DUGOUT NEWS

ISSUE 007



SUSSEX FOOTBALL

LICENCE TO THRILL

DUGOUT DATAHUB

LIVE NOW



- Create your own PDF and PNG stat packs
- For the Isthmian and SCFL leagues
- Compare teams, graphs, players, results, fixtures and power rankings
- New stats updated automatically after every game
- Powered by **DUGOUT AI**

DUGOUTDATAHUB.COM

CONTENTS

THE STORIES BETWEEN THE SCORES · PRESS-LOCKED 20 SEPTEMBER 2026

04	When football becomes more than the result — from the editor
05	Meet the contributors
06	Rebels raid the North — Hartlepool United 1–3 Worthing
07	National League — results, table and round-up
10	Cup weekend — Horsham, Eastbourne Borough and the Sussex FA Cup ties
14	Isthmian Premier — results, table and round-up
16	Isthmian South East — results, table and round-up
18	Isthmian South Central — results, table and round-up
21	SCFL Premier — results, table and round-up · Midhurst: the facts
24	Bexhill on fire as they hit five — Crawley Down Gatwick 1–5 Bexhill United · Geoff Martin
26	SCFL Division One — results, table and round-up
29	Westfield hit four — Westfield 4–0 Clanfield · Jack Stapley
30	Willett wins it late — Infinity 2–1 Saltdean United · Charlie Bone
31	The week ahead — RUR Cup, Senior Cup and next Saturday
32	SCFL Division Two — results, table and round-up
34	Golden Boot Watch — the leading scorers, league by league
36	Comply, Adhere, Obey, Conform — Russ Cochran
40	Who protects the club? — Paul Wise
43	Six hurts. The journey shouldn't — Pagham 0–6 Hanworth Villa · Dugout Diaries
47	TMG & Rottingdean set the pace — Brighton, Worthing & District League

PARTNERS · DUGOUT AI · IN THE DUGOUT APP · DUGOUT 90 · DUGOUT DATA HUB · JOMA SPORT UK · SNLF · THESNLF.CO.UK



MIKE McCAFFREY
DUGOUT DIARIES · EDITOR

WHEN FOOTBALL BECOMES MORE THAN THE RESULT

Issue 007 opens with celebration, concern and one question Sussex football cannot simply scroll past.

MIKE MCCAFFREY

DUGOUT DIARIES · EDITOR

Another week of non-league football, and another reminder that you never really know what is coming next.

We have plenty to celebrate. Worthing travelled all the way to Hartlepool and came home with a magnificent 3–1 win. Hastings continue to set the pace. Bognor remain unbeaten. Eastbourne Borough and Horsham are into the FA Cup Third Qualifying Round. Bexhill responded to a difficult couple of weeks by sticking five past Crawley Down Gatwick.

But there is one story this week that I do not think we can simply scroll past.

Midhurst & Easebourne have now failed to raise a side for their last two first-team fixtures.

Their scheduled game at Lingfield on Wednesday night was postponed, and Saturday's trip to Hassocks did not take place either. What is on the record is this: manager Connor Hoare resigned on Monday, and in the club's own words “significant changes within the infrastructure of the club” meant agreements made before he arrived were “no longer sustainable”. Most of his squad left with him. Whatever else eventually emerges from Midhurst, two consecutive games lost from the calendar because a club cannot field a team should concern anyone who cares about Sussex non-league football.

There will be rumours. There will be screenshots. There will be people claiming to know exactly who promised what, who was being paid what and who is responsible. Dugout News is not going to turn rumour into fact.

What we can do is ask questions. How does a football club go from assembling an ambitious squad to being unable to put eleven players onto a pitch? Who protects a club when circumstances change? And at what point should leagues, governing bodies and the wider game become concerned about whether something is sustainable?

Those questions could not be more relevant this week. Russ Cochran looks at the Independent Football Regulator and asks why greater scrutiny stops where it does. Paul Wise asks an even simpler question: who protects the club?

Players leave. Managers leave. Chairmen leave. Sponsors leave. The badge is supposed to remain. That is why what happens next at Midhurst matters.

But this issue is not all doom and gloom. Far from it. There is some bloody brilliant football happening across Sussex right now. So grab a coffee – or preferably a DUG OUT 90 – and enjoy Issue 007.

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS

The people behind Issue 007 – and the rule they all work to: verified when possible, transparent when not, never guess the score.



MIKE McCAFFREY

DUGOUT DIARIES · EDITOR

Editor. Worthing, Pagham and the view from the dugout. Photo: IBB10 Show / Dugout AI.



RUSS COCHRAN

OFF THE PITCH

Governance, regulation and the business of the non-league game. Photo: supplied.



PAUL WISE

TALKING POINT

Opinion from inside the Sussex game. Photo: supplied.



GEOFF MARTIN

BEXHILL UNITED

Bexhill United correspondent and photographer, BornATotter. Photo: supplied.



JACK STAPLEY

WESTFIELD

Westfield match reports from SCFL Division One. Photo: supplied.



CHARLIE BONE

MATCH REPORTS

New this issue: Infinity v Saltdean United. Photo: supplied.



DOUGIE

DUGOUT AI · DATA & ROUND-UPS

Results, tables and league round-ups, verified at press-lock.

REBELS RAID THE NORTH

Hartlepool United 1–3 Worthing · Saturday 19 September 2026 · Att 3,870

FROM SUSSEX TO HARTLEPOOL – THREE POINTS COMING HOME.

Worthing produced one of the headline results of the Sussex weekend, winning 3–1 away at Hartlepool United.

Cory Adjetey-Brew opened the scoring on 35 minutes with his first senior goal, heading in Ricky Aguiar's cross. Aguiar doubled the advantage on 59 minutes with a thunderous volley after Coleman De-Graft's shot was blocked. Will Harris pulled one back for Pools on 77 minutes, but José Márquez glanced home a header in stoppage time to settle it.

The victory was Worthing's second consecutive National League win, following Tuesday's 1–0 home victory over Hornchurch, and moved Adam Hinshelwood's side to 11th after nine matches, on 14 points with a +2 goal difference.

Long trip. Former EFL opposition. Three goals. Three points. Sussex has a Step One club and Worthing are beginning to look increasingly comfortable making noise at this level. The result cost Hartlepool head coach Lee Clark his job: he resigned with immediate effect after the game.

Verification: Worthing FC and Hartlepool United official match reports; Football Web Pages match centre, checked 20 September 2026.

1–3

HARTLEPOOL

WORTHING

ADJETEY-BREW 35

AGUIAR 59

MÁRQUEZ 90+3

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Results and table · correct to Saturday evening, 19 September 2026

RESULTS

Hornchurch	1–0	Scunthorpe
AFC Fylde	1–2	Altrincham
Barrow	1–0	Aldershot
Boreham Wood	4–1	Harrogate
Eastleigh	1–0	Carlisle
FC Halifax	1–1	Sutton
Forest Green	1–3	Boston United
Gateshead	1–6	Southend
Hartlepool	1–3	Worthing
Woking	0–0	Kidderminster
Tamworth	2–1	Wealdstone

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Boreham Wood	9	7	2	0	+12	**23**
2	Southend United	9	6	2	1	+11	**20**
3	Kidderminster	9	5	3	1	+6	**18**
4	AFC Fylde	9	5	2	2	+7	**17**
5	Harrogate Town	9	5	1	3	+4	**16**
6	Sutton United	9	4	4	1	0	**16**
7	Yeovil	9	4	3	2	+4	**15**
8	Aldershot	9	4	3	2	+3	**15**
9	AFC Hornchurch	9	4	3	2	-1	**15**
10	Altrincham	9	4	3	2	-3	**15**
11	**Worthing**	**9**	**4**	**2**	**3**	**+2**	**14**
12	Eastleigh	9	4	2	3	+1	**14**
13	FC Halifax Town	9	3	4	2	+3	**13**
14	Forest Green	9	4	1	4	-1	**13**
15	Boston United	9	3	2	4	0	**11**
16	Carlisle	9	2	4	3	+2	**10**
17	Barrow	9	2	3	4	-1	**9**
18	Woking	9	2	3	4	-2	**9**
19	Hartlepool	9	2	3	4	-4	**9**
20	Wealdstone	9	2	2	5	-4	**8**
21	Tamworth	9	2	2	5	-7	**8**
22	Scunthorpe	9	1	4	4	-4	**7**
23	Solihull Moors	9	1	1	7	-14	**4**
24	Gateshead	9	1	1	7	-14	**4**

NATIONAL LEAGUE

WORTHING RAID HARTLEPOOL — AND THE TOP TWO TURN UP THE HEAT

Worthing returned from one of the longest trips of their season with a second successive league victory, beating Hartlepool United 3–1 and moving onto 14 points from nine matches. Cory Adjetey-Brew's first senior goal gave the Rebels the interval lead, Ricky Aguiar's thunderous volley doubled it, and José Márquez headed the clincher in stoppage time after Will Harris had briefly revived Pools.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

Hornchurch 1–0 Scunthorpe

AFC Fylde 1–2 Altrincham

Barrow 1–0 Aldershot

Boreham Wood 4–1 Harrogate

Eastleigh 1–0 Carlisle

FC Halifax 1–1 Sutton

Forest Green 1–3 Boston United

Gateshead 1–6 Southend

Hartlepool 1–3 Worthing

Woking 0–0 Kidderminster

Tamworth 2–1 Wealdstone

WHAT IT MEANS

THE REBELS

Worthing are 11th: P9 W4 D2 L3, 17 scored, 15 conceded, 14 points. The win followed the midweek 1–0 victory over Hornchurch, giving Adam Hinshelwood's side six points from the week in front of 3,870 at Hartlepool.

AT THE SUMMIT

Boreham Wood remain unbeaten after a 4–1 win over Harrogate and lead with 23 points. Southend are second on 20 after a remarkable 6–1 win at Gateshead; Kidderminster sit third on 18.

RESULT OF THE DAY

Southend's six at Gateshead was the weekend's biggest National League score. Boston also produced an eye-catching away result, winning 3–1 at Forest Green.

NEXT STORY

Worthing now have a full week before FC Halifax Town visit Sussex on Saturday. The question is whether back-to-back wins become a genuine run rather than a good seven days. Hartlepool, meanwhile, are looking for a new head coach after Lee Clark's resignation.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

1 Boreham Wood P9 23
2 Southend Utd P9 20
3 Kidderminster P9 18
4 AFC Fylde P9 17
11 WORTHING P9 14

DUGOUT NEWS

FOLLOW US ON SOCIALS

JOIN THE CONVERSATION. NEVER MISS A STORY.

