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CONGLETON TOWN FC

v WITTON ALBION

15/02/2025 | KICK-OFF 15:00PM
2024/25 SEASON





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UP THE BEARS

BY KEN MEAD
CLUB SECRETARY

A very warm welcome is extended to everyone at the Cleric Stadium today and particularly to the players, officials and supporters of Witton Albion who have made the trip for this afternoon's match in the Pitching In Northern Premier League Division One West.

Looking at Witton's recent results, they seem to go through each month with fairly consistent results. November was not a good month where they played 5 times, drawing once and losing four times. December saw much better times with 4 matches played, winning three and losing once. In January they continued the improvement with 4 matches played and three wins and one draw. February, so far though, has been more challenging with 3 played and 3 defeats. However, those defeats came at home to Newcastle Town (0-3), at home to Widnes (0-1) and away at Hednesford (2-1) and each one of those were against teams in good form. So, it will be expected that they will be looking to quickly arrest that decline here today. They will look to our meeting back in mid-October when they ran out 5-2 winners at Wincham Park.

Looking back at that disappointing 5-2,

2 result, it would have been easy for the Bears faithful to think it was a sign that we could be looking at a battle for points to secure our status for next season. As it turned out, it was the signal for a 15 league match unbeaten run made up of 11 wins and 4 draws that propelled the Bears into the top three. A similar disappointing result (5-1) away at leaders Widnes recently followed, and the hope was the Bears would produce a similar response. It looked good with a dramatic 4-3 home win against Bootle after the Bears led 2-0, courtesy of Dan Needham and Matt Gillam, and then trailed 3-2 before 2 goals in the final 10 minutes from Kieran Knapper and Dan Needham won the match. It was a similar story away at an improving Clitheroe three days later. An early generous penalty award allowed Pete Williams to put the Bears ahead before a dangerous looking Clitheroe forward line saw them lead 2-1 at half time. The Bears

responded with an excellent second half with 2 goals from George Sankey and a Max McCarthy free kick special giving the Bears a 4-2 win to secure the points. We came unstuck away at Avro last Saturday after conceding 2 goals in 2 minutes just before half time to leave the Bears 3-0 down at half time. A strong second half performance produced 2 goals for Ethan Hartshorn but the equaliser was to prove elusive, despite a strong penalty claim for hand ball not being given.



With 12 league games remaining, there is a lot to play for. Widnes have a strong lead at the top of the table but were beaten at home last Saturday by an improving Atherton Collieries. Vauxhall Motors are second but in midweek were held 3-3 at home by Clitheroe who were leading 3-2 until the 9th minute of stoppage time. We lie third with Hednesford and Chasetown in 4th and 5th making up the current play off spots.

Upcoming fixtures: Next Saturday 22nd February ko 3pm, we are at home to Atherton Collieries. Saturday 1st March ko 3pm, we travel to Hednesford Town. We then have 2 successive home games. Saturday 8th March ko 3pm v Wythenshawe and Saturday 15th March ko 3pm v Mossley.



We hope everyone here enjoys the match and importantly, stays safe and has a safe journey home.

Ken

KEN MEAD
CLUB SECRETARY



MATCH OFFICIALS

REFEREE: ABID HUSSEIN
ASSISTANT REFEREES:
JAMIE KILGANNON
ANDREW COTTRELL



Congleton Town FC 24/25 Squad

THE BEARS

GOALKEEPERS:

David Parton
Travis Ziglam
Ayrton Best

DEFENDERS:

Callum Lovatt
Darren Chadwick
Joshua Hall
Joshua Ryder
Marco Fregapane
Owen Morris
Richard Duffy

MIDFIELDERS:

Callum Stringer
Daniel Needham
Dorian Jedrzejczyk
Ethan Hartshorn
George Sankey
Kieran Garner-Knapper
Peter Williams
Thomas Allen
William Arnold

STRIKERS:

Brian Barton
Max McCarthy
Thomas Hampton
Lewis Porter

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HOW IT STARTED...

FORMATION AND GROUNDS

In the 1880's the district of Witton, centrally situated in the mid-Cheshire salt town of Northwich, had several different teams using the name 'Witton' as a prefix. The name Witton Albion itself can be traced back to a match played on October 26th 1887. No record of any matches has been found for 1889 and as such 1890 can be regarded as the year when the current club was actually formed.

