 2022/23.			Finlay Shorrocks	Versatile left-sided player who joined Sphinx in September 2023 and debuted in our first win in eighth tier football.	INSTARMAC®
	Keelan Fallows	Talented goalkeeper who joined from Tamworth at the start of Sphinx's first season in the eighth tier of English football.			Callum Whiteside	Versatile defensive player who joined Sphinx at the start of 2022/23 and quickly became a reliable regular for John Woodward and Shaun Thomas.	
	Louis Guest	A former Sphinx junior and now a leader in our squad, Guesty is a long-serving central defender and the club's vice captain.			Leo Wood	Promising striker who joined Sphinx on loan from Solihull Moors in early 2024.	Sponsorship available
	Tyler Haddow	Dynamic and respected wide attacker who arrived at Sphinx in January 2024 with a fearsome reputation locally.	Sponsorship available		Callum Woodward	Long-serving legendary club captain, a battling mainstay in the Sphinx midfield and a vital source of goals and creativity.	 Exhibitors · Displays · Bespoke Filings

FIRST TEAM MANAGEMENT

John Woodward	Joint Manager	Sponsorship available
Shaun Thomas	Joint Manager	Sponsorship available
Nigel Starkey	First Team Coach	Sponsorship available
Michael Taylor	Goalkeeping Coach	Sponsorship available
Damian Morgan	Goalkeeping Coach	Sponsorship available
Jim McClean	Chief Scout	Sponsorship available
Kirk Holland	First Team Physio	Sponsorship available
Paul Seddon	Kit Manager	Sponsored by CEFOVID UGANDA
Sharon Taylor	Club Secretary	
Martin Sutton	Matchday Volunteer	CNS SPORT 
Liam Cook	Match Commentator	
Chris Nee	Programme Editor	

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COVENTRY SPHINX 1 RUGBY TOWN 1

Pitching In NPL
Division One Midlands
Saturday 17th February 2024

Last season's United Counties League Premier Division South top two met for the second time at Step Four and shared the points at the Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena.

Coventry Sphinx took the lead in the first half but were pegged back by Rugby Town early in the second. A red card left the visitors to play 25 minutes with ten men but they held on for a 1-1 draw with their goalkeeper relatively untroubled.

Joint managers John Woodward and Shaun Thomas made a handful of changes. Leo Wood played to the right of striker Matty Shipman, with Tyler Haddow on the left. Alex Lock and Jack Downes anchored the midfield behind Jac Redhead.



Stuart Guest

The defensive unit remained unchanged. Goalkeeper Keelan Fallows played behind a back four made up of Joe Pursey, Louis Guest, Will Edjenguele and Finlay Shorrock. Guest captained the side in his 300th Sphinx appearance.

Continuing on from a rousing second half in their previous outing at AFC Rushden & Diamonds, Sphinx made a lively start against their neighbours. But it was Fallows who was called into action first, getting down well to deny Rugby skipper Michael Taylor at close range.

With seven minutes played, Haddow threaded a pass through for Shipman. The striker got a shot away but was under sufficient pressure to make it a difficult one and he could only poke it into the arms of goalkeeper Paul Hathaway.

Haddow went closer himself three minutes later. A long free kick found him in the box and pulled it down beautifully before having his first effort blocked by a defender and sending an improvised second over the top.

Sphinx moved through the gears early on. Downes fired a shot wide from 20 yards, just in time for Rugby to arrive in the match as a serious attacking force.

The home team had a solid first quarter of an hour but David Kolodynski got himself into space on the right corner of the Sphinx box. He sliced his shot wide but the Valley enjoyed a good spell of pressure in the middle of the half.

Downes backed himself from outside the area again in the 26th minute, this time seeing his 25-yard shot screw wide with significant help from the wind that whipped around Sphinx Drive.

The home team made the breakthrough with 32 minutes played. An incisive attack on the right culminated in a beauty of a cross to the near post from Shipman. Haddow got across his marker, glanced a header past Hathaway and claimed his first Sphinx goal.

Sphinx controlled the rest of the half and were on top after the goal, but Taylor went closest with a header from a free kick that flashed wide of Fallows' goal. The home team took a one-goal lead into the break but wouldn't hold on to it much longer.

The second half was defined by moments of chaos that might have redirected the outcome either way. Sphinx made the early running but Rugby equalised out of nowhere in the third minute of the half.

Jamie Melbourne's cross from the left caught the wind and swung high over the grasp of Fallows before dropping into the far corner of the Sphinx net to make it 1-1.

After levelling the score, Rugby mounted a period of sustained pressure, relieved intermittently by threatening Sphinx counter-attacks. One such break led to a key moment that changed the timbre of the game.



Stuart Guest

With 25 minutes remaining, Sphinx caught the Valley defensive line high and got in behind. Shipman was clipped by Liam Francis and the defender was shown his second yellow card of the game.

Rugby kept the eleven men of Sphinx honest with long balls into Taylor and Madundo Semahimbo but the remainder of the match looked like a team with a full complement against a team with ten men.



Stuart Guest

Sphinx used the man advantage to create a number of chances but nothing to test Hathaway in the Rugby goal. Five minutes from time, substitute Ashton Demulder fired over from 25 yards and, in terms of efforts on goal, that was that.

There was some frustration at missing out on a win against ten men but Sphinx didn't do enough with their

attacking possession after the dismissal of Francis and didn't carve out many real opportunities to get Hathaway working in the Rugby goal.

Results elsewhere in the bottom six ensured that both teams could look at this as a point gained on those around them.

Sphinx had the added bonus of preventing Rugby from closing the gap as they began a run of fixtures dominated by home games.

A visit to Corby Town will be followed by three home games in eight days against Shepshed Dynamo, Loughborough Dynamo and Harborough Town.

Cambridge City come to Coventry on Saturday 16th March to make it four home matches on the bounce.