X	@thesnlf @thesnlfdod @ibb10 @thedugoutai
INSTAGRAM	@iamthedugout @thesnlf.co.uk @thesnlf_food
YOUTUBE	@dugoutai @LessFootballAdventures
KICK	@dugoudiaires
TIKTOK	@iamthedugout

SUBSCRIBE ON YOUTUBE

@dugoutai • @LessFootballAdventures

FOLLOW • SUBSCRIBE • SHARE

CUP WEEKEND

Horsham had no league fixture – and Sussex supplied plenty of knockout drama.

HORSHAM: P8 · 10 PTS · 15TH

Horsham's league record remains P8, W2, D4, L2, GF9, GA10, GD -1, 10 points. Saturday was about the FA Cup instead.

FA CUP – SECOND QUALIFYING ROUND – SUSSEX

Eastbourne Borough	3–0	Windsor & Eton
Walton & Hersham	0–3	Horsham
Hampton & Richmond	3–3	Crowborough Athletic
Chichester City	2–3	SE Dons
Hanwell Town	2–1	Burgess Hill Town
Pagham	0–6	Hanworth Villa

Eastbourne Borough and Horsham go into Monday's Third Qualifying Round draw. Crowborough Athletic replay Hampton & Richmond at home on Tuesday 22 September.

HORSHAM

0–3

HESTER-COOK 81

YILA 82

AJAKAIYE 90+

THROUGH TO THE THIRD QUALIFYING ROUND

NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH / FA CUP

BOROUGH AND HORSHAM MARCH ON AS SUSSEX LIVES ON IN THE CUP

There was no National League South fixture for Horsham, but the Hornets made their Saturday count in the FA Cup. Walton & Hersham held them until the final ten minutes before Charlie Hester-Cook, Jamie Yila and Daniel Ajakaiye turned a tight tie into a 3–0 away win. Eastbourne Borough were through by half-time against Windsor & Eton.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

Eastbourne Borough 3–0 Windsor & Eton

Walton & Hersham 0–3 Horsham

Hampton & Richmond 3–3 Crowborough Athletic

Chichester City 2–3 SE Dons

Hanwell Town 2–1 Burgess Hill Town

Pagham 0–6 Hanworth Villa

WHAT IT MEANS

BOROUGH CRUISE

Eastbourne Borough were through by half-time. Grout, McQueen and Omotayo all scored in the first 45 minutes against Windsor & Eton, and Borough join Horsham in Monday's Third Qualifying Round draw.

HORSHAM'S LATE BLITZ

Walton & Hersham held the Hornets for 80 minutes. Hester-Cook broke the deadlock, Yila added a second within minutes, and Ajakaiye made it three in added time. The scoreline looked comfortable; the route to it was anything but.

CROWBOROUGH DRAMA

Elliott Duncan scored twice and George Hutcheon once as Crowborough led 3–2 at Hampton & Richmond deep into the second half, only for Reece Grego-Cox to level in the 90th minute. The replay is at Crowborough on Tuesday 22 September. Their cup story remains alive.

TWO BRUTAL EXITS

Chichester City led SE Dons 2–1 through Rowlatt and Bridle before Ralfi Hand's free-kick in the 92nd minute and Alex Teniola in the 95th turned the tie on its head. Burgess Hill also exited, losing 2–1 at Hanwell despite Shamir Fenelon scoring in added time.

PAGHAM'S PERSPECTIVE

Pagham were beaten 6–0 by Hanworth Villa, a club operating two levels above them. The score hurt, but reaching the Second Qualifying Round matched Pagham's best FA Cup run.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

HORSHAM LEAGUE SNAPSHOT
P8 W2 D4 L2
GF 9 GA 10 GD −1
10 pts · 15th

SNLF SHOW

SNLF SHOW LIVE @ RAKKUS



WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2026

7PM–9PM

84 SOUTH ST, LANCING BN15 8AJ

FREE ADMISSION • TICKET REQUIRED

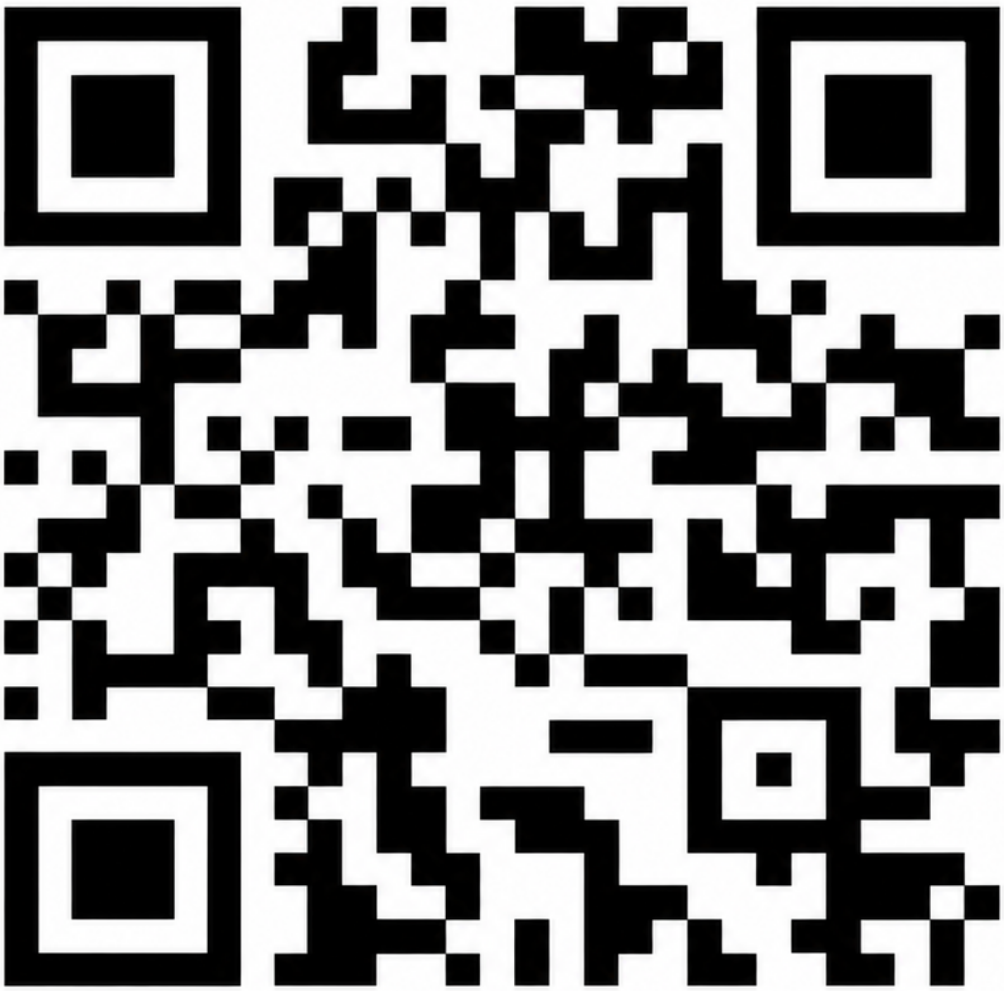
DONATIONS TO A LOCAL CHARITY ON THE DOOR

YOUR QUESTIONS. ANYTHING SUSSEX NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL.

STREAMED LIVE ON YOUTUBE

BAKKUS SNLF LIVE SHOW

SCAN FOR TICKETS



ISTHMIAN PREMIER

FA Cup weekend reduced the league programme to two games.

RESULTS

Cheshunt	3–1	Lewes
Maldon & Tiptree	2–3	Carshalton Athletic
Dartford	FA CUP	Whitehawk
Stanway Rovers	FA CUP	Cray Wanderers

Dartford v Whitehawk and Stanway Rovers v Cray Wanderers were not played because of FA Cup ties. Dartford v Whitehawk is rearranged for Tuesday 29 September (7.45pm); Stanway v Cray is date TBC.

COMING UP

TUE 22 SEP

Brentwood Town v Maldon & Tiptree

Three Bridges v Leatherhead

SAT 26 SEP · FA TROPHY

Lewes v Uxbridge

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Enfield Town	8	6	0	2	23	11	+12	**18**
2	Welling United	8	6	0	2	18	9	+9	**18**
3	Dartford	8	6	0	2	13	8	+5	**18**
4	Carshalton Athletic	9	6	0	3	15	13	+2	**18**
5	Lewes	9	5	1	3	14	11	+3	**16**
6	St Albans City	8	4	2	2	17	13	+4	**14**
7	Leatherhead	8	4	2	2	14	12	+2	**14**
8	Ramsgate	8	4	1	3	19	10	+9	**13**
9	Dulwich Hamlet	7	4	1	2	16	9	+7	**13**
10	Eastbourne Borough	8	4	1	3	14	11	+3	**13**
11	Chatham Town	8	4	0	4	16	13	+3	**12**
12	Wingate & Finchley	8	3	2	3	13	18	-5	**11**
13	Aveley	8	3	1	4	16	14	+2	**10**
14	Burgess Hill Town	7	2	4	1	11	9	+2	**10**
15	Cray Wanderers	7	2	3	2	13	11	+2	**9**
16	Maldon & Tiptree	7	3	0	4	11	16	-5	**9**
17	Cheshunt	9	1	5	3	7	12	-5	**8**
18	AFC Whyteleafe	8	1	3	4	10	17	-7	**6**
19	Whitehawk	8	1	2	5	9	19	-10	**5**
20	Three Bridges	8	1	1	6	13	25	-12	**4**
21	Stanway Rovers	8	1	1	6	6	21	-15	**4**
22	Brentwood Town	7	1	0	6	8	14	-6	**3**

ISTHMIAN PREMIER

A TINY LEAGUE CARD — BUT NO SHORTAGE OF CONSEQUENCE

FA Cup commitments stripped the Isthmian Premier programme back to just two league matches, leaving the table with games-in-hand everywhere and putting extra weight on the points that were actually available.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

Cheshunt 3–1 Lewes

Maldon & Tiptree 2–3 Carshalton Athletic

Dartford v Whitehawk — not played (FA Cup)

Stanway Rovers v Cray Wanderers — not played (FA Cup)

WHAT IT MEANS

LEWES BEATEN

The Rooks were 3–0 down at Cheshunt before Mackenzie Richardson's goal in the third minute of stoppage time reduced the deficit. It was consolation rather than comeback, and it was Cheshunt's first league win of the season.