Albion's first ground was adjacent to the Parish Church Vicarage. In 1897 they moved to Magdala Place near the Station Bridge. 1910 saw them move, paying the princely sum of £15 per annum, to a new ground adjacent to the Victoria Saw Mills just off Witton Street. July 1920 saw the club buy the ground outright for £750. Renamed appropriately the Central Ground, this was to be their home until 1989, when a Sainsbury's Supermarket was developed on the site. The club then bought a 14 acre site off Chapel Street, Wincham and so their current Wincham Park stadium was constructed. To secure the club's future, much of the surrounding land was later sold off.

The ground and facilities have been most welcome to local clubs Nantwich Town, Runcorn Linnets and Northwich Victoria, whilst awaiting moves into their own new grounds, indeed the latter are now in their second spell with us. We have also seen Football League Division Two Barrow use Wincham Park as their training base

LEAGUES AND HONOURS

Witton Albion, after winning the Crewe FA Junior Cup, encountered their first league opponents in

1894 when part of the Cheshire Junior League. They then had a season in the Crewe & District Junior League, whilst having their Reserve Team replace them and actually win the 1896/97 campaign. From 1897-1901 the team then competed in the Cheshire League before spreading their wings as they joined The Combination where the opposition consisted of the likes of Bangor, Burslem Port Vale, Chester, Tranmere Rovers, Wellington (now Telford) and Wrexham. A move to the Manchester League was made for 1904/05 where they played Altrincham, Macclesfield, Hyde, Buxton and Northwich Victoria on a regular basis. As leagues became stronger and stronger Witton decided to join the Lancashire Combination in 1912 and the decision was rewarded the following season when they carried off the 2nd Division championship. Unfortunately, with the outbreak of World War One, Albion only had one season in the top flight, finishing a respectable 10th.

Following the war Witton Albion became one of the founder members of the Cheshire County League. It was not though until after the Second World War that championship honours were achieved. The following ten years saw them arguably become one of the best non-league sides in the country. They won the league three times with the league and cup double attained in 1953/54. They were also League and Cup runners-up during this period as well as a long spell of consecutive appearances in the Proper Rounds of the F.A. Cup.

Witton were denied founder membership of the Northern Premier League due to the entry qualification relating to the season two prior to the formation and so had to battle on before eventually gaining promotion, when finishing



Cheshire County League runners-up in 1978/79. They almost won the NPL at the first attempt but were pipped by Mossley by just one point. The second season after moving to Wincham Park saw them as runaway champions with a sixteen point margin over Stalybridge Celtic.

Season 1991/92 therefore saw them compete with the cream of the non-league world in the Football Conference. Cheltenham Town, Colchester United, Dagenham & Redbridge, Macclesfield Town, Wycombe Wanderers and Yeovil Town, future Football League clubs, were amongst their opponents in the three year spell as members. The end of the 1993/94 season saw the club relegated, for the first time in their history. With the club's much publicised financial problems the end of the 1996/97 season brought a further relegation to the NPL First Division. Finding eventual stability the club finished comfortably in the top half in the succeeding seasons. In 1999/2000 Witton were only denied promotion on goal difference when they finished level on points with both Accrington Stanley and Burscough, along the way only suffering four defeats!

A 5th place finish in 2003/04 ultimately, under the re-construction of the non-league pyramid, earned Albion a place back in the NPL Premier Division. 2007 saw the tightest ever finish in the NPL's 39 year history with Albion missing automatic promotion by just one goal and then losing to AFC Telford in the play-off final in front of a Wincham Park crowd of 2,281. Albion suffered a similar fate the following season, with the title seemingly won, a tremendous run from Fleetwood dashed hopes of automatic promotion before Witton this time lost at the play-off semi-final stage. After finishing runners-up for two consecutive seasons in the Premier Division, the failure to secure promotion saw a mass exodus of management and players.

Nigel Deeley, previously the popular assistant, was the unanimous choice as the new Manager with the task of rebuilding the playing squad.

After 7 points from an opening 9 the Manager's fortunes changed and after a run of nine consecutive defeats the Board decided to appoint former manager Gary Finley in his place. Finley and assistant Lee Coathup (a member of the Wembley FA Trophy squad in 1992) looked to have steered Albion away from relegation, however only 3 points from the final 8 games saw Witton slump to 3rd from bottom that relegated them to the NPL Division 1 South.