TEAMSHEET

- 1 Keelan Fallows
- 2 Joe Pursey
- 3 Finlay Shorrock
- 4 Jack Downes
- 5 Will Edjenguele
- 6 Louis Guest
- 7 Leo Wood ▼ Castellano (80)
- 8 Alex Lock ▼ L. Downes (54)
- 9 Matty Shipman
- 10 Jac Redhead ▼ Demulder (70)
- 11 Tyler Haddow
- 12 Luke Downes ▲ Lock (54)
- 14 Ashton Demulder ▲ Redhead (70)
- 15 James Bryson
- 16 Callum Whiteside
- 17 Alfonso Castellano ▲ Wood (80)

SPHINX MAN OF THE MATCH
FINLAY SHORROCK



2023/24 Player Stats (all competitions)

Player	Apps	Mins	Starts	Full 90	Sub On	Yellows	Second Yellows	Straight Reds	Goals	Assists	Goals Per 90	Assists Per 90	G+A Per 90
Adams, Jamal	4	133	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bailey-Nicholls, Khaellem	6	96	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Brown, Leo	5	448	5	4	0	1	0	0	2	1	0.022	0.011	0.033
Bryson, James	11	771	9	7	2	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Carey, Kyle	7	530	6	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Castellano, Alfonso	5	262	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cristofaro, Antonio	4	105	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Dainty, Gio	9	534	7	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	0.022	0.011	0.033
Demulder, Ashton	4	194	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Downes, Jack	26	2180	24	18	2	10	2	0	2	0	0.022	0.000	0.022
Downes, Luke	26	1647	18	12	8	6	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Draper, Jamie	1	90	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edjenguele, Will	18	1457	17	13	1	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ellis, Sam	10	239	2	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fallows, Keelan	27	2430	27	27	0	4	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Guest, Louis	27	2292	26	24	1	8	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Haddow, Tyler	3	270	3	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Harkin, Ryan	1	46	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hayward, Jordan	16	837	9	5	7	1	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Hedge, Zach	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Jackson, Sam	1	28	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Johnson, Max	12	539	5	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lock, Alex	16	980	11	7	5	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Martin, Callum	7	463	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Parker, Dylan	15	1125	12	7	3	3	0	0	3	3	0.033	0.033	0.067
Peplinski, Dawid	4	168	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phillips, Leigh	3	125	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pursesey, Joe	27	2325	26	24	1	6	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Redhead, Jac	19	1436	17	7	2	5	0	0	3	3	0.033	0.033	0.067
Shipman, Matty	28	2520	28	28	0	7	0	0	10	4	0.111	0.044	0.156
Shorrock, Finlay	21	1634	20	14	1	1	1	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Whiteside, Callum	27	1951	22	18	5	6	0	0	1	0	0.011	0.000	0.011
Wood, Leo	3	192	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Woodward, Callum	16	1276	16	8	0	6	0	1	1	3	0.011	0.033	0.044

2023/24 Player Stats (NPL Midlands only)

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Bryson, James	11	771	9	7	2	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Carey, Kyle	5	404	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Castellano, Alfonso	4	242	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cristofaro, Antonio	3	91	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Dainty, Gio	8	464	6	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Demulder, Ashton	4	194	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Downes, Jack	23	1910	21	15	2	9	2	0	2	0	0.022	0.000	0.022
Downes, Luke	23	1405	15	10	8	5	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Draper, Jamie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edjenguele, Will	17	1367	16	12	1	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ellis, Sam	8	183	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fallows, Keelan	24	2160	24	24	0	3	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Guest, Louis	25	2112	24	22	1	7	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Haddow, Tyler	3	270	3	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Harkin, Ryan	1	46	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hayward, Jordan	14	711	8	4	6	1	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Hedge, Zach	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Jackson, Sam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Johnson, Max	10	449	4	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lock, Alex	15	926	10	7	5	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Martin, Callum	6	427	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Parker, Dylan	12	891	9	5	3	2	0	0	2	3	0.022	0.033	0.056
Peplinski, Dawid	4	168	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phillips, Leigh	2	63	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pursesey, Joe	25	2145	24	22	1	5	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Redhead, Jac	18	1346	16	6	2	5	0	0	3	3	0.033	0.033	0.067
Shipman, Matty	25	2250	25	25	0	7	0	0	10	4	0.111	0.044	0.156
Shorrock, Finlay	20	1580	19	14	1	1	1	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Whiteside, Callum	24	1695	19	16	5	6	0	0	1	0	0.011	0.000	0.011
Wood, Leo	3	192	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Woodward, Callum	15	1214	15	8	0	6	0	1	1	3	0.011	0.033	0.044



Unlike a lot of the football supporters I know, I have no idea what was the first match I watched on television or even the first match I attended in person. I don't remember going to a game aware it was my first and I can't place an earliest memory now, more than three decades later.

It simply isn't there. No nostalgic flash across the hippocampus. No potential candidates for the dubious accolade. There's just a sort of mush in which five years of formative football have congealed into what I think of as the early days.

What that means is that I was taken to football very young, which in turn means that I remember – just – a time when football wasn't fashionable and actually going to matches was sometimes considered a little weird.

It's hard to imagine now but it's not all that long ago that football was grubby. Not state ownership grubby or corrupt governing bodies grubby or financial doping grubby, but actually grubby.

Even Premier League grounds were ramshackle in the first half of the 1990s and those lower down were so run-down that they seemed to transcend ugliness and acquire an earthy romanticism, bathed in that strange beautiful orange

glow that only the streets around football grounds have on a Tuesday evening.

I didn't realise until much later that I was getting into football right in the eye of stormy change. It wasn't cool, yet, but it was growing in popularity and the polish of the Premier League was gradually being applied.

Football was in the midst of history, for better and worse, and its public perception was shifting too.

Football's place in society in the early 1990s wasn't a positive one. The breakaway league was bouncing from stadium to satellite to television set in the afterglow of World Cup Italia '90 but outsiders still considered it a dirty and dangerous pastime.

It's not difficult to understand where that sentiment originated. The Hillsborough Disaster was a tragedy for all of football and all of football had to take on the chin that it would add to the game's negative reputation.

It's thanks to the dedication and determination of Hillsborough survivors, families and campaigners since 1989 that the disaster is, broadly, not used to criticise football or football supporters to this day.

Nevertheless, the 1980s left football supporter culture on its arse. Sure, there are those of us who liked that it was rough around the edges, even a little perilous.

We like an edge, a frisson in the air. But few of us actually want to beat people up or be beaten up ourselves, yet racism and hooliganism defined football in the eyes of outsiders.