CARSHALTON TURN IT AROUND

Maldon & Tiptree raced into a two-goal lead inside four minutes, but Carshalton recovered to win 3–2. On a short programme, that comeback became the division's defining result.

WHY THE TABLE LIES A LITTLE

Cup weekends create an uneven early-season picture. Some sides bank points while others hold games in hand, so raw position needs to be read alongside matches played.

SUSSEX WATCH

Lewes took the only Sussex league fixture and drop to fifth; a win would have sent them top. Whitehawk's trip to Dartford was not played because of Dartford's cup tie and is now set for 29 September. Whitehawk (19th) and Three Bridges (20th) both sit in the bottom four.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

```
WEEKEND NOTE
2 league games played
2 not played (FA Cup)
Lewes 5th · 16 pts
```

DOUGIE · DUGOUT AI · DATA & ROUND-UPS · RESULTS VERIFIED AT PUBLICATION CUT-OFF

ISTHMIAN SOUTH EAST

Hastings lead. Eastbourne Town hit seven.

RESULTS

AFC Croydon	3–1	Ashford United
Deal Town	6–1	Punjab United
Eastbourne Town	7–0	Horley Town
Faversham Town	3–1	Herne Bay
Hastings United	3–0	Merstham
Sevenoaks Town	2–1	Margate
Sittingbourne	0–1	Peacehaven
South Park	5–1	Steyning Town
Whitstable Town	0–1	Cray Valley PM

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Hastings United	6	5	0	1	16	8	+8	**15**
2	Broadbridge Heath	6	4	1	1	17	7	+10	**13**
3	Faversham Town	5	4	1	0	12	6	+6	**13**
4	Sittingbourne	6	4	1	1	10	7	+3	**13**
5	AFC Croydon Athletic	6	4	0	2	13	8	+5	**12**
6	South Park	6	3	2	1	14	8	+6	**11**
7	Erith Town	4	3	1	0	13	3	+10	**10**
8	Margate	6	3	1	2	11	8	+3	**10**
9	Herne Bay	4	3	0	1	9	5	+4	**9**
10	Peacehaven & Telscombe	6	2	2	2	7	10	-3	**8**
11	Eastbourne Town	6	2	1	3	14	9	+5	**7**
12	Deal Town	6	2	1	3	11	11	0	**7**
13	Cray Valley PM	7	2	1	4	7	11	-4	**7**
14	Ashford United	5	2	0	3	9	8	+1	**6**
15	Sevenoaks Town	6	2	0	4	7	11	-4	**6**
16	Horley Town	6	2	0	4	6	20	-14	**6**
17	Merstham	6	1	2	3	6	10	-4	**5**
18	Sheppey United	4	1	0	3	4	5	-1	**3**
19	Crowborough Athletic	5	1	0	4	6	11	-5	**3**
20	Whitstable Town	5	1	0	4	4	11	-7	**3**
21	Steyning Town	5	1	0	4	5	13	-8	**3**
22	Punjab United	6	0	2	4	5	16	-11	**2**

ISTHMIAN SOUTH EAST

SEVEN FOR EASTBOURNE TOWN — HASTINGS STAY TOP

This was the division's wildest attacking Saturday so far. Eastbourne Town smashed seven past Horley, Deal hit six against Punjab United and South Park scored five against Steyning. At the top, Hastings United kept doing the simple thing well: winning.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

AFC Croydon 3–1 Ashford United

Deal Town 6–1 Punjab United

Eastbourne Town 7–0 Horley Town

Faversham Town 3–1 Herne Bay

Hastings United 3–0 Merstham

Sevenoaks Town 2–1 Margate

Sittingbourne 0–1 Peacehaven

South Park 5–1 Steyning Town

Whitstable Town 0–1 Cray Valley PM

WHAT IT MEANS

HASTINGS SET THE PACE

Max Walsh scored twice and Kesna Clarke added the third in a 3–0 win over Merstham in front of 861 at the Pilot Field. Hastings moved to 15 points from six games and sit first.

TOWN HIT SEVEN

Sonny James Walsh grabbed a hat-trick, Arron Hopkinson scored twice and Marcin Ruda and Aaron Capon also found the net as Eastbourne Town won 7–0. Horley's Max Foulkes was sent off on 22 minutes.

PEACEHAVEN'S AWAY THREE

A 1–0 win at Sittingbourne pushed Peacehaven onto eight points. It was a very different kind of victory from the goal-fests elsewhere, but arguably just as valuable.

SUSSEX PICTURE

Broadbridge Heath did not play but remain second on 13 points. Hastings lead; Eastbourne Town climb into the middle group; Steyning remain near the bottom after the 5–1 defeat. Midweek: Sittingbourne v Hastings and Peacehaven v Steyning on Tuesday; Sevenoaks v Eastbourne Town on Wednesday.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

1 Hastings P6 15
2 Broadbridge H. P6 13
3 Faversham P5 13
4 Sittingbourne P6 13
10 Peacehaven P6 8

ISTHMIAN SOUTH CENTRAL

Unbeaten Bognor four clear after six games.

RESULTS

Bognor Regis	3–1	Harrow Borough
Littlehampton	1–8	Hartley Wintney
Ascot United	0–4	Raynes Park Vale
Bedfont Sports	0–2	Moneyfields
Westfield	3–0	Cobham
Winchester City	0–0	Jersey Bulls

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Bognor Regis Town	6	5	1	0	11	4	+7	**16**
2	Winchester City	6	3	3	0	17	5	+12	**12**
3	AFC Portchester	6	4	0	2	13	8	+5	**12**
4	Hendon	5	3	2	0	15	6	+9	**11**
5	Westfield	5	3	1	1	11	6	+5	**10**
6	Southall	5	3	0	2	9	6	+3	**9**
7	Cobham	6	3	0	3	8	10	-2	**9**
8	Raynes Park Vale	6	3	0	3	10	13	-3	**9**
9	Kingstonian	4	2	2	0	9	5	+4	**8**
10	Jersey Bulls	4	2	2	0	6	4	+2	**8**
11	Bedfont Sports	6	2	2	2	7	8	-1	**8**
12	Hartley Wintney	4	2	1	1	14	8	+6	**7**
13	Ashford Town (Middx)	5	2	1	2	12	8	+4	**7**
14	Windsor & Eton	4	2	0	2	6	8	-2	**6**
15	Moneyfields	6	1	2	3	7	8	-1	**5**
16	Harrow Borough	7	1	2	4	8	11	-3	**5**
17	Hayes & Yeading	4	1	1	2	6	8	-2	**4**
18	Ascot United	6	1	1	4	7	11	-4	**4**
19	Egham Town	4	1	0	3	4	14	-10	**3**
20	Littlehampton Town	7	1	0	6	7	19	-12	**3**
21	AFC Stoneham	3	0	0	3	2	8	-6	**0**
22	Binfield	5	0	0	5	3	14	-11	**0**

ISTHMIAN SOUTH CENTRAL

BOGNOR UNBEATEN AND FOUR CLEAR — LITTLEHAMPTON HIT FOR EIGHT

Bognor Regis Town continue to set the early standard. A 3–1 home win over Harrow Borough moved the Rocks to 16 points from six games and kept their unbeaten league start intact. At the other end of the emotional scale, Littlehampton suffered a brutal 8–1 home defeat.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

Bognor Regis 3–1 Harrow Borough

Littlehampton 1–8 Hartley Wintney

Ascot United 0–4 Raynes Park Vale

Bedfont Sports 0–2 Moneyfields

Westfield 3–0 Cobham

Winchester City 0–0 Jersey Bulls

WHAT IT MEANS

ROCKS ROLL ON

Henry Nevill and Luke Roberts put Bognor in control before Henry McDonald added a third in the seventh minute of added time. Tommy Scott also saved a penalty with the game at 2–1, in front of 572 at Nyewood Lane.

A LONG DAY FOR THE GOLDS

Littlehampton lost Scott Faber to a red card after 32 minutes and were beaten 8–1 by Hartley Wintney. Harry Heath scored Littlehampton's goal in first-half stoppage time.

PRESSURE FROM BELOW

Winchester's goalless draw with Jersey Bulls left them on 12 points, four behind Bognor. AFC Portchester are also on 12, while Hendon have 11 from five. Winchester host Bognor on Tuesday night – first against second.

OTHER MOVERS

Raynes Park Vale won 4–0 at Ascot, Moneyfields took a 2–0 away win at Bedfont and Westfield beat Cobham 3–0.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

1 Bognor Regis P6 16
2 Winchester P6 12
3 AFC Portchester P6 12
4 Hendon P5 11
20 Littlehampton P7 3

DUG OUT 90

HYDRATION FOR THE FULL 90

NATURAL STILL SPRING WATER • 330ml • 100% RECYCLABLE



THE NEW HOME OF DUG OUT 90

www.dugout90.com

BUILT AROUND GRASSROOTS & NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL

SCAN THE CAN • STAY HYDRATED

SCFL PREMIER

Saturday 19 September · results locked at publication cut-off

RESULTS

AFC Varndeanians	1–0	Guernsey
Little Common	0–0	Horsham YMCA
Billingshurst	0–3	Wick
Crawley Down Gatwick	1–5	Bexhill United
Eastbourne United	0–2	East Grinstead Town
Hassocks	P–P	Midhurst & Easebourne
Haywards Heath	P–P	Pagham
Lancing	0–3	Roffey
Lingfield	4–1	Seaford Town
Newhaven	2–1	Forest Row

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Eastbourne United	10	7	1	2	34	15	+19	**22**
2	Haywards Heath Town	7	6	1	0	15	4	+11	**19**
3	AFC Varndeanians	9	5	2	2	9	7	+2	**17**
4	Lingfield	8	5	1	2	23	15	+8	**16**
5	Hassocks	7	4	2	1	20	9	+11	**14**
6	East Grinstead Town	8	4	2	2	17	11	+6	**14**
7	Roffey	7	4	1	2	20	9	+11	**13**
8	Bexhill United	8	4	1	3	15	15	0	**13**
9	Newhaven	8	4	1	3	12	16	-4	**13**
10	Pagham	6	4	0	2	20	12	+8	**12**
11	Crawley Down Gatwick	9	3	3	3	14	16	-2	**12**
12	Guernsey	8	3	2	3	11	14	-3	**11**
13	Midhurst & Easebourne	6	3	1	2	12	8	+4	**10**
14	Seaford Town	8	3	0	5	13	17	-4	**9**
15	Wick	8	3	0	5	11	19	-8	**9**
16	Lancing	8	2	0	6	10	20	-10	**6**
17	Horsham YMCA	8	1	2	5	9	16	-7	**5**
18	Billingshurst	10	1	2	7	14	26	-12	**5**
19	Little Common	7	1	1	5	6	20	-14	**4**
20	Forest Row	10	1	1	8	12	28	-16	**4**

MIDHURST

TWO GAMES. NO SIDE.