The 2009/10 season saw Witton travel more than 3,000 miles in a mixed league campaign. Ever present in the top half of the table Witton touched the summit and appeared to be putting together a side capable of returning, at the first time of asking, to the Premier Division. Lack of consistency, injuries and a high turnover of players ultimately lead to the club missing out on the play-offs by six points and finishing 7th in the league. Manager Gary Finley departed on the final day of the season.

In May 2010 Witton appointed the experienced Paul Ogden as Manager. With more than 40 years management experience his appointment was part of an overall restructure of the club's football activities by Chairman Mark Harris and the Board. Former fan's favourite Dave MacPherson returned to the club as Assistant Player/Manager, moving up later in the season when Paul Ogden relinquished his role, whilst Brian Pritchard stepped up to the position of Assistant Player/Manager following a record breaking previous season when he increased his number of games for the club to well over the 700 mark! At the end of the 2010/11 season and with Dave MacPherson's departed, Brian Pritchard was appointed Manager with Mike Moseley his Assistant and Nigel Deeley added onto the coaching team. These full members saw their just rewards along with the rest of the "Witton Family" when their charges won both their Play Off semi and final 3-0 to earn their place back in the NPL Premier Division for season 2012/13.

With virtually the same squad the following season saw the team achieve a marvellous 4th position only to be beaten at FC United of Manchester in

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the Play-Off semi-final. 2013/14 however saw a very different scenario as the team skirted around the relegation positions for a good while until early March when a good set of results saw them eventually finish in 16th spot.

On the 2014 August Bank Holiday, Manager Brian Pritchard made the shock announcement that he was leaving the club after a total of 19 years with Witton. A massive decision for him but with his work commitments, together with his personal life to consider, then the club very reluctantly accepted his resignation. Anthony Sheehan stepped up from his role of Player Coach to manage the club and initially results went his way but a disastrous run of defeats saw him leave. Tony Sullivan was brought in from Cammell Laird at the beginning of October charged with ensuring Premier Division status was maintained. It took over four months to finally establish a run of good results and by the end of March the team were finally out of the drop zone. April though brought just a single point from six matches the final one being at Stamford when 2-0 up at half-time against fellow relegation candidate an awful second period consigned the team to the First Division.

Tony Sullivan duly stepped away but the club was able to take advantage of NPL First Division South Norton United's sad demise to recruit their manager Scott Dundas along with almost his total backroom staff and a sizable contingent of players. However just two months into the campaign and following a poor set of results Dundas and his staff were relieved of their duties leaving Paul Ogden to step in once more along with stalwart Terry Murphy, who sadly has now passed away, to take temporary charge of team affairs prior to the appointment of former player Carl Macauley who along with his assistant Gary Martindale were the management team at Conference North Vauxhall Motors until the club's resignation. They thankfully succeeded in steadying the ship and despite the club, once again being forced to change regional divisions set about recruiting their own team, both on and off the field.

Their dedication certainly paid off in 16/17 when, in practically any other scenario picking up nigh on 100 points and scoring 100 goals along the way would secure automatic promotion, the team won their Play-off games against AFC Rushden & Diamonds and Spalding United to regain their place back in the NPL's top flight. The first season back exceeded expectations as it was only in the final month that Albion missed out on a play-off position whilst in 18/19, playing catch-up, the team finished in the top ten. 20/21 saw them well placed, with games in hand, before the season was curtailed but the following season, with so many players being unavailable through injuries and Covid issues, the team struggled to get any sort of run together and ultimately finishing second bottom were relegated.

The management were subsequently relieved of their duties, the whole playing squad, many of whom had been with the club four years or so, sought pastures new and Jon Macken was duly appointed to firstly busy himself constructing a whole new team. Not surprisingly therefore it took a wee while for the squad to settle down and three months in were flirting near the relegation zone. The final 25 league games though saw just 4 losses and the climb up the table ended with them just shy of a play-off spot finishing in 6th place. With virtually the same squad last season was virtually a repeat, just being pipped for a play-off spot on the final day. 2024/25 though sees half the squad departing with new players being asked to step up from mainly North West Counties football. This, coupled with the sacking of the management duo, after a disastrous pre-season, will virtually mean a back to the drawing board approach under the leadership of senior players Ben Harrison & Jim Lawrie. Following a successful interim period in charge, the pair were appointed Manager and Assistant Manager on a full-time basis in October 2024.