Thatcher. Moynihan. The National Front. ID cards. Fences, electrified and otherwise. These are the bastard outcomes of football's perception immediately prior to the dawn of the Premier League, each and every one defeated by supporters.

Turns out the football generation before mine wasn't so bad after all.

Yet the place occupied in the national psyche by those very supporters had been manipulated by the poisonous and deliberate slander of the Conservative government and its rancid red-top state media.

Even with the Premier League in place it would take a home tournament and the adoption of the recommendations of the Taylor Report to make football feel accessible.

1996 was a cultural moment unlike any other. The confluence of EURO '96, Britpop and surging New Labour is overstated but in the simplified understanding of an eleven-year-old boy obsessed with football and infatuated with music, the felt phenomenon was lightning in a bottle.

English football and my experience of it have grown together. I'm lucky to be the age I am and grateful to have been thrust into the football world when I was, perfectly positioned to ride the wave and let the surface-level sociology of it wash over me while being blissfully unaware of how simplistic those interpretations were.

Football's cycle of cool is seldom about the football. On either side of the turn of the 1980s, casuals brought men's fashion into football. Frequently connected to hooligan firms and intrinsically linked with working class male culture in England, casuals served to anchor the game in the social world around it at a time when both sorely needed to have a look at themselves.

Casual culture itself might have ebbed away but it still has wellsprings among football supporters and its impact can be seen at the match today, almost with ubiquity. Keen observers of the narrative timeline will note that casuals didn't make football fashionable on the outside. There's only so much a Lacoste polo and Ralph Lauren harrington can do.

But that collision of football and fashion underpins the sport's cool in the modern day. Scroll through the leading lifestyle blogs and it won't be long before you find one of two versions of football's undeniable x-factor.

Whether it's the traditional sportswear manufacturers collaborating with fashion houses and boutique designers of impossible cool, or said designers simply taking the game as their raw materials, football-inspired street style is everywhere and it has been for some time.

Football itself has kept pace. Capitalising on its position at the forefront of culture when the world rocked on its axis

and distances shrank, football's enduring global appeal was supercharged by easy access. If football is nothing but a sport with some stories attached, modern communications technology was made for it and rampant commercial zeal ensured the opportunity wasn't missed.

But there's an historical context too. Had football not developed in the way it did in the second half of the last century, the Premier League wouldn't have happened and the Extremely Online fanatics of Twitter would now be sending each other badly spelled death threats about tennis.

What ended with the Premier League ticking into the millennium as a sporting cosmopolitan bazaar for the world to enjoy began with the abolition of the maximum wage for players in 1961 and England winning the World Cup five and a half years later.

Society has long held wealthy young men in either contempt or esteem depending on a suite of factors we shan't go into, but there's no doubt that other young men – or a large proportion of them, at least – consider them aspirational. That's been building in football now for sixty years.

There's an argument that what we've experienced in football supporter culture over those six decades are waves of fashion and football, lapping at one another with the wild electricity of youth culture. If that's the case, if football's fashionable appeal is somehow cyclical, it should be sloping back off into the shadows any day now.

There are harbingers and they rest, as ever, at the whim of the next generation. As such they're ungraspable to me, but as a sociological observer it seems that esports players and streaming celebrities, though they piggyback on "proper" football for now, are one such threat.

All else being equal that shouldn't be a problem. People can enjoy many passions in life and it's even better when they're complementary, so EA FC streaming should go hand in hand quite happily with Fantasy Premier League, Football Manager, watching the Premier League on television, and going to the match.

Therein lies the powderkeg. If young fans are priced out of going to the football in person they can never become supporters. Their passions will become not complementary but competitive, and it's the old-fashioned one that will miss out.

Football will continue. Football shirts on Hypebeast might not. PSG might even go back to being a football club.

Football will always be attractive to an enormous number of people irrespective of their generation. It's too intoxicating not to be. But that doesn't mean it'll always be fashionable nor in fashion.

Consumer culture and youth culture don't stand still and football, though it's kept up with remarkable consistency for a very long time now, could eventually drift away from the limelight.