Lingfield (Wed 16 Sep): postponed

Hassocks (Sat 19 Sep): postponed

Manager Connor Hoare resigned Mon 14 Sep

Club: agreements made before his arrival were “no longer sustainable”

Next: Eastbourne United (H), Sat 26 Sep

NO RUMOURS. JUST THE FACTS.

SCFL PREMIER

BEXHILL HIT FIVE, ROFFEY HIT THREE — AND TWO FIXTURES DISAPPEAR

Bexhill United supplied the standout attacking performance of the SCFL Premier weekend with a 5–1 victory at Crawley Down Gatwick. It was a sharp response after a difficult couple of weeks and one of several strong away displays across the division.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

AFC Varndeanians 1–0 Guernsey

Little Common 0–0 Horsham YMCA

Billingshurst 0–3 Wick

Crawley Down Gatwick 1–5 Bexhill United

Eastbourne United 0–2 East Grinstead Town

Hassocks P–P Midhurst & Easebourne

Haywards Heath P–P Pagham

Lancing 0–3 Roffey

Lingfield 4–1 Seaford Town

Newhaven 2–1 Forest Row

WHAT IT MEANS

BEXHILL BOUNCE BACK

Charlie Scarles scored twice, with Jack Shonk and Jack Mison also on the scoresheet. A Ryan Moir effort was involved in the third goal, although the final attribution was not treated as certain at publication cut-off.

ROFFEY ON THE ROAD

Roffey won 3–0 at Lancing, matching Wick's 3–0 away victory at Billingshurst. East Grinstead also travelled well, beating leaders Eastbourne United 2–0.

VARNDEANIANS EDGE IT

Aiden Eckworth's 79th-minute goal gave AFC Varndeanians a 1–0 win over Guernsey, who have now lost four in a row.

THE FIXTURES THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN

Hassocks v Midhurst & Easebourne did not take place, with Midhurst unable to raise a side after manager Connor Hoare's resignation and the departure of most of his squad. It was to have been James Westlake's 200th game as Hassocks manager. Haywards Heath Town v Pagham was also postponed for Pagham's FA Cup tie.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

```
ALSO: Lingfield 4–1 Seaford
Newhaven 2–1 Forest Row
Little Common 0–0 Horsham YMCA
Weekend focus: availability + depth
```

FOOTBALL
PEOPLE
PLATFORMS
PROGRESS

MORE
THAN
A GAME

DUGOUT AI × Joma SPORT UK

GRASSROOTS BUILDS GREATER FOOTBALL

NEW PARTNERSHIP

THE DUGOUT AI x JOMA SPORT UK

A LEADING SPORTSWEAR BRAND GLOBALLY.

The Dugout is delighted to announce an exciting new partnership with Joma Sport UK.

Joma has a strong and growing presence across grassroots and non-league football, making this a natural partnership for The Dugout Hub as we continue to develop our platform and support the clubs, players and communities that make the non-league game so special.

Working together, we aim to bring greater exposure, insight and opportunities to clubs across the region, combining The Dugout's growing football platform with Joma's experience and commitment to the grassroots game.

We're really excited about what we can build together throughout the season and look forward to sharing more over the coming months.

SUPPORTING CLUBS | EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES | CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

NON-LEAGUE STRONGER TOGETHER

BUILT
FOR A
BIGGER
TOMORROW

DUGOUTAI.COM

BEXHILL ON FIRE AS THEY HIT FIVE



GEOFF MARTIN
BEXHILL UNITED · BORNATOTTER

Crawley Down Gatwick 1–5 Bexhill United · SCFL Premier · Saturday 19 September 2026

BY GEOFF MARTIN · BEXHILL UNITED CORRESPONDENT

MATCH FACTS

Kilkenny 15 (CDG)
Scarles 28, 58
Shonk 45
Moir (or own goal)
Mison
Club man of the match: Jack Shonk
Photos: BornATotter

A response was needed. Bexhill delivered it in bucket loads.

After a disappointing couple of weeks it was important that Bexhill took steps to turn things around, and they did exactly that at Crawley Down Gatwick on Saturday afternoon.

Pirates boss Jay Skinner-Swain again found his defensive resources stretched, with Callum Brand suspended and Harry Marchant the latest on the injury list. It meant moving Kasey Smith into the middle alongside Dale Penn, with Richie Welch on the left and Ash Latuske on the right.

A fair old wind was blowing across the Haven from the airport end and Bexhill had it at their backs in the first half. On just four minutes a brilliant free kick from Ryan Moir was only kept out by the fingertips of Freddy Leather in the Anvils goal.

Callum Kilkenny reacted fastest to a loose ball in the Bexhill box on the quarter-hour mark and whacked it home to break the deadlock.

The leveller came on 28 minutes. A ball from Moir split the defensive line, Jack Shonk picked it up and drove forwards, drawing out the keeper and squaring for Charlie Scarles to sweep into the empty net.

Just before the break a beautiful pass from Kyle Holden released Shonk, and he delivered a finish that simply oozed class. Bexhill went in 2–1 up.

The second half was lit up by a flurry of Bexhill goals. Ryan Moir drove a low, hard shot in that took a big deflection. Moir deserved a goal for his high-energy performance, but the final attribution may yet be an own goal.

Jack Mison, on at the back for the injured Richie Welch, picked up a half-clearance just inside the box and whacked it home on the half-volley.

Bexhill were not done. Shonk won the ball deep and set up Scarles for his second with a precision pass. So it finished 5–1.

Regardless of the score, the result and performance put Bexhill's season back on track after a tricky period. On Tuesday they are back at the Polegrove against Forest Row for a 7.30pm kick-off in the RUR Cup.

Verification: FA Full-Time fixture record; Crawley Down Gatwick FC match summary; Bexhill United FC match-day posts, checked 20 September 2026.

FIVE AT THE HAVEN

Crawley Down Gatwick 1–5 Bexhill United · Saturday 19 September 2026 · Photos: BornATotter







Celebration and set-piece action at the Haven, where Bexhill's 5–1 win took them to eighth in the SCFL Premier.

PHOTOS: BORNATOTTER · SUPPLIED TO DUGOUT NEWS · FRAMES CROPPED TO FIT

SCFL DIVISION ONE

All ten Saturday results accounted for.

RESULTS

AFC Walcountians	5–0	Mile Oak
Dial Square	1–0	Dorking Wanderers B
East Preston	0–1	Jarvis Brook
Guildford City	2–0	Shoreham
Hailsham Town	5–2	Arundel
Infinity	2–1	Saltdean United
Oakwood	1–1	Loxwood
Reigate Priory	1–0	Worthing United
Ringmer AFC	0–1	Selsey
Westfield	4–0	Clanfield

NEXT SATURDAY

Arundel v Oakwood

Clanfield v Dorking B

Dial Square v Ringmer

East Preston v Guildford

Infinity v Hailsham

Loxwood v Saltdean

Mile Oak v Reigate

Selsey v Westfield

Shoreham v Jarvis Brook

Worthing Utd v Walcountians

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	AFC Walcountians	8	7	1	0	25	4	+21	**22**
2	Infinity	8	7	0	1	23	12	+11	**21**
3	Worthing United	7	5	1	1	28	3	+25	**16**
4	Reigate Priory	8	5	0	3	19	11	+8	**15**
5	Guildford City	8	4	2	2	19	7	+12	**14**
6	Jarvis Brook	7	4	1	2	9	6	+3	**13**
7	Dial Square	7	4	1	2	8	6	+2	**13**
8	Arundel	9	4	1	4	20	24	-4	**13**
9	Westfield	8	3	2	3	13	8	+5	**11**
10	Mile Oak	9	3	2	4	11	16	-5	**11**
11	Selsey	9	3	2	4	8	16	-8	**11**
12	East Preston	7	3	1	3	9	8	+1	**10**
13	Hailsham Town	8	3	1	4	16	17	-1	**10**
14	Loxwood	8	2	3	3	9	12	-3	**9**
15	Oakwood	8	2	2	4	10	24	-14	**8**
16	Saltdean United	6	2	1	3	12	12	0	**7**
17	Clanfield	7	2	0	5	5	14	-9	**6**
18	Ringmer AFC	8	1	3	4	6	16	-10	**6**
19	Shoreham	8	1	2	5	4	19	-15	**5**
20	Dorking Wanderers B	10	0	2	8	10	29	-19	**2**

SCFL DIVISION ONE

WESTFIELD HIT FOUR AS WALCOUNTIANS AND HAILSHAM GO BIG

Division One delivered a complete ten-game Saturday and plenty of goals. Westfield's 4–0 win over Clanfield combined control, controversy and a big contribution from Pethig, while AFC Walcountians and Hailsham Town both scored five.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

AFC Walcountians 5–0 Mile Oak

Dial Square 1–0 Dorking Wanderers B

East Preston 0–1 Jarvis Brook

Guildford City 2–0 Shoreham

Hailsham Town 5–2 Arundel

Infinity 2–1 Saltdean United

Oakwood 1–1 Loxwood

Reigate Priory 1–0 Worthing United

Ringmer AFC 0–1 Selsey

Westfield 4–0 Clanfield

WHAT IT MEANS

WESTFIELD'S FOUR

Tewksbury opened the scoring from the penalty spot, Pethig scored twice on his first start since returning from Little Common, and Willett completed the 4–0 win.

RED-CARD TALKING POINT

A Clanfield defender was dismissed before half-time for a challenge on Ward. Westfield's own report was fair-minded enough to acknowledge they would have felt aggrieved had the same decision gone against them.

FIVES ELSEWHERE

AFC Walcountians swept aside Mile Oak 5–0 to stay top, while Hailsham Town beat Arundel 5–2. Those were the division's other major attacking statements.