F.A. COMPETITIONS

Witton Albion first made it into the Proper Rounds of the F.A. Cup in 1948. Since then they have



figured in the First Round draw a further twelve times. On three occasions further progress to Round Two has been made, 1951, 1953 and 1991. The latter being as a result of Witton defeating Football League opposition for the one and only time – Halifax Town in a replay at the Shay. When Albion met Bolton Wanderers in 1990 it was to be the main BBC TV's Match of the Day. Barry Davies was in attendance and despite atrocious weather and pitch conditions the crowd of 3,784 plus the millions who tuned in saw Witton not be overawed. The soon to be promoted Wanderers, their then manager Phil Neal together with the 800 visiting fans departed much relieved with their 2-1 victory.

In the 2011/12 season's FA Cup Albion won through four rounds, accounting for higher ranked Marine and Altrincham along the way before giving Conference outfit Barrow the fright of their lives in a pulsating encounter in front of a 860 home crowd. The next six seasons though saw the team only register five wins in total although in 2016/17 they defeated higher level team Buxton 3-0 and ran Conference North Salybridge Celtic to a replay. 18/19 season's FA Cup run saw Witton defeat both National League North clubs Spennymoor and FC United of Manchester before succumbing to the then National League highfliers Solihull Borough.

In the F.A. Trophy the three seasons of 1990/91, 91/92, 92/93 truly stand out as Witton became the first team to make three successive semi-final appearances. 1992 culminated in them making it to Wembley Stadium, where they encountered a powerful Colchester United who had already secured promotion back into the Football League. The crowd that day, in excess of 32,000, were joined by a massive T.V. audience when Sky TV relayed the whole of the Final, for the very first time. Witton had defeated Colchester the previous season at Layer Road and so revenge was very much the order of the day. Mike Lutkevitch gave the 5,000 strong following hope with his looping header, after Albion had trailed 0-2, but a late goal won the game for the Essex side.

The 16/17 season saw the team's best performance in a decade that included notching up very impressive wins over higher ranked Kettering Town and Boston United before losing out in very controversial circumstances to National League Chester FC after a replayed First Round tie. 20/21 peculiar circumstances saw Albion get to make Round 2, even though they only won one tie!

The Cheshire County F.A. Senior Cup has been won by Witton eleven times since 1902 and they have been beaten finalists on ten occasions. The 90's decade saw them carry off the trophy in 1995 & 1996 together with three further appearances in the Final. 2004 saw us again contest the Final with World media coverage and exposure following a certain "sending-off" incident. The 2006 Final saw Albion, with several Reserve team players drafted in defeat odds on favourites Salybridge Celtic 2-0. Since then though we have only been able to make it as far as the semi-final stage three times.

FORMER PLAYERS

A number of former Witton Albion players have also appeared in the Football League; Geoff Horsfield (Scunthorpe, Leeds, Leicester, Sheffield Utd, West Bromwich Albion, Wigan, Fulham & Birmingham City), Andy Oakes (Darlington, Swansea, Walsall, Bolton, Derby, Port Vale and Hull), John Doolan (Rochdale, Blackpool, Doncaster, Barnet and Mansfield) and Shaun Whalley (Accrington Stanley, Wrexham, Luton, Shrewsbury). One of non-league's top goalscorers and one time the holder of the most expensive non-league transfer fee, Carl Alford (Macclesfield Town, Kettering Town, Rushden & Diamonds, Stevenage Borough, Doncaster Rovers, Yeovil Town, Nuneaton Borough) also gave his career a massive boost when he moved on from Wincham Park, having played for us in that Wembley F.A. Trophy Final. In 2005/06 Crewe's Nicky Maynard had a seven week spell on loan to us, upon his return he quickly earned a 1st team place and began scoring freely for the Alex before a £2m plus fee took him to Bristol City before signing for



Premiership bound West Ham United. Later he overcame a long term injury before helping to take Cardiff City into the Premiership before joining MK Dons in 2015. Shaun Miller, three seasons ago at Bolton via Wigan Athletic, Sheffield United, Coventry City, Morecambe & Carlisle United, also returned to Crewe following a loan spell early in 2007 and completed the end of that season as a 1st team player and goalscorer. Other Crewe players loaned to Witton have gone on to make first team appearances, namely Luke Offord, Travis Johnson & Regan Griffiths. Our 2011/12 season's "Player of the Season" Alex Titchiner was snapped up by then the new Football League outfit Fleetwood Town during the 2012 summer and spent quite some time on loan at FC Halifax Town helping them secure promotion.