Date	Opponents	Comp	H	A	Res	Starting Eleven											Substitutes (<i>not used in italics</i>)						
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14	15	16	17 / GK	18	19 / GK
5 Aug	Stourport Swifts	FAC EP	A	2-0	L	Fallows	Pursey	Hayward	L. Downes	Guest ©	Whiteside	Parker	J. Downes	Shipman	Carey	Johnson	Ellis	Jackson	Peplinski	Cristofaro	Billing	Martin	Selley-Haywood
12 Aug	Quorn	NPL M	H	1-1	D	Fallows	Pursey	Hayward	J. Downes	Guest	Whiteside 1	Parker	Woodward ©	Shipman	Carey	Johnson	L. Downes	Ellis	Phillips	Cristofaro	Martin		
15 Aug	Gresley Rovers	NPL M	A	1-1	D	Fallows	Pursey	Martin	L. Downes	Guest	Whiteside	Parker	Woodward ©	Shipman 1	Carey	J. Downes	Johnson	Peplinski	Ellis	Jackson	Cristofaro		
22 Aug	Sporting Khalsa	NPL M	H	0-1	L	Hedge	Pursey	Martin	L. Downes	Guest ©	Whiteside	Hayward	J. Downes	Shipman	Carey	Johnson	Parker	Ellis	Peplinski	Cristofaro	Jackson		
26 Aug	Spalding United	NPL M	A	4-0	L	Hedge	Pursey	Martin	J. Downes	Guest	Whiteside	Hayward	Woodward ©	Parker	Ellis	Johnson	L. Downes	Peplinski	Cristofaro	Draper			
28 Aug	Bedworth United	NPL M	H	0-1	L	Hedge	Pursey	Martin	L. Downes	Guest	Whiteside	J. Downes	Woodward ©	Parker	Cristofaro	Johnson	Phillips	Peplinski	Ellis	Penton			
2 Sep	Sutton Coldfield Town	NPL M	A	4-1	L	Fallows	Whiteside	Martin	J. Downes	Guest	Peplinski	Pursey	Woodward ©	Shipman 1	Redhead	Parker	L. Downes	Johnson	Ellis	Phillips	Cristofaro		
9 Sep	Quorn	FAT 1Q	A	4-0	L	Fallows	Whiteside	Phillips	L. Downes	Guest	Edjenguete	J. Downes	Woodward ©	Shipman	Redhead	Parker	Johnson	Carey	Cristofaro	Peplinski	Ellis	Hedge	
16 Sep	AFC Rushden & Diamonds	NPL M	H	2-1	W	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest	Edjenguete	Hayward	Woodward ©	Shipman 1	Redhead	J. Downes	Parker 1	Johnson	Ellis	Peplinski	Bryson		
30 Sep	Rugby Town	NPL M	A	1-2	W	Fallows	Bryson	Shorrock	J. Downes	Guest	Edjenguete	Whiteside	Woodward © 1	Shipman 1	Redhead	Parker	Pursey	Bailey-Nicholls	Castellano	Ellis	Phillips		
7 Oct	Corby Town	NPL M	H	0-1	L	Fallows	Bryson	Shorrock	Whiteside	Guest	Edjenguete	Pursey	Woodward ©	Shipman	Ellis	Parker	Johnson	L. Downes	Phillips	Bailey-Nicholls	Redhead		
14 Oct	Shepshed Dynamo	NPL M	A	2-2	D	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes	Edjenguete	Bryson ©	Pursey	J. Downes	Shipman 1	Lock	Parker 1	Guest	Ellis	Johnson	Cristofaro			
21 Oct	Coleshill Town	NPL M	H	0-0	D	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Edjenguete	Parker	J. Downes	Shipman	Lock	Dainty	Whiteside	Bryson	Redhead	Ellis	Johnson		
4 Nov	Anstey Nomads	NPL M	H	2-2	D	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Edjenguete	Pursey	Lock	Shipman 1	Redhead	Brown 1	Parker	Johnson	Bryson	Reed	Hedge		
11 Nov	Walsall Wood	NPL M	A	1-1	D	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Edjenguete	Pursey	Lock	Shipman	Redhead	Brown 1	Dainty	J. Downes	Johnson	Parker	Hayward		
14 Nov	Nuneaton Borough	BSC 2R	H	2-3	L	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	L. Downes ©	Whiteside	Draper	Parker 1	J. Downes	Shipman	Lock	Dainty 1	Martin	Hayward	Castellano	Guest	Redhead		
18 Nov	Hinckley LR	NPL M	H	1-1	D	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Whiteside	Brown	Lock	Shipman	Redhead 1	Dainty	Edjenguete	Hayward	Bailey-Nicholls	J. Downes	Draper		
21 Nov	Harborough Town	NPL M	A	6-1	L	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Edjenguete	Pursey	J. Downes	Shipman	Brown	Dainty	Redhead 1	Lock	Bailey-Nicholls	Hayward			
25 Nov	Boldmere St Michaels	NPL M	A	3-1	L	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Whiteside	J. Downes	Redhead	Shipman	Brown	Dainty 1	Woodward	Edjenguete	Lock	Bailey-Nicholls	Hayward		
9 Dec	Cambridge City	NPL M	A	0-1	W	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	J. Downes	Guest	Edjenguete	Lock	Woodward ©	Shipman 1	Redhead	Hayward	L. Downes	Adams	Bailey-Nicholls	Whiteside			
16 Dec	Gresley Rovers	NPL M	H	1-1	D	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	J. Downes	Guest	Whiteside	Adams	Woodward ©	Shipman 1	Redhead	Hayward	L. Downes	Bailey-Nicholls	Lock	Bryson			
23 Dec	Quorn	NPL M	A	4-2	L	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes ©	Edjenguete	Bryson	Pursey	J. Downes 1	Shipman	Redhead 1	Lock	Woodward	Hayward	Dainty	Adams	Bailey-Nicholls		
26 Dec	Lye Town	NPL M	H	2-0	W	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	J. Downes 1	Edjenguete	Bryson	Pursey	Woodward ©	Shipman	Redhead	Dainty	L. Downes	Adams	Hayward 1	Lock			
1 Jan	Bedworth United	NPL M	A	1-0	L	Fallows	Bryson	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest	Edjenguete	Pursey	Woodward ©	Shipman	J. Downes	Dainty	Hayward	Adams	Lock	Martin	Cristofaro		
6 Jan	Spalding United	NPL M	H	0-1	L	Fallows	Bryson	Hayward	Lock	Guest	Edjenguete	J. Downes	Woodward ©	Shipman	Redhead	Carey	Pursey	Whiteside	L. Downes	Dainty	Shorrock		
13 Jan	Sporting Khalsa	NPL M	A	3-0	L	Fallows	Pursey	Hayward	L. Downes	Guest	Bryson	Lock	Woodward ©	Shipman	Redhead	Carey	Edjenguete	Whiteside	Harkin	Martin			
27 Jan	Coleshill Town	NPL M	A	2-3	W	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock 1	Castellano	Edjenguete	Guest	Demulder	Woodward ©	Shipman 2	Redhead	Haddow	L. Downes	Lock	Wood	Whiteside	Bryson		
3 Feb	AFC Rushden & Diamonds	NPL M	A	0-0	D	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	Castellano	Guest ©	Edjenguete	Demulder	J. Downes	Shipman	Redhead	Haddow	L. Downes	Lock	Whiteside	Wood			
17 Feb	Rugby Town	NPL M	H	1-1	D	Fallows	Pursey	Shorrock	J. Downes	Edjenguete	Guest ©	Wood	Lock	Shipman	Redhead	Haddow 1	L. Downes	Demulder	Bryson	Whiteside	Castellano		
24 Feb	Corby Town	NPL M	A	3-0	L	Fallows	Whiteside	Shorrock	L. Downes	Guest ©	Bryson	Pursey	Castellano	Shipman	J. Downes	Wood	Demulder	Hayward	Haddow	Redhead			
2 Mar	Shepshed Dynamo	NPL M	H																				
5 Mar	Loughborough Dynamo	NPL M	H																				
9 Mar	Harborough Town	NPL M	H																				
16 Mar	Cambridge City	NPL M	H																				
23 Mar	Loughborough Dynamo	NPL M	A																				
30 Mar	Sutton Coldfield Town	NPL M	H																				
1 Apr	Lye Town	NPL M	A																				
6 Apr	Walsall Wood	NPL M	H																				
13 Apr	Anstey Nomads	NPL M	A																				
20 Apr	Boldmere St Michaels	NPL M	H																				
27 Apr	Hinckley LR	NPL M	A																				

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The
Daniel Wilkinson
Foundation

*Providing Screening and Defibrillators to
prevent Sudden Cardiac Death in the young*



The Daniel Wilkinson Foundation is a charity set up in memory of Daniel Wilkinson who died in 2016 aged 24, while playing the game he loved, from an underlying heart condition called Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy (ARVC).