TIGHT MARGINS

Four matches were decided by a single goal: Dial Square, Jarvis Brook, Reigate Priory and Selsey all won 1–0. Infinity came from behind to edge Saltdean 2–1 and stay a point off the top; Oakwood and Loxwood shared the points.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

```
10 fixtures completed
4 one-goal victories
2 teams scored five
Westfield: 4–0 and a clean sheet
```


IBB10 SHOW
ON AIR
www.dugout-ai.com
2026 BEST NON LEAGUE PODCAST
FACTS • RUMOURS • NEWS • TRANSFERS
SUSSEX NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL SHOW
DUGOUT DIARIES
#SNLF Edition
DUGOUT AI
GOALIE MONT
THE KEEPER'S VOICE
IBB10 PENN
IN BED BY TEN
PROJECT WOOD
PROJECT WOOD
DUGOUT DIARIES
DUGOUT DIARIES
IN THE DUGOUT
AI ANALYST
POWERED BY DUGOUT AI
SUNDAYS 8PM
LIVE ON YOUTUBE • TIKTOK • INSTAGRAM • KICK
DOWNLOAD THE IN THE DUGOUT APP

WESTFIELD HIT FOUR

Westfield 4–0 Clanfield · By Jack Stapley



JACK STAPLEY
WESTFIELD

WESTFIELD	4–0	CLANFIELD

Westies got back to winning ways in spectacular fashion on Saturday with a convincing 4–0 victory over Clanfield, a side they had never previously faced.

The opening 20 minutes were a rather dull stalemate before Michael Rwabigwi, Tewksbury and Clanfield began trading chances.

A mishit Clanfield goal kick was chested into the path of Tewksbury by Willett, who was brought down as he raced through. Having missed from the spot last week, Tewksbury stepped up again and confidently dispatched the penalty into the bottom-left corner.

Things took another turn just before the break when Clanfield were reduced to ten men. A Clanfield defender was shown red after being adjudged to have gone over the ball and caught Ward. It was a decision that, had the situation been reversed, Westies would certainly have felt aggrieved about themselves.

Pethig, making his first start since rejoining from Little Common, tapped home the second and later headed in his second from a yard out.

Late on, Willett got the final touch to a Saville effort that was already heading goalwards. Four goals, three points and a clean sheet.

Verification: FA Full-Time fixture record (Tewksbury 20 pen, Pethig 56, 64, Willett 83; att 80), checked 20 September 2026.

WILLETT WINS IT LATE



CHARLIE BONE
MATCH REPORTS

Infinity 2–1 Saltdean United · Sidlesham Recreation Ground · By Charlie Bone

INFINITY	2–1	SALTDEAN UNITED

This one looked like a proper contest from the first few minutes, and Saltdean proved it on 13 minutes when Alfie Mitchell threaded a perfect ball through for Alfie Marchant to finish.

Infinity poured forward in response, but a well-organised Saltdean defence kept them out until the 35th minute. Zack Willett fed Max Davies in the box and Davies lifted his finish into the top corner to level before half-time.

The second half followed the same pattern: attacks from both sides and more strong defending from Saltdean. With time running out it had the look of a draw, until a fierce Infinity counter-attack on 78 minutes ended with Willett – the division's leading scorer – finishing to put the hosts ahead.

The last ten minutes were all Infinity: clever game management, holding Saltdean off the ball, and seeing it through to the whistle. Full time, Infinity 2–1 Saltdean United – a result that keeps Infinity second, a point behind AFC Walcountians.

Verification: FA Full-Time fixture record (Davies 35, Willett assist; Willett 78, Page assist; no cards). Saltdean's scorer not entered on Full-Time at time of checking – as reported. Checked 20 September 2026.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Cup nights, league Saturdays and another busy Sussex programme.

TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER · SUSSEX RUR CHARITY CUP · FIRST ROUND

Bexhill United v Forest Row	19:30
East Preston v Westfield	19:30
Seaford Town v Arundel	19:30
Saltdean United v Infinity	19:30
Billingshurst v Haywards Heath Town	19:45
Eastbourne United v Hassocks	19:45
Hailsham Town v Loxwood	19:45
Worthing United v Lancing	19:45

ALSO TUESDAY · SUSSEX SENIOR CHALLENGE CUP

- Midhurst & Easebourne v Pagham
- Shoreham v Jarvis Brook

RUR CUP · TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

- AFC Varndeanians v Horsham YMCA (20:00)
- Pagham v Selsey (TBC)

SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER · SCFL PREMIER

- AFC Varndeanians v Billingshurst
- Bexhill United v Lingfield
- Crawley Down Gatwick v Hassocks
- East Grinstead Town v Little Common
- Forest Row v Wick
- Horsham YMCA v Haywards Heath Town
- Lancing v Guernsey
- Midhurst & Easebourne v Eastbourne United
- Pagham v Seaford Town
- Roffey v Newhaven

WESTFIELD

BACK TO WINNING WAYS

Next: East Preston away (Tue)

then Selsey away (Sat)

Worthing United at home (Tue 29)

Source: Sussex FA county cup fixtures; FA Full-Time SCFL 2026/27, read 20 September 2026.

SCFL DIVISION TWO

All seven fixtures accounted for.

RESULTS

Bosham	5–0	Southwater
Copthorne	1–2	Worthing Town
Hurstpierpoint	3–0	Ferring
Rudgwick	1–3	ASC Brighton Rangers
Rustington	2–0	Chichester City B
Upper Beeding	0–5	Storrington Community
Brighton Electricity	P–P	Alfold

TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Rustington	7	6	0	1	26	5	+21	**18**
2	TD Shipley	6	5	1	0	19	4	+15	**16**
3	Chichester City B	6	5	0	1	33	6	+27	**15**
4	Hurstpierpoint	6	4	1	1	18	4	+14	**13**
5	Ferring	6	4	1	1	14	8	+6	**13**
6	Alfold	6	3	1	2	11	11	0	**10**
7	Storrington Community	6	3	0	3	10	16	-6	**9**
8	Worthing Town	6	3	0	3	14	31	-17	**9**
9	Southwater	6	2	1	3	13	14	-1	**7**
10	Bosham	6	2	0	4	11	12	-1	**6**
11	Upper Beeding	7	2	0	5	9	19	-10	**6**
12	ASC Brighton Rangers	7	1	2	4	11	25	-14	**5**
13	Copthorne	7	1	0	6	5	26	-21	**3**
14	Brighton Electricity	4	0	2	2	2	5	-3	**2**
15	Rudgwick	6	0	1	5	6	16	-10	**1**

SCFL DIVISION TWO

STORRINGTON AND BOSHAM HIT FIVE AS RUSTINGTON STAY TOP

Division Two produced two five-goal statements on Saturday. Storrington Community won 5–0 at Upper Beeding, and Bosham matched it with a 5–0 home win over Southwater after leading only 1–0 at the break. Rustington kept a clean sheet in a 2–0 win over Chichester City B to stay top on 18 points from seven.

SATURDAY SCOREBOARD

Bosham 5–0 Southwater

Copthorne 1–2 Worthing Town

Hurstpierpoint 3–0 Ferring

Rudgwick 1–3 ASC Brighton Rangers

Rustington 2–0 Chichester City B

Upper Beeding 0–5 Storrington Community

Brighton Electricity P–P Alfold

WHAT IT MEANS

STORRINGTON'S FIVE

The biggest away result in the division, and one that lifts Storrington to seventh.

BOSHAM'S SECOND HALF

Only 1–0 up at half-time, then four more after the interval. Bosham move to tenth; Southwater stay ninth.

THREE FOR HURST

Hurstpierpoint beat Ferring 3–0 to go fourth, while ASC Brighton Rangers travelled to Rudgwick and returned with a 3–1 victory, leaving Rudgwick still without a win.

WORTHING TOWN EDGE IT

A 2–1 win at Copthorne lifts Worthing Town to eighth and leaves Copthorne 13th on three points.

TABLE / WEEKEND SNAPSHOT

```
6 completed · 1 postponed
Rustington top on 18
Chichester City B: +27 from six
Every score verified at press-lock
```

GOLDEN BOOT WATCH

THE LEADING SCORERS, LEAGUE BY LEAGUE

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Matt Rush	Boreham Wood	9
Luca Thomas	AFC Fylde	6
Luke McCormick	Yeovil	6
Lewis Walker	Kidderminster	6

Round 9 · checked 20 Sep

NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH

Decarrey Sheriff	Dover Athletic	5
Tom Leahy	Maidstone United	5
Jephte Tanga	Tonbridge Angels	5
Nathan Odokonyero	Salisbury	5
Hisham Kasimu	Chesham United	5

Round 8· checked 20 Sep

ISTHMIAN PREMIER

Anas Igozouln	Leatherhead	6
Callum Jones	Ramsgate	6
Toby Aromolaran	Aveley	5
Kai Corbett	Eastbourne Borough	5
Nahum Melvin-Lambert	Welling United	5

Football Web Pages · 19 Sep

ISTHMIAN SOUTH EAST

Mason Doughty	Broadbridge Heath	6
Jack Evans	Faversham Town	6
Harvey Smith	Sittingbourne	5
Max Walsh	Hastings United	5
Sonny James Walsh	Eastbourne Town	4

Football Web Pages · 19 Sep

ISTHMIAN SOUTH CENTRAL

Jack Arnold	Ashford Town (Middx)	7
Radu Stefanoaica	Hendon	5
Danilo Pereira	Hartley Wintney	4
Callum Marklew	Cobham	4
Luke Pardoe	Bognor Regis Town	3

Football Web Pages · 19 Sep

SCFL PREMIER

Charlie Ball	Eastbourne United	9
James Hull	Eastbourne United	7
Kwesi Ntim	Lingfield	7
Lewis Rustell	Pagham	7
Joshua Wright	Seaford Town	7

FA Full-Time stat leaders · 20 Sep

SCFL DIVISION ONE

Zackary Willett	Infinity	9
Tommy McKenna	Reigate Priory	8
Daniel Kingston	Worthing United	6
Luke Mitchell	Guildford City	6
Tyler Pearson	Hailsham Town	6