Some previous players, since the mid 1960's, include Chris Nicholl (Aston Villa, Southampton, Northern Ireland), Peter Mellor (Burnley and Fulham - their goalkeeper in the FA Cup Final), Neil Parsley (Huddersfield and West Brom), Peter Henderson (Chester and Gillingham), Mark McCarrick (Birmingham and Tranmere), Phil Power (Crewe and Macclesfield), Dave Carrick (Preston, Port Vale, Wrexham), Mark Leonard (Everton, Stockport, Wigan, Rochdale, Crewe), Grenville Millington (Chester and Wales) and local talented player Mike Whitlow (Leeds, Leicester, Bolton Wanderers and Sheffield United).

Another locally born and bred midfield player, Colin Rose won caps in 1996 when called into the England semi-pro International squad whilst Andy Lee, John Davison and David Constantine retained their places in the England team, after moving to Witton from their previous clubs. In 2007/08 Liam Brownhill was chosen as the only non-league player below the Conference to feature in the England "C" team in their two European Championship matches.



Witton Albion v COL FAC (Photo by Karl Brooks Photography)

In no particular order other familiar names to appear in Albion's colours over the past forty years or so, include Nigel Gleghorn (Ipswich, Man City, Stoke, Birmingham), Kevin Langley (Everton, Wigan), Ray Wallace (Southampton, Leeds Utd.), Ray Ranson (Man. City, Everton, Newcastle), Goalkeeper John Burridge, Arthur Albiston (Man. Utd.), Nicky Reid (Man. City, West Brom.), Tony Henry (Man. City), Neil McNab (Tottenham, Bolton, Man. City), Billy Garton (Man. Utd.), Scott McGarvey (Man. Utd.), Mark Lillis (Aston Villa, Man.City), Brendan Batson (Arsenal, Cambridge, West Brom.), Frank Carrodus (Man. City, Aston Villa), Drew Brand (Everton), Micky Mellon (Tranmere, Blackpool, Burnley, Bristol City) and last season Matt Lowton (Sheffield United, Aston Villa, Burnley & Huddersfield Town) & Tom Pope (Crewe, Port Vale, Rotherham United & Bury). Ken Barnes (Man. City), ex Busby Babe Denis Violett and England and Lancashire fast bowler Ken Higgs plus the star local comedian John Bishop are amongst others that appeared over the years.

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WITTON ALBION FC

SQUAD LIST:

ELLIS ALLEN – Goalkeeper

Born on 16/10/2001 who joined us from Alsager Town in early October. Originally a trainee with Oldham Athletic had spells at Cypriot club APEA Akrotiri, Holywell Town and Whitchurch Alport before joining 1874 Northwich in the summer of 2022. A freak accident, whilst he was on holiday, curtailed his season after just 8 games. Upon recovery he took his match total up to 30 before signing for Glossop in January 2024. Made 20 appearances for the Hillmen before commencing this campaign at Abbey Hey, joining Alsager in mid-September.

JOEL BAILEY – Central Defender

Born in Manchester on 28/9/2005 who has joined us on a season's loan from Altrincham. Progressed through the Robin's Academy, Under 19's and Reserve teams and got to make a first team appearance, in a Cheshire Senior Cup tie, on 10/10/2023.

JAMES BAILLIE – Defensive Midfielder

Born in Warrington on 2/11/95 who'd played eighteen games for Warrington Rylands this season prior to joining us in late November. Has had previous experience at Crewe Alexandra, Nantwich Town, Curzon Ashton, Abbey Hey, Mossley, Warrington Town and Ashton United



JOEL BEMBO-LETA – Central Defender

Born in Kinshasa on 15/2/92, a Congolese U20 International, who signed for us initially at Christmas 2017 thanks to Altrincham allowing him to come to us when we were experiencing severe defensive injuries. A 7 day approach from then Welsh Premier outfit Bangor City saw him leave us, after just 2 games, making 13 appearances and scoring twice for the Citizens. Initially at Oldham Athletic's Academy he then made 151 appearances for Stalybridge Celtic by the end of the 13/14 season. Subsequently at Curzon Ashton, Colwyn Bay, Marine, Buxton, Droylsden & Shaw Lane before signing for Altrincham. From 17/18 he's had spells with Glossop North End, Ramsbottom, Ashton United, Wythenshawe Town and Northwich Victoria before spending the whole of the 22/23 campaign at Abbey Hey (37 apps.). Re-joined the Vics last October making 4 appearances.