Dan played football from an early age and joined Hull City AFC when he was 10, earning a professional contract aged 18. Loughborough University followed where he completed a degree in Accounting and Financial Management while playing non-league football. He was an athlete who enjoyed the gym and took his health and nutrition very seriously. He lived life to the full and had so much ahead of him.

Other than feeling light-headed on a few occasions in the month before he died, he had no symptoms!

SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN THE YOUNG (SCD)

- SCD is the leading cause of death in young athletes during sport and the majority of deaths occur with NO SYMPTOMS or family history.
- ARVC can be found in one in every 1,000 to 5,000 young adults - IF IT IS LOOKED FOR.
- Warning signs may include light-headedness, fainting, palpitations, swollen legs, breathlessness.
- Every week in the UK, 12 apparently fit and healthy young people (aged 35 and under) die from previously undiagnosed heart conditions.
- In Italy, where screening is mandatory for all young people engaged in organised sport, they have reduced the incidence of young sudden cardiac death by 89%.

OUR MISSION

The Daniel Wilkinson Foundation has been set up to raise awareness of SCD and to provide funding towards heart screening, defibrillators and CPR/defibrillator training primarily for grass-roots sporting teams.

Tragedies can be prevented through cardiac screening. It is vital that young people are identified and treated.

Find out more

 [@dannywilks5](https://twitter.com/dannywilks5)

 [thedanielwilkinsonfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/thedanielwilkinsonfoundation)

 [dwfoundation5](https://www.instagram.com/dwfoundation5)

 contact@thedanielwilkinsonfoundation.org

 [thedanielwilkinsonfoundation.org](https://www.thedanielwilkinsonfoundation.org)

To donate: mydonate.bt.com/charities/thedanielwilkinsonfoundation

CORBY TOWN 3 COVENTRY SPHINX 0

Pitching In NPL
Division One Midlands
Saturday 24th February 2024

After a home draw against Rugby Town, Coventry Sphinx travelled to Northamptonshire to face Corby Town in good spirits but with their preparation having been disrupted.

Corby ran out 3-0 winners at Steel Park, the scoreline reflecting their ability to be clinical in front of goal rather than dominate the match from start to finish. Sphinx rued chances not taken and a poor period after the Steelmen broke the deadlock.



Stuart Guest

Suspension, injury, illness and absence played a big role in team selection for joint managers John Woodward and Shaun Thomas.

Callum Whiteside and James Bryson came into the side to play in defence in front of goalkeeper Keelan Fallows. Louis Guest continued as captain.

Joe Pursey and Finlay Shorrock started at wing back, while Jack Downes, Luke Downes and Alfonso Castellano made up the midfield behind Matty Shipman and Leo Wood.

Sphinx made a positive start but it was the hosts who made inroads after the first few minutes. They won the aerial duel from a free kick to force Fallows into a save and a Sphinx defender then needed to turn the loose ball away.



Stuart Guest

From the resulting corner, the visitors had to clear an effort off the line. That early spell for Corby eased as Sphinx settled on the ball again, playing some nice football at times but also seeking to get the Steelmen turned quickly.

A long throw-in from Pursey was partially cleared but found Jack Downes, whose left-footed effort was well struck but zipped wide of the Corby goal.

Sphinx enjoyed a solid first 25 minutes in possession, looking sharp on the ball but unable to give the opposition goalkeeper much to be concerned about. At the other end, Fallows had to save again in the 21st minute as Corby's opportunities started to flow.

The visitors had to make an unwelcome change when Shorrock, already far from fully fit, had to be replaced by the equally unready Jordan Hayward, who put in a shift on the left that his lungs wouldn't have appreciated.

The match was effectively won by two goals in the space of five minutes. Corby broke the

deadlock just before the half hour when Tristan Thompson-Matthews slid in to prod home the rebound after another Fallows save.

In the 34th minute, an attack on the left eventually led to the ball falling for Joe Butterworth 25 yards from goal. His low drive was perfectly struck and thumped one post before hitting the net just inside the other to make it 2-0.

This was not an afternoon for a comeback. With Sphinx rocking, Corby set about the search for a third goal.

A header sailed wide ten minutes before half time and a much easier chance was squandered soon after. Sphinx's first test of the second half was to get a foot on the ball and have a say in the match again.

The attitude and character shown in the second half was nothing more than we've come to expect but it was good to see nonetheless. It was hard going but the players never gave up on the match and started the second period on the front foot.



Stuart Guest

Ten minutes in, Wood fired over after a couple of ricochets in the box. Pursey's tremendous work on the right generated the opening.

Ashton Demulder came on for Castellano after 57 minutes and got straight into the task.

Sphinx were playing reasonably well but the chances wouldn't come. Instead, Fallows made a fantastic save at the other end to deny a long-range effort he didn't see until late and Sphinx were limited to a clean 25-yard strike from Luke Downes that took a nick and went just over.

Less than a minute later, Corby scored their third. Play was allowed to continue despite a clear handball in midfield and Reuben Marshall was able to step onto a shot which he smashed in off the bar.

The matter of whether the ball crossed the line was disputed but the assistant referee awarded the goal and Shaun Thomas was sent from the dugout in the aftermath.

Corby controlled what was left of the match. Connor Tomlinson hit the post with ten minutes to go and Fallows made sure 3-0 didn't become 4-0 with an excellent save three minutes from time.

Even at 3-0, the visitors kept working hard and demonstrated their commitment to the Sphinx cause.