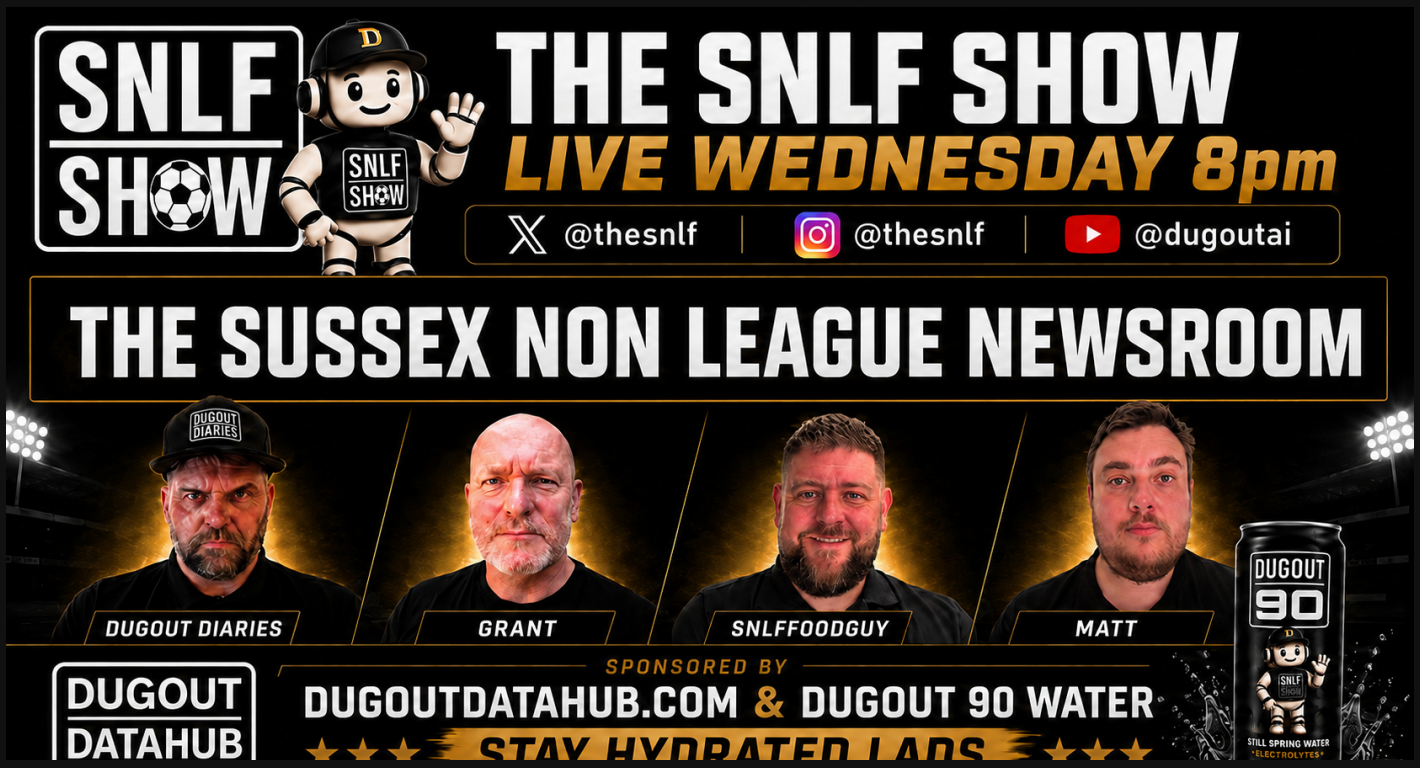
FA Full-Time stat leaders · 20 Sep

SCFL DIVISION TWO

Joshua Irish	Chichester City B	10
Josh Hall	Chichester City B	9
Joshua Castle	Chichester City B	7
Reece Nixon	TD Shipley	7
Jordan Clark	Rustington	6

FA Full-Time stat leaders · 20 Sep

League goals only. SCFL totals rely on clubs entering line-ups on FA Full-Time; Bexhill's Crawley Down game was not yet entered at press-lock. In all competitions, Brett Pitman (Midhurst & Easebourne) has 12. Facts first.



www.thesnlf.co.uk

PODCASTS · ARTICLES · GOALS · MATCH REPORTS

COMPLY, ADHERE, OBEY, CONFORM



RUSS COCHRAN
OFF THE PITCH

But who regulates the regulators? And why isn't the new IFR regulating everyone?

BY RUSS COCHRAN · OFF THE PITCH

The Independent Football Regulator is being presented as an important step towards making English football more sustainable, more financially responsible and better governed. There is little doubt the game has needed a conversation about regulation for some time.

The Football Governance Act 2025 created the regulator, with responsibilities that include financial sustainability, systemic financial resilience and protecting the heritage of football clubs. To achieve this, the IFR will operate a licensing system covering the top five tiers of the men's English pyramid. Clubs will have to demonstrate appropriate financial resources, governance arrangements and fan engagement, while owners and directors will be subject to suitability tests.

But that only covers the professional game. Which raises another question.

What about the rest of the pyramid?

For the vast majority of people involved in football, the game doesn't begin at the Premier League or even the National League. It begins at the local ground. It's the volunteers opening the turnstiles, the person cutting the grass, the committee member doing the accounts, the person running the bar, the administrator completing the paperwork, and the handful of people who spend their evenings trying to keep their club moving forward.

That is where I think the debate about football regulation needs to go further.

WHERE DOES THE FA FIT IN?

We already have the oldest established authority in the game. The Football Association sits at the centre of the English pyramid, responsible for the governance and regulation of the national game, while leagues and competitions operate their own rules and requirements.

So the question isn't whether regulation exists. It clearly does – for the game itself. It is the business side, off the pitch, that can get a little shady, and not only in and around the boardroom.

The question is whether the existing system does enough to head things off before a club reaches the point where something has gone seriously wrong.

There is an important distinction between regulating what happens on the pitch and understanding how a club is being run away from it. A club can comply with every competition rule while still having weaknesses in governance, financial planning, succession, infrastructure, safeguarding, volunteer management or long-term sustainability. That is where a more structured form of scrutiny could have a role, and where early intervention could prevent what we all hate to see.

SHOULD CLUBS BE VETTED ON HOW THEY ARE RUN?

I'm not suggesting every village club needs a corporate regulator sitting over its shoulder. Quite the opposite.

Non-league football survives because ordinary people are prepared to give up their time and take responsibility for their clubs. Any new system would need to recognise that reality – the qualities and contributions given freely in people's own time – and avoid drowning small clubs in bureaucracy.

But there is a difference between regulation and basic governance standards. Clubs moving up the pyramid could be asked to show they have some fundamentals in place: published accounts, verified by an independent body; an AGM; safeguarding; a clear record of who owns the club.

Because when you see a club operating beyond its means, and then the inevitable club statement announcing its impending doom, it is usually the same things we identify on repeat. That face-palm moment. The questions are always the same:

Who is responsible for running it? Does the club have a realistic financial plan? What happens if the

chairman, secretary or treasurer suddenly leaves? Who controls the ground – or are we at the mercy of local politicians? How are volunteers found and supported, and how are those in key positions replaced when they go? Are major financial commitments understood and backed by actual money? Does the club have a plan for maintaining the facilities its level requires, and will it meet ground grading if short-term success arrives?

And perhaps most importantly: is the club being run with some consideration for what happens next season, rather than simply what happens this Saturday?

The IFR model shows how this could work at the higher levels. Clubs within its remit will have to provide strategic business information, financial plans, governance information and details of their owners and senior personnel. Nobody is suggesting an identical system should be bolted on from Step 2 down to county league level. But the principle travels.

THE DANGER OF LEAVING IT UNTIL SOMETHING GOES WRONG

One of the problems with football governance is that intervention becomes much harder once a problem has developed. By then money may have disappeared, debts accumulated, facilities deteriorated, and relationships between supporters, committees, owners and communities broken down. At that point everybody asks the same question: "Why didn't somebody see this coming?"

Prevention is considerably cheaper than rescue. That doesn't mean the FA should look over the shoulder of every club committee or dictate how a club operates. It means there could be greater emphasis on identifying risk.

A club that is financially healthy, properly structured and transparently run should have very little to fear from demonstrating that. Good governance should make running a football club easier, not harder.

THE NON-LEAGUE EFFECT

This matters because instability at one club doesn't stay at one club. If a club collapses, it affects players, staff, volunteers, supporters, suppliers, landlords, local businesses and other clubs – who usually absorb the people involved, because they are football people and players will always find a new outlet.

It distorts competitions too: points earned, players cup-tied, fixture lists disrupted. Covid showed us that with null and void.

And a club spending money it doesn't realistically have can look like an attempt to gain an advantage over a club trying to operate sustainably, ethically and by the book. That creates an uncomfortable situation for clubs doing things properly, and it can unfairly brand those who are simply trying to grow and win promotion. The temptation becomes: "If everyone else is spending, can we afford not to – or, with our finances, can we at all?"

That is where the pyramid becomes vulnerable. Non-league clubs are particularly exposed because their margins are so small. A modest increase in energy costs, pitch maintenance, insurance, travel, staffing or ground-grading requirements can have a significant effect. At the same time clubs are trying to improve facilities, attract supporters, find sponsors and stay competitive. It is a balancing act.

REGULATION SHOULDN'T KILL THE SPIRIT OF NON-LEAGUE

There is a danger here too. If regulation becomes too complicated, expensive or bureaucratic, it could have the opposite effect. The people running a small non-league club aren't accountants, lawyers or professional administrators. They are volunteers. They are supporters. They are people who care enough about their local club to give up their evenings and weekends.

So any additional governance requirements would need to be proportionate. The Act itself says as much: any requirement on a club should be "proportionate to the benefits which are expected to result", and the regulator must recognise "the differences between clubs and competitions". The Government's own factsheet promises that "where clubs are lower risk or already well-run, the IFR will not look to intervene unless necessary".

That principle should be just as important further down the pyramid – while remembering that many people would be put off if their relaxed, unpaid, voluntary role suddenly came with an extensive rule book.

PERHAPS THE FA NEEDS TO LOOK AT THE GAPS

The IFR creates an interesting situation. For the top five tiers there will be a statutory regulator with powers over licensing, financial sustainability, governance, owners and directors, fan engagement and heritage. Below that sits the overwhelming majority of English football – an unfathomable number of people operating local clubs, leagues and county associations.

So perhaps the question shouldn't simply be "Do we need another regulator?" Perhaps it should be "What should the existing football authorities already be doing?"

Could the FA develop a proportionate governance framework for clubs further down the pyramid? Could promotion through the levels involve progressively greater requirements, as ground grading already does? Should clubs be able to seek guidance and support before problems arise, rather than simply being punished after they occur – ask Sheffield Wednesday, whose darkest season ended in administration, a points deduction and relegation? Succession plans, financial contingency plans and clearly defined responsibilities could be written into constitutions. Why not make that the base to start from?