ALFIE BLAKELEY – Goalkeeper

Warrington born on 24/10/2007 who plays for the Witton Under 18's and has to date been nominated on our cup-tie benches as cover for our goalkeeper's.

HARRY BRAZEL – Attacking Midfielder

Salford born on 31/7/91 Harry joined us mid-October 2023 after two and a bit seasons with Bury for whom he made 99 appearances and netted 21 goals. 22/23 saw him pick up four trophies at the end of season awards. Season 16/17 saw him not too far away playing 30 times for Winsford United. He was signed by Stockport County in January 2017 and got to appear 7 times for the then National League North outfit until departing in summer 2018. Having had a loan spell previously that year he joined Runcorn Town permanently knocking in 16 goals in his 39 games. Played 3 times for Leek Town before signing for Widnes in February 2019. After 23 appearances he was released as part of cost cutting measures. February 2020 thus saw him at Welsh Premier side Cefn Druids, for whom he made 20 appearances before signing for the Shakers for the 21/22 campaign. In his first season with us scored 8 times in his 28 appearances.

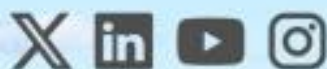
BEN CRANE – Forward

Born in Crewe 9/7/2006 who has joined after playing the final 3 months of last season on the books of Cheadle Heath Nomads. Prior to that he was with Cheshire League outfit Malpas. Currently on dual registration with Northwich Victoria.

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OWEN CUSHION – Central Midfielder

Liverpool born on 5/1/2005 who progressed through the Youth ranks at Wrexham getting to make a first team appearance in December 2023. Spent the latter end of last season on loan to Colwyn Bay making 10 appearances (5 starts) for the then Welsh Premier outfit. Signed for Prescott Cables in August and got to make 4 appearances off the bench before joining Albion at the end of that month. Currently on dual registration with Burscough.

VANI Da SILVA – Forward

Born in Portugal 30/3/2003 who has re-joined us having made 8 appearances (4 starts, 1 goal) at the beginning of the 2022/23 season when on loan from Oldham Athletic. With Bury originally before making 9 first team appearances for the Latics (1 start) and also appeared 3 times, off the bench, at both Curzon Ashton and FC United of Manchester in other loan spells. Last season saw him initially at Avro before joining Abbey Hey for whom he made 27 appearances (11 starts, 7 goals).

MAMADOU DJABI – Forward

Born in Sierra Leone 1/12/97 who signed in late September from Northwich Victoria. Commenced his career in 2014 with Fleetwood Town scoring a good few times in their Youth setup. Had loan spells at Lancaster City and Colne in 2018. Signed for Colne in 2019 making 25 appearances. Joined St Helens Town in Dec 2021 and Runcorn Town two years later. After 13 appearances, 2 goals both on his debut, joined the Vics in August 2024 and in his 7 matches (4 starts) scored 4 times.

LOUIE FALLON – Goalkeeper

Born 6/12/06 in Stockport who joined us on dual registration from Conference League Altrincham in late November when Ellis Allen sustained an injury.

ELI FISHER – Forward

Manchester born on 23/4/2006 who has joined after being released by Port Vale. An U18's regular with a handful of Staffordshire Senior Cup ties, scoring several times. Had a 3 month spell with Midland Football League Northwich Victoria at the end of last season making 12 appearances (4 starts, 3 goals). In an Albion pre-season game notched a 12 minute hat-trick! Is dual registered with Glossop North End for whom he netted in each of his first 3 matches.



TOM GAMBLE – Defender

Lichfield born on 18/7/2002, who has joined us having been studying at Lancaster University the past few years. On the youth books at both Derby County and West Bromwich Albion he signed for Kendal Town in October 2022 making 18 appearances for the NWCFL "Mintcakes". Currently on dual registration with Northwich Victoria.

OWEN GERMAN – Central Midfielder

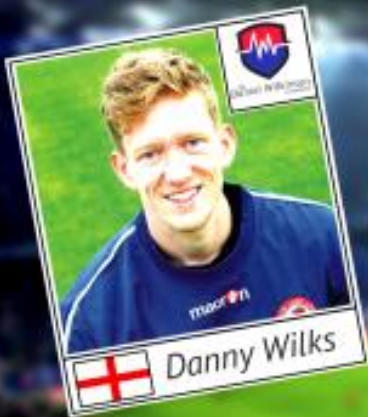
Born in Crewe on 18/3/2005 who has joined us on loan from Altrincham. A product of their Academy setup and part of the first team pre-season squad Owen has, over the past two seasons, had loan spells with both Irlam Town & Wythenshawe Town making 10 appearances for both NWCL outfits.