That sense of pride will be the minimum required as they head into a crucial run of four home games against high quality opposition.

Those matches won't define the season for Sphinx. There will be plenty to play for in the last month of the season regardless of how they turn out.

But some points in the bag over the next four weeks – an aim this group of players is eminently capable of achieving – would go a very long way.

TEAMSHEET

- 1 Keelan Fallows
- 2 Callum Whiteside
- 3 Finlay Shorrock ▼ Hayward (27)
- 4 Luke Downes
- 5 Louis Guest @
- 6 James Bryson
- 7 Joe Pursey
- 8 Alfonso Castellano ▼ Demulder (58)
- 9 Matty Shipman
- 10 Jack Downes
- 11 Leo Wood
- 12 Ashton Demulder ▲ Castellano (58)
- 14 Jordan Hayward ▲ Shorrock (27)
- 15 Tyler Haddow
- 16 Jac Redhead

SPHINX MAN OF THE MATCH
JOE PURSEY



MATCH HIGHLIGHTS

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YOUTH TEAM FIXTURES

Thursday 17 August	1-4	L	Solihull Moors	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 31 August	2-1	W	Rugby Borough	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 7 September	5-2	W	Stourport Swifts	FA Youth Cup Preliminary Round
Thursday 14 September	1-1	D	Inkberrow	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 21 September	0-6	L	AFC Wulfrunians	FA Youth Cup First Round Qualifying
Thursday 28 September	3-1	W	Stratford Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 5 October	1-4	W	Rugby Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 12 October	4-0	W	P S Olympic	Joel Richards Memorial Cup R1
Monday 23 October	1-0	L	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 9 November	3-4	L	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 16 November	3-0	W	Atherstone Town	Joel Richards Memorial Cup R2
Tuesday 5 December	*1-1	D	Rushall Olympic	Colin Lowe Memorial League Cup R3
Thursday 14 December	1-6	L	Stourbridge	Joel Richards Memorial Cup QF
Monday 8 January	5-3	L	Bedworth United	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 11 January	5-1	L	Inkberrow	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 1 February	1-3	W	Stratford Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Friday 9 February	1-2	W	Alvechurch	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Monday 12th February	6-3	L	Solihull Moors	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Monday 26th February	1-6	W	Rugby Borough	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 29th February	19.45	H	Kidderminster Harriers	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 7th March	19.45	H	Halesowen Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 14th March	19.45	H	Bedworth United	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Alvechurch	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Halesowen Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Kidderminster Harriers	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Rugby Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division

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IFAB'S PHONEY WAR ON DISSSENT

The reaction to the news that football's lawmakers plan to trial blue cards and ten-minute sin bins was hostile. Reports that the International Football Associations Board (IFAB) had lined up testing were swiftly denied by FIFA, such was the vitriol.

Whether the initial whiff was briefed by or leaked out of IFAB, the chilly response was made all the more remarkable by the fact that dissent – one of the two offences for which the potential blue card would be issued – is generally accepted to be an issue that does need addressing.

Dissent is a problem. It's possible to make an argument in bad faith that viewing it as such is somehow soft or weak, but dissent isn't just an irritation or a question of preference. It creates a negative environment for officials in the elite game, the ultimate outcomes of which include conspiracy theories, defamation and the establishment of referees as a modern football folk devil.

In non-league, grassroots and youth football, the effect of that is tangible. Real people are really abused and really assaulted. Recruiting referees is all but impossible and it all starts with dissent on the field. Why, then, are sin bins not seen as a potential solution?

The blue card is a red herring. It's undoubtedly part of the reason for agitation but the colour of the card is of little consequence. Likewise, the apparent desire to roll cynical fouls into the sin bin equation merely exposes it as the populist window dressing that it is. Football has a problem that most sensible observers recognise. Sin bins don't fix it.

It's telling that the discussion in the wake of the IFAB leak ignored almost entirely the fact that trialling sin bins in non-league – and let's be honest, the idea of trialling something in meaningful matches is a fallacy anyway – has been happening for years. From the ninth tier of English football down, the National League System has sin bins.

There are no blue cards in non-league but there are ten-minute sin bins in place for dissent, along with a somewhat confused realignment of the logic of a yellow card. It's out there in the wild and has been for some time. It's already being faux-trialled. It's already bedded in. We've already seen it in action. We've already got the data.

After the 2019/20 season, the Football Association hailed the performance of the sin bin in non-league and grassroots football. Temporary dismissals had, it claimed, reduced dissent by 38 percent across 31 participant leagues.

If that suggests that ten-minute temporary dismissals have significantly improved the amount of dissent faced by non-league referees, you should spend a few Saturday afternoons, ears wide open, at Step Five matches. There are three types of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.

The introduction of sin bins hasn't reduced dissent. Not even slightly. There's a case to be made that they've made the problem of endemic dissent worse rather than better. Sin bins have reduced the number of yellow cards issued for dissent. You can decide for yourself whether that's a positive development.

The way the sin bin is applied in non-league is dysfunctional at best. It's necessarily subject to the whims of referees

when it has to be a zero-tolerance fix if it's to have any chance of succeeding. Some referees are less affected by dissent than others. All referees are thick-skinned but some skins are thicker than others.

Officials have always had differing tolerance levels and that has predictably translated into their willingness to use the sin bin.

In a game that has referees with varying degrees of leniency and even a taste for giving some back every now and again, the end result has been to raise the threshold that dissent must reach before the average match official decides it must be dealt with. Thus, yellow cards for dissent decline but dissent does not.

Consistency between instances of dissent within the same match is an issue as well, but that's by the by. The sin bin fundamentally fails in its only purpose and that, if a trial really meant a trial, would have knocked it into a cocked hat years ago.

It doesn't work and that's why football supporters – the people who know and understand the behaviour and motivations of football players intuitively – know instinctively that it's a bad idea. Sticking a blue card on top just made it easier for them to dismiss out of hand.

There are other negatives. Taking a gobby player off the pitch for ten minutes is unlike sending one off permanently. It's eminently manageable for the team that's a player short, and so managing it is what they do.

Ten minutes (and it is, in theory, ten minutes of ball-in-play time) of attack versus defence later, they're back to eleven against eleven and away they go once more. As unintended consequences go, that's a doozy. It changes football at its root, and for nothing.