This isn't about taking football away from volunteers. Non-league football doesn't need another layer of people telling clubs how to run their business, particularly if it gets in the way of how you put on your match day. It may be football, but it is your unique way of putting it on at home. Any future regulation needs to reach the people who run those clubs with the right support, in the right way.

There is a huge amount of expertise across the pyramid, but sometimes it isn't reaching the clubs that need it most. If regulation is about protecting football's future, prevention has to be part of the conversation. A new regulator may provide greater oversight at the top, and hopefully that filters down. But English football isn't just the Premier League, the EFL and the National League. It is an entire pyramid of the same community and the same fanbase, vast enough that it almost certainly affects you locally.

So if the health of English football really matters, perhaps we need to ask whether the foundations underneath the headline divisions are getting enough attention. Because by the time a club reaches crisis point, regulation becomes a very expensive exercise in closing the stable door.

Maybe the better question is not who regulates football. Maybe it is who is making sure the clubs at the bottom of the pyramid are strong enough to survive long enough to climb it properly. Sustain – not a stain.

WHERE THE IFR STANDS – SEPTEMBER 2026

The IFR is now considerably further along than a proposal, but it is not yet licensing clubs and won't be until November.

21 July 2025	Football Governance Act 2025 receives Royal Assent; the IFR is created
1 November 2025	The regulator's first statutory powers (information gathering) come into force
12 December 2025	Provisions on incumbent owners and officers, investigations, enforcement and sanctions commence
5 May 2026	Owners' and senior managers' regime goes live for new owners and officers
1 July 2026	Final licensing rules and guidance published after two consultations (Oct 2025, Mar 2026)
2 November 2026	Provisional-licence applications open
26 February 2027	Application window closes
2027/28	Every club in the five regulated divisions must hold a provisional licence

Why has it taken so long? Parliament passed the framework, not a ready-made regulator: an organisation had to be established, staffed, funded and given detailed rules, with powers phased in rather than switched on at once. The licensing system is complicated – a financial plan, a corporate governance statement, fan engagement and an annual declaration, plus owner and senior-manager suitability tests. The IFR consulted twice before finalising the rules. And it has to work across very different clubs: a Premier League club and a National League club have radically different finances, ownership and risks, so the approach is meant to be proportionate rather than one-size-fits-all.

THE UNREGULATED MANY

The IFR's remit is the top five tiers of men's English football only. The regulatory boundary reaches down to the National League and stops. Below it sits everything else.

The Government says the IFR is intended to improve financial soundness and resilience across the regulated game, and the IFR acknowledges the clubs it regulates are part of a wider ecosystem. Its first State of the Game report, due by May 2027, is explicitly looking beyond the immediate regulatory scope, and it says it has already been collecting financial, ownership, governance and fan-engagement

information. It is already assessing owners: Shrewsbury Town's prospective new owners were approved by the IFR this month. Its first enforcement action, against Morecambe, came in the summer.

So here is the question for everyone below Step 1: if Parliament has decided football needs independent regulation at the top of the pyramid, what happens to the clubs immediately below the boundary?

That brings us back to the FA. The question isn't whether every non-league club needs an IFR-style regulator. It is whether the FA and the competitions governing the lower pyramid have strong enough preventative governance and financial safeguards, from Step 2 downwards, before a club reaches crisis point. Look at the numbers.

Premier League to National League (Step 1) – regulated by the IFR	116 clubs · 6%
Steps 2 to 6 (FA allocations, 2026/27)	972 clubs
County-run feeder leagues at Level 11 (the old Step 7)	about 790 clubs
Everything below the boundary	about 1,760 clubs · 94%

The boundary looks very different when you view the whole pyramid. Roughly six per cent of clubs sit above it. Ninety-four per cent sit below it – and they are the clubs that probably need it most. And Level 11 is not some tiny fringe: it is where the pyramid becomes local and county-based, and the FA puts the wider grassroots network at around 18,000 accredited clubs.

If independent regulation is considered necessary for 116 clubs at the top, what governance framework exists for the other 94 per cent?

Next time you see a non-league club issue one of those statements, don't hold your breath. There will be another one tomorrow.

Safe to say we need a physio for all these face-palms.

THE UNREGULATED MANY

116

clubs in the Premier League, EFL and National League – the only clubs the Independent Football Regulator will license. Six per cent of the pyramid.

1,760

clubs, roughly, from Step 2 down to the county feeder leagues at Level 11 – 94 per cent of the pyramid – with no statutory regulator and no owners' test below Step 4.

Views are the author's own. Sources: Football Governance Act 2025; Commencement Regulations 2025/1134, 2025/1286 and 2026/477; Specified Competitions Regulations 2025/1216; IFR licensing pages; gov.uk IFR factsheet; The FA NLS club allocations 2026/27; House of Lords Library; Shrewsbury Town FC statement, 7 September 2026. Checked 20 September 2026.

WHO PROTECTS THE CLUB?



PAUL WISE
TALKING POINT

People are temporary. The football club is not.

BY PAUL WISE · TALKING POINT

> *Written before Connor Hoare's resignation as Midhurst & Easebourne manager on 14 September.*

A couple of weeks ago I wrote an article asking what actually makes someone a football person.

I talked about the people putting the nets up, making the teas, collecting the corner flags, worrying about whether the electricity bill has been paid and standing behind the same barrier in the pissing rain year after year.

Maybe I should have asked another question.

Who protects those people?

Because what's happened at Midhurst & Easebourne recently has got me thinking.

And before I go any further, I'm going to make something very clear.

I don't know exactly what has happened behind closed doors at Midhurst.

I don't know what individual players were promised. I don't know what financial agreements were made or who said what to whom.

There are plenty of rumours flying around, as there always are in non-league football, but I'm not interested in presenting rumours as facts.

What I can talk about is what everyone has watched happen from the outside.

Not that long ago Midhurst were struggling towards the bottom end of the Southern Combination Premier Division.

Connor Hoare came in midway through last season with the immediate job of keeping them at Step 5 before what was described at the time as a big rebuilding project.

And then everything seemed to change.

The ambition changed. The recruitment changed. The whole image of the club changed.

Fast forward a few months and former Football League striker Brett Pitman is playing for Midhurst & Easebourne alongside a number of other experienced players.

That's some transformation at Step 5.

And this is where I have a problem.

WHO CHECKS THE PEOPLE MAKING THE PROMISES?

We always hear about the “fit and proper person” test in professional football.

The actual FA version is called the Owners' and Directors' Test and it applies through the professional game and down into the National League System, including the Isthmian, Northern Premier and Southern Leagues.

But apparently not Step 5.

Why?

Seriously, what magically changes between Step 4 and Step 5?

Why does somebody involved in running a club one step higher need scrutiny that apparently isn't considered necessary one division below?

I'm not suggesting anybody currently or previously involved at Midhurst would fail one. I've got absolutely no evidence to say that. That isn't my point.

My point is why isn't the protection there in the first place?

And maybe a fit and proper person test isn't even enough.

Maybe at this level there needs to be some sort of financial sustainability check when somebody comes into a club and suddenly wants to massively increase its ambition and spending.

Because it's very easy to promise the moon.

It's considerably harder to pay for the rocket.

THE CHANGES WEREN'T JUST ON THE PITCH

There have also been documented changes at the company that manages the club's ground and facilities, Midhurst and Easebourne Sports Community Management Co Ltd.

Public company records show a compulsory strike-off notice in July this year. Accounts were subsequently filed and that strike-off action was discontinued in August.

There were also changes involving directors around the same period.

Now again, before somebody screenshots that paragraph and starts shouting about it on X, I'm not suggesting that proves anything untoward.

It doesn't.

A compulsory strike-off notice can happen for administrative reasons and I have absolutely no evidence that those company filings explain what has happened with the first team.

But they are facts.

And they happened during a period where an awful lot seemed to be changing around the football club.

Which brings me back to the same question.

When a football club changes direction that quickly, who is checking that whatever is being built can actually last?

A PROMISE WORKS BOTH WAYS

Then we get to the players.

I've seen some of the comments on social media from people who have left the club. I'm deliberately not naming anybody because this isn't personal.

And I'll be fair to them.

If you agree to play football for a certain amount of money and somebody doesn't pay you what was agreed, I don't expect you to keep turning up for nothing.

If a promise was made, it should be honoured. Simple.

But here's the bit where I'll probably upset a few people.

A promise works both ways.

If you're going to take to social media and slaughter a football club because it hasn't delivered what you believe you were promised, perhaps you have to ask yourself whether you delivered what was expected of you.

This wasn't a squad put together just to survive. Look at the calibre of player recruited. Look at the experience. Look at the expectations that naturally came with it.

Yet for all that, Midhurst weren't exactly ripping the league apart.

That doesn't mean somebody should accept not being paid. Of course it doesn't.

But if we're going to have a public conversation about people failing to deliver their side of a bargain, I think it's fair that conversation works both ways.

And what I particularly don't like is seeing the club itself getting slaughtered.

Because Midhurst & Easebourne Football Club didn't personally make anyone a promise.

The badge didn't. The supporters didn't. The bloke putting the nets up didn't.

Yet they'll still be there after everyone else has gone.

WE'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE

You don't have to travel very far around Sussex to see what can happen when things go wrong at football clubs.

Look at Southwick. Founded in 1882. A founder member of the Sussex County League. Six-time County League champions.

That's not some football club somebody invented five minutes ago because they fancied having a go at being a chairman. That's generations of Sussex football history.

Yet they lost their historic Old Barn Way home and people associated with Southwick have spent years trying to preserve and rebuild something that existed long before any of the people involved in its problems came along.

Then you've got Montpelier Villa. Almost the complete opposite story.

A club that climbed quickly into senior football before, in 2025, withdrawing its first team, U23s and U18s from the Southern Combination after the club itself identified financial irregularities within its men's section and a significant financial shortfall.

They ended up dropping back into the Mid-Sussex League because continuing at that level could have threatened the wider club.

Southwick and Montpelier Villa couldn't be more different. One absolutely dripping in history. The other

trying to establish itself and climb the pyramid quickly.

Different clubs. Different circumstances. Same lesson.

Football clubs aren't indestructible.

And before anyone gets carried away, I'm absolutely NOT saying Midhurst are about to disappear. I don't know that and there is no evidence for me to suggest it.

What's happened there has simply made me ask a bigger question.

PEOPLE ARE TEMPORARY

Managers come and go. I know that better than most.