ISAAC GRAHAM – Central Midfielder

Born 11/8/99 in Trafford who joined us in mid-October from Newcastle Town, for whom he made 37 appearances after joining them mid-September 2023 after 4 matches for Wythenshawe Amateurs. On the books of both Altrincham & Curzon Ashton he had his first spell with Cheadle Heath Nomads in 18/19. At Padiham before Trafford signed him from Fulwood Amateurs at the start of the 21/22 season. An odd game for Longridge Town was followed by 7 appearances at West Didsbury finishing the season with a couple of games for 1874 Northwich. After appearing 8 times for Northwich Victoria at the beginning of the 22/23 campaign he returned to Cheadle Heath Nomads racking up his total appearances for the NWCL outfit to 48 netting 7 goals.

MAX HARROP – Attacking Midfielder

Born 30/6/93 in Oldham who was signed from Avro at the end of 2024 for whom he made 24 appearances netting twice in his two spells there having completed last season at Bury FC (6apps,2goals). Commenced his football at Liverpool Academy before signing for Bury, making his first teams debut on 26/3/2011. Got to make 10 substitute appearances for the Shakers in the next two years, also going on loan to Blyth Spartans in December 2011 (5apps,1goal), Hinckley United in December 2012 (12 apps) & Tamworth in March 2013. Upon his release made 66 appearances, 53 starts and scored 7 times for Nantwich Town before finishing the 14/15 season at Ashton United. Commenced 15/16 at Ramsbottom United returning briefly to Nantwich. 2017 saw him with Altrincham where he helped the Robins to promotion in his three seasons there, 107 matches, 63 starts and 12 goals. 2020-22 saw him with Curzon Ashton prior to a 2nd spell at Ashton. Commenced last season with Stalybridge Celtic (18 apps,4goals) moving to Avro in the December.



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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!

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- SCD is the leading cause of death in young athletes during sport and the majority of deaths occur with **NO SYMPTOMS** or family history.
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- 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

 thedanielwilkinsonfoundation

 dwfoundation5

 contact@thedanielwilkinsonfoundation.org

 thedanielwilkinsonfoundation.org

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



NICK HEPPLER – Centre Forward

Born in Blackburn 24/2/92 who joined us at Christmas after playing 3 times with Mossley. Scored against us for Wythenshawe Town whom he joined from AFC Blackpool in early September and made 16 appearances scoring 4 times. He'd signed for AFC Blackpool in October 2023 and netted 23 times for them in only 24 appearances. Prior to then he had a couple of games for Padiham, scoring once and was on Kendal Town's books twice. Earlier in his career he was at AFC Darwen scoring 31 goals in his 60 appearances. Nick, playing in the West Lancashire League, was also a scoring sensation for Poulton. Spent some time in the British Army where he won the 'Army Cup' and the 'Super Cup' in back-to-back seasons, something which had never been done before – he also scored hat-tricks in all four finals!

OLLIE HITCHCOX – Central Defender

Born 28/10/2003 in Chester who joined us at the beginning of the 22/23 season following his release from Wrexham AFC where for the previous two seasons he has featured in both their Youth & Reserve team set-ups. Had a really impressive first season here making 38 starts in his 42 appearances and scoring the season's opening goal at Newcastle Town. Last season he took his appearances total up to 78 whilst knocking in another couple of goals.

JAMES HOOPER – Forward

Born 10/2/97 in Manchester, joined us initially on a dual registration agreement from Altrincham in early March 2020. A similar arrangement had earlier seen him net 3 times in his 3 appearances for West Didsbury & Chorlton. Made 1st team Football League appearances whilst with Rochdale & Carlisle and scored on his Albion debut. In the 3 games he was able to play before the season was brought to an end he netted twice. Signed fully Jamie made 17 appearances, 7 from the bench, scoring three more times before being released in September 2021. Joined Atherton Collieries and on dual registration back at Didsbury he scored twice for both clubs before joining Workington for the 22/23 campaign, again netted twice prior to his first spell at Runcorn scoring 3 times before a further spell for the West Didsbury outfit. Beginning of 2023 saw him in Australia at Moreland City for whom in his 19 matches he score 3 times. Returning to these shores in the October he re-joined Runcorn Linnets and in his 25 appearances (15 starts) was on the score-sheet 4 times before re-signing for the Albion in early September.