If sin bins aren't the answer to a question everybody seems to agree is in dire need of one, then what is? Maybe football will need to find a way to reshape itself a little bit around the radical notion of treating referees like human beings.

Maybe the game does need to crank up the harshness of repercussions and make clear to referees that dissent is not a matter for their discretion.

Hell, maybe the sin bin will emerge as part of what will surely be a multi-faceted fix. But let's start at the beginning. Dissent by word or action is a yellow card offence already covered under Law 12 of the Laws of the Game. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action is a sending off offence. In both cases the wording is clear and no room is left for interpretation.

Until referees stop selectively putting up with those offences – and the uncomfortable truth is that they do exactly that – we simply can't know whether or not we already have adequate legislation. Football should explore that avenue before messing itself up any further.



SHEPshed DYNAMO

Shepshed, in NW Leicestershire, has had football teams associated with it since 1879. Whilst many of these achieved local recognition over the years, it was with the formation of the Charterhouse club in the mid-1970's, that the name of Shepshed became known nationally.

Between 1978 and 1984, the club rose from the lower reaches of the Leicestershire Senior League to the summit of the Southern League Premier Division, winning seven consecutive promotions (including six successive championship titles) on the way.

They also reached both the semi-final and quarter-final of the FA Vase, as well as the First Round Proper of the FA Cup. Unfortunately, the club, then known by its original name of Shepshed Albion, closed down in 1994.

1994 to 2004

The current Dynamo club was formed in the summer of 1994. Initially playing in the newly formed Midland Alliance, the club enjoyed a successful first season, finishing 4th. The following season, under Manager Mark O'Kane, the club won the title by eight points including a remarkable 23 game unbeaten start.

After a hectic summer of improvement works, the club took up their place in the Southern Football League for the 1996/97 campaign. Whilst league success proved harder to come by, the club more than made up for this in the FA Cup by reaching the First Round Proper. Despite a heavy away defeat at the hands of Carlisle United, the memory of the day will live long with all that were there.

The second season proved less successful, and with the team struggling near to the bottom of the league, O'Kane was replaced in February 1998, by John Hanna. The change brought a creditable 16th place by the end.

1998/99 saw the best league season to date. Shepshed were in the top six of the league for most of the season, but slipped to a final placing of 10th, after a poor run-in. 1999/2000, the centenary year for the club's ground "The Dovecote", saw a season-long battle against relegation, a final placing of 18th and the resignation of Hanna in July 2000. His assistant, Dave Williams, was appointed.

His first season in charge saw a 15th place finish. The next two saw the financial purse strings tightened, however whilst Shepshed flirted with relegation, a 16th place position was recorded in both. The summer of 2003 saw a change in the constitution of the football club that led to it becoming a private limited company.

However, in footballing terms, the season can be fairly described as disastrous, as it saw two changes in management after Williams was sacked in October and his successor Dave Clay resigned in January. Pete McGurk then took charge of first team matters but despite improved results, he had insufficient time to prevent Shepshed from finishing bottom of the Southern League Western Division.

However, restructuring in the summer of 2004 relieved Dynamo and saw them start their 10th anniversary season as members of the UniBond League. McGurk led the team to a respectable 15th place finish in a season that also saw them win the Loughborough Charity Cup and Coalville Charity Cup double.

2005 to date

Season 2005/06 culminated in a fine 10th place finish and saw the club receive the UniBond League Club Of The Month Award, Fair Play Award and Goalscorers Award for April 2006. Dynamo also reached the finals of both the Loughborough and Coalville Charity Cups.

McGurk resigned in December 2006, with the club in 15th place, replaced by his assistant Adam Stevens. He resigned in April 2007 after a 1-6 defeat at second-bottom Chorley left Dynamo in 20th place (5th bottom). Former Belper Town manager Martin Rowe was appointed in May 2007, however his reign was to last only until November, after a dismal start to the season.

Ex Sutton Town and Gedling Town manager Lee Wilson was Rowe's replacement. Fortunes soon turned around and Dynamo ultimately finished in 15th position. The 2007/08 season finished with silverware after Shepshed lifted the Loughborough Charity Cup with a 3-1 victory over near-neighbours Loughborough Dynamo.

The 2008/09 season saw fortunes dramatically change for the better, with Shepshed ending the season in 8th place, their highest league table position for 13 years, however Wilson resigned immediately after the end of the season. Dave Stringer and Jimmy Ginnelly were announced to lead Shepshed into the 2009/10 season, but following a difficult season, Dave parted company with Shepshed.

Barry Baker and Bob Norris were appointed for 2010/11. As the season started Baker was hit by a serious illness, and forced to resign. Dynamo appointed Dave Frecklington but this again failed to last and he was relieved of his duties after a string of poor results that saw Shepshed finish in 21st position leading to relegation. However Shepshed were

relieved following financial problems at Rushden & Diamonds.

John Ramshaw was appointed the new manager as Evo-Stik Division One South football was awarded to Shepshed for the 2011/2 season. In October Eastwood Town persuaded Ramshaw to take over their hot seat. His assistant Chris (Chalky) White was given the post in November 2011. In 2012, with new Chairman Mick Sloan, Shepshed Dynamo competed in the United Counties League, where after a mixed start ended the season on a high finishing in 9th position and beating local rivals Quorn FC 5-0 to lift the Loughborough Charity Cup.

In 2013-14 Shepshed were yet again moved sideways to compete in the Midland Football Alliance and after a season of mixed results finished in 16th place. Jim Wynne and Matt Houldsworth began the campaign with a mix of old and new players signed.

In November they were replaced by the successful championship winning Jeff Stocking from Oadby, strengthening the squad but finished the season in 15th place. For the 2014-15 season Jeff was joined by former Loughborough and Quorn manager John Folwell and they recruited a squad of talented young players who enjoyed an unbeaten pre-season. Due to business requirements Jeff stood down with John being joined by Jimmy Gray. Before the completion of that season however John also had to resign due to promotion at work. Jimmy Gray saw out the season, helped by Andy Hohn, and the side finished fourth.