Players come and go. Chairmen come and go. Directors come and go. People with money come and go.

However important you think you are while you're there, eventually somebody else will be sitting in your seat.

A player can be at another club next Saturday. A manager can get another job. Somebody putting money into a club can decide tomorrow that they've had enough.

The football club can't.

And neither can the people who've supported it for 20, 30, 40 or 50 years.

That's why I think the FA seriously needs to look at whether the protections higher up the pyramid should exist further down.

I'm not against money in non-league football. Far from it.

If somebody wants to put their own money into a Step 5 club, improve the ground, sign better players and have a proper crack at going up, brilliant. That's ambition. And football needs ambitious people.

But there's a massive difference between ambition and fantasy.

If someone is going to come into a community football club and dramatically change what that club is spending and promising, surely somebody somewhere should be asking whether it's sustainable.

Where's the money coming from? Can these commitments actually be met?

And most importantly…

What happens to the football club if that person suddenly walks away?

Because a football club is worth a lot more than whatever number somebody has written on a spreadsheet.

Which takes me back to my article from a couple of weeks ago.

What is a football person?

It's the volunteer. The supporter. The bloke putting the nets up. The person making the coffees. The treasurer worrying about the electricity bill.

The person still standing behind that barrier in the pissing rain long after the exciting new signing, ambitious manager and bloke with the big chequebook have moved on to something else.

Those people don't want to be promised the moon.

They just want their football club to still be there next Saturday.

So who protects them?

Views are the author's own. Company details: Companies House filing history for company 07955570 (First Gazette notice 14 July 2026; accounts filed 24 August; strike-off discontinued 25 August; director change 25 August). FA Owners' and Directors' Test applies to Steps 1–4 of the National League System. Checked 20 September 2026.

SIX HURTS. THE JOURNEY SHOULDN'T.



MIKE McCAFFREY
DUGOUT DIARIES

Pagham 0–6 Hanworth Villa · Second Qualifying Round · The Covers Arena

PAGHAM	0–6	HANWORTH VILLA

Football can be a right bastard sometimes.

You spend weeks building towards something. You win games you're not supposed to win. You start looking at the FA Cup draw with one eye closed. People around the club start whispering, 'Imagine if...'

And then somebody turns up and sticks six past you.

Pagham 0. Hanworth Villa 6.

There isn't really a clever way of dressing that scoreline up. Pagham were beaten. Properly beaten. Hanworth Villa were ruthless, clinical and, on the day, simply too good.

But if the only thing you take from Pagham's FA Cup run is the number six, then you've completely missed the bloody point.

Because Saturday wasn't really about how the journey ended. It was about the fact Pagham got there in the first place.

Hanworth arrived at the Covers Arena playing two levels above Pagham. Unfortunately, it did not take long for the gap to show. Billy Nutbeam scored after two minutes, Nikolay Zlatev struck twice and Hanworth were out of sight by the break. Haydon Vaughan added two after it.

That's the FA Cup for you. For every afternoon when David finds the stone and twats Goliath between the eyes, there's another when Goliath takes the slingshot off him and beats him around the head with it. Saturday was the latter.

LOOK HOW FAR YOU CAME

Pagham 0–6 Hanworth Villa · Second Qualifying Round · The Covers Arena

And yes, it'll hurt. Players don't walk off after losing six and start congratulating themselves on what a lovely cup run they've had. That's bollocks. They're competitors.

By Sunday morning, somebody needs to remind them what they've actually achieved.

Pagham started this FA Cup journey as a Step 5 football club. No television cameras. No millionaire substitutes. No enormous squad of analysts. Just a Sussex non-league football club having a crack at the greatest domestic cup competition in the world.

And they kept surviving until they found themselves in the Second Qualifying Round, equalling the best FA Cup run in the club's history.

That matters. It matters to the volunteers, the supporters, the people behind the bar, the people selling programmes, the committee, the sponsors and the people putting the ground together on a Saturday morning.

Nobody can delete the rounds that came before it. Nobody can take away the wins, the excitement or the fact this group equalled Pagham's best-ever FA Cup run.

So there'll be no piss-taking from Dugout Diaries about the six. Not this time.

Pagham 0–6 Hanworth Villa. That's the result. But it isn't the story.

Hold your heads up, Lions. You did Pagham proud. You did the SCFL proud. And you gave Sussex another little FA Cup journey to remember.

Verification: Sussex Express FA Cup round-up; Non-League Paper match report; Pagham FC club records (best run: Second Qualifying Round, five previous occasions), checked 20 September 2026.

THE RESULT IS NOT THE STORY.


IN THE DUGOUT
IN THE DUGOUT APP
AVAILABLE NOW ON APP STORE AND GOOGLE PLAY
LIVE SCORES
Real-time score updates
LEAGUE TABLES
Standings, form and stats
PODCASTS
Shows, interviews and analysis
Download on the App Store
9:41
IN THE DUGOUT
LIVE SCORES
VIEW ALL
LIVE 78'
AFC Rovers
2 - 1
Premier Division
United FC
LEAGUE TABLE
VIEW TABLE
POS TEAM P GD PTS
1 AFC Rovers 32 +28 71
2 United FC 32 +18 63
3 City Athletic 32 +15 56
4 Town United 32 +9 52
5 Albion FC 32 +6 49
PODCASTS
VIEW ALL
IN THE DUGOUT PODCAST
Episode 23
The Non-League Journey
FIXTURES
VIEW ALL
SAT 24 MAY
AFC Rovers V United FC
15:00 | Premier Division
Home
Scores
Tables
Podcasts
More
FIXTURES
Upcoming matches and schedules
AND MANY MORE FEATURES
USED BY OVER 2,000 USERS
GET IT ON Google Play
Live scores. League tables. Podcasts. Fixtures. And much more.

IN THE DUGOUT

DUGOUT CASH CUP

BRIGHTON & WORTHING DISTRICT LEAGUE

SEASON FINALE PLAY-OFF

The Top 4 Teams. 3 Games. 1 Winner.
Semi-Finals, Final & a £1,000 Prize!



WINNER
£1,000

RUNNER-UP
£500

FINAL FILMED LIVE & STREAMED ON YOUTUBE!

FAMILY FUNDAY AT SHOREHAM FC!

LIVE MUSIC

KIDS ENTERTAIMENT

AWARDS CEREMONY

FINALS TAKE PLACE
END OF 2026/2027 SEASON

COMING SOON

DATES & FIXTURES TO BE CONFIRMED

CREATED BY
DUGOUT AI LTD

DUGOUT DIARIES

SPONSORED BY
IN THE DUGOUT APP

TMG & ROTTINGDEAN SET THE PACE

NEW TO DUGOUT NEWS · GRASSROOTS COVERAGE FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID UP

Two games in and already the Brighton, Worthing & District Football League is giving us the sort of grassroots football we love – goals everywhere, early front-runners emerging and a Golden Boot race that has started at a ridiculous pace.

TMG First sit top of Division One, level on six points with Rottingdean Village but ahead courtesy of an outrageous +16 goal difference after just two matches. TMG have hit the ground running and their firepower is all over the early scoring charts.

Right at the front is Bradley Hunt, who has five goals from his opening two appearances. But he isn't alone. Rottingdean Village's Carl Leonard also has five from two, meaning the first Golden Boot battle of the season is already nicely poised.

And Hunt isn't the only TMG player filling his boots. Barney Boutwood has four goals from just one appearance, while Jonny Taylor has three from two and Luke Selby has two. Sompting's Dan Deacon has three, all in one game. When you've got that many players contributing goals this early, it isn't difficult to understand where that +16 goal difference has come from.

Rottingdean aren't letting them disappear over the horizon, though. They have also taken maximum points from their opening two matches and sit second with a healthy +5 goal difference. Leonard's five goals have obviously played a huge part, while Adrian Avery has chipped in with two goals and three assists.

Behind the leading pair, Lectern First and Montpelier Villa II both have three points from two matches. Lectern currently hold third place with a +1 goal difference, while Montpelier sit fourth on -2 after a nine-goal thriller at Sompting.

Saturday's results: Lectern 1–3 Rottingdean Village; Sompting 4–5 Montpelier Villa II; TMG 5–0 Diversity United.

It's obviously very early days. Nobody is winning a league in September after two matches, and with such a short opening sample one result can completely reshape the table. But TMG and Rottingdean have already given everyone else something to chase.

Sompting have played only once so far, while Diversity United and Boys Brigade Old Boys are still searching for their first points. That's hardly a crisis in September – but the longer the two sides at the top keep winning, the quicker the pressure builds on everybody underneath them.

At this level there aren't television cameras dissecting every decision or national newspapers analysing expected goals. It's players turning up, clubs run by volunteers, local rivalries and football being played because people genuinely bloody love it.

That's exactly why the Brighton, Worthing & District League is joining Dugout News coverage. We'll follow the table. We'll publish the results. We'll look ahead to the fixtures. We'll track the goalscorers. Because grassroots football doesn't suddenly become important when you reach Step 6. It matters from the bottom of the pyramid upwards.

THE EARLY PICTURE

TMG LEAD ON GOAL DIFFERENCE · HUNT & LEONARD JOINT TOP SCORERS

LEAGUE TABLE

POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	TMG First	2	2	0	0	18	2	+16	**6**
2	Rottingdean Village First	2	2	0	0	8	3	+5	**6**
3	Lectern First	2	1	0	1	4	3	+1	**3**
4	Montpelier Villa II	2	1	0	1	5	7	-2	**3**
5	Sompting First	1	0	0	1	4	5	-1	**0**
6	Diversity United First	2	0	0	2	2	10	-8	**0**
7	Boys Brigade Old Boys First	1	0	0	1	2	13	-11	**0**

GOLDEN BOOT RACE

1	**Bradley Hunt**	TMG First	5
2	**Carl Leonard**	Rottingdean Village First	5
3	**Barney Boutwood**	TMG First	4
4	**Jonny Taylor**	TMG First	3
5	**Dan Deacon**	Sompting First	3
6	**Adrian Avery**	Rottingdean Village First	2
7	**Luke Selby**	TMG First	2

DOUGIE'S NUMBER

+16

TMG's goal difference after only two league matches. Three TMG players are already in the top four of the scoring chart.

SOURCE: THE FA FULL-TIME. TABLE AND PLAYER STATISTICS FROM CURRENT 2026/27 DIVISION 1 VIEWS, READ 20 SEPTEMBER 2026.