The management team for the 2016/17 season assembled the bulk of last season's successful side and a mix of experienced players with a group of promising youngsters. Although staying in the higher end of the league for most of the season, including reaching the last 32 in the FA Vase and winning the Loughborough Charity Cup, the club finished fifteenth.

For the 2017-18 campaign again a mix of last season's players plus experienced additions were to represent the club with hopes of a much higher finish in the league table. A competitive season ended with a 7th position but also the loss of manager Gray. This saw ex-Gresley manager Damion Beckford-Quailey take charge and a squad comprising some of last term's players joined by new faces and several ex-Shepshed favourites returning to the Dovecote.

The FA allocation to leagues for season 2019-20 saw the club again moved to the United Counties for a second time. Damion remained as manager, assisted by Wayne Scott and Dave Clay. Several new faces were included in the squad.

Season 2019-20 saw the club in a very strong position for promotion before the Covid pandemic caused the season to be null and void. With a late start, 2020-21 was a busy one with the club retaining most of the squad and being joined by three additions and increased coaching staff. Despite this, during the FA restructuring, we were finally promoted back to step 4 via the PPG system after over 10 years at step 5.

In the first season back at Step 4 in 2021, Dynamo Manager Damion Beckford-Quailey, assisted by Gary Drake, managed an impressive 11th placed finish, gaining points of each of the top eight teams in the league. In the following season they finished with an almost identical record as the season before.

The 2023-24 season sees Manager Damion Beckford-Quailey along with assistant Gary Drake remain at the club with additions to the technical area as Matt Melbourne makes the transition from player to coach, alongside Nick Fairbrother in also joining the coaching staff.

Several new replacement players have arrived to fill the vacant areas in the squad following several players moving to higher level, and long-standing captain Jake Betts announcing his retirement.





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Sunday 10 September	3-0	L	Shifnal Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 17 September	1-8	W	Crusaders Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 24 September	1-6	L	Worcester City Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 1 October	0-5	W	AFC Telford United	Women's FA Cup 2QR
Sunday 8 October	5-5	D	Solihull Sporting Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 15 October	0-5	L	Stourbridge 1st	BCFA Women's County Cup
Sunday 22 October	7-5	L	Northampton Town	Women's FA Cup 3QR
Sunday 29 October	3-4	W	Kidderminster Harriers Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 26 November	3-3	D	Burton Albion Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 3 December	3-2	L	Worcester City Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 17 December	5-1	W	Lichfield City Ladies	West Mids Premier Cup 1R
Sunday 7 January	4-0	L	Lye Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 14 January	4-3	W	Crusaders Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 21 January	2-1	W	Shrewsbury Town Women	West Mids Premier Cup QF
Sunday 28 January	4-0	L	Shrewsbury Town Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 4 February	2-3	L	Burton Albion Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 25 February	3-0	L	Knowle Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 3 March	14.00	H	Shifnal Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 10 March	14.00	H	Coundon Court Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 17 March	14.00	H	Lichfield City Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 24 March	14.00	H	Lye Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 14 April	14.00	H	Shrewsbury Town Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 21 April	14.00	H	Knowle Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 28 April	14.00	A	Lichfield City Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
TBC	A		Coundon Court Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
TBC	H		Kidderminster Harriers Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division



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PITCHING IN NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE MIDLANDS FIXTURES

Saturday 2nd March

Anstey Nomads	v	Rugby Town
Bedworth United	v	Corby Town
Boldmere St Michaels	v	Spalding United
Cambridge City	v	Sutton Coldfield Town
Coleshill Town	v	AFC Rushden & Diamonds
Coventry Sphinx	v	Shepshed Dynamo
Gresley Rovers	v	Sporting Khalsa
Hinckley LR	v	Walsall Wood
Loughborough Dynamo	v	Quorn
Lye Town	v	Harborough Town

Tuesday 5th March

AFC Rushden & Diamonds	v	Quorn
Coventry Sphinx	v	Loughborough Dynamo
Walsall Wood	v	Harborough Town

Saturday 9th March

Cambridge City	v	Anstey Nomads
Coventry Sphinx	v	Harborough Town
Lye Town	v	Walsall Wood
Shepshed Dynamo	v	Sutton Coldfield Town

Tuesday 12th March

Spalding United	v	Lye Town
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PITCHING IN NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE MIDLANDS LEAGUE TABLE

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Harborough Town	27	21	2	4	67	17	50	65
2	Spalding United	28	19	4	5	61	29	32	61
3	Anstey Nomads	26	16	8	2	62	30	32	56
4	Loughborough Dynamo	28	17	5	6	56	39	17	56
5	Hinckley LR	28	15	7	6	46	33	13	52
6	Quorn	27	13	7	7	51	35	16	46
7	Sporting Khalsa	29	14	4	11	43	45	-2	46
8	Lye Town	27	13	6	8	38	32	6	45
9	Corby Town	29	11	8	10	59	40	19	41
10	Walsall Wood	25	12	4	9	43	41	2	40
11	Sutton Coldfield Town	28	11	6	11	43	41	2	39
12	Boldmere St Michaels	28	10	4	14	46	40	6	34
13	Bedworth United	30	9	7	14	32	38	-6	34
14	Coleshill Town	29	9	4	16	46	64	-18	31
15	Shepshed Dynamo	27	8	5	14	34	48	-14	29
16	Cambridge City	28	7	5	16	34	54	-20	26
17	Coventry Sphinx	27	5	10	12	25	46	-21	25
18	Rugby Town	29	6	3	20	31	63	-32	21
19	Gresley Rovers	29	4	6	19	29	77	-48	18
20	AFC Rushden & Diamonds	27	4	3	20	21	55	-34	15

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Jac Redhead
Matthew Shipman
Finlay Shorrock
Duncan Van Den Top
Callum Whiteside
Leo Wood
Callum Woodward

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Kyle Dixon
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Mason Lee
Jack Lynch
Kevin Masindo
Shaquille Master
Reece Morris
Pearson Mwanyongo
Shaquille O'Neil-Brooks
Niall Prenderville
Dylan Reason
Shaun Ruzvidzo
James Shaw
Leke Shodunke
Jordan Smith
Charlie Wakefield
Jordan Wakeling
Matthew White

Referee: Jason Porter

Assistant Referees: Stuart Hale and Nathan Parry