KYLE KING – Midfielder

Born in Wigan 17/3/2005 who has joined us after playing seven times for then NPL Premier outfit Atherton Collieries, the last two months of the 23/24 campaign. A versatile midfielder who previously had been with Fleetwood Town since Under-13s level. Progressing through the Cod Army Academy & Under 18's and is still currently a staff member, being one of their Performance Analysts. Son of former Albion player Jamie Harrison Kyle had a 6 match loan spell with Barnoldswick Town in April 2023. Unfortunately hi season has been curtailed following an ACL injury versus Wythenshawe Town in December.

MIKE KORAL – Defensive Wing-back

Born in Manchester on 6/10/92 Mike initially joined us as a striker for the 2014/15 season, when he made a two-step jump up from playing North West Counties football. Mike was part of the Crewe Alexandra Academy set-up and in February 2012 went on loan to Congleton Town where he scored 8 goals in his 9 appearances. He signed permanently for them the following season and in his two seasons made a further 104 appearances scoring 33 times. Unfortunately, a broken toe curtailed his start to his Albion career and after making just 6 starts in his 15 appearances (2 goals) he left to join Runcorn Town in January 2015. The 16/17 campaign saw him back at Congleton Town (42 appearances, 6 goals). The next season Winsford United gained his services and by the time he left in mid-September 2018 he'd made 44 appearances, 11 goals. 1874 Northwich was his next club for whom he made 64 appearances, 9 goals before joining Nantwich Town (11 appearances) in mid-September 2020. Mike then returned to 1874 Northwich for the 21/22 season and made 40 appearances, 4 goals prior to rejoining us. Come the end of last season he'd racked up 101 appearances getting on the score-sheet 8 times.

EWAN McGEADY – Full Back

Born in Crewe 1/10/2004 who has joined us after several years with Altrincham. Progressed through the Robin's Academy getting to make a first team appearance on 31/1/2023. Spent time on loan, to Alsager, during 2022/23 making 14 appearances as well as completing last season, loaned to 1874 Northwich, for whom he played 9 times (8 starts) for.

Currently on dual registration with Winsford United.



ANDYSMANCLUB



#ITSOKAYTOTALK

WHAT IS ANDYSMANCLUB?

ANDYSMANCLUB is a free peer-to-peer group that provides a place for men to come together in a safe and open environment to talk about the issues or problems that they have faced or are currently facing.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The process is about bringing men together who have been in similar situations, to help each other on a peer to peer basis, sharing how they have dealt with various situations through lived experiences. No matter how big or small your problem feels, we are here to support each other. The 5 questions that are asked each week are designed not only to encourage men to talk, but to start to focus on the positives and on strategies to keep moving forward. There is no pressure to answer any of the questions and it is not uncommon for men to just listen for the first few sessions.

The clubs all run on the same format and adhere to the same guidelines. A key principle of ANDYSMANCLUB is anything that is said in the club, stays within the club.

WHO IS IT FOR?

The club is open to any man 18 or over, who is going through a storm, been through a storm or just wants to meet a good group of people with the aim of improving one another.

WHEN IS IT?

ANDYSMANCLUBs meet every Monday at 7pm (excluding Bank Holiday Mondays).


WHERE IS IT?


ANDYSMANCLUB has over 100 locations across the UK. Check our website below for a full list.


HOW DO I JOIN?


Just turn up on the night. No registration or referral is required, all we ask is that you arrive before 7pm. The full list of our locations available on our website.

CONTACT US

 @andysmanclub

 @andysmanclubuk

 info@andysmanclub.co.uk

 @andysmanclubuk

 andysmanclub.co.uk

 andysmanclub



JAY SALKELD – Attacking Midfielder

Born in Liverpool 24/3/2001 Jay has joined us from North West Counties side Lower Breck for whom he made 30 appearances, netting six times after joining them in November 2023. Commenced his career as a Youth Team player with Tranmere Rovers before playing at Ashton Town and AFC Liverpool. Then had his first spell with City of Liverpool in Autumn 2021 before making 22 appearance, 5 goals for Burscough. There then followed 14 appearances at both Skelmersdale & Widnes before a 15 match spell with Runcorn Town at the beginning of 2023. Commenced last season back at City of Liverpool prior to an 8 game stint, 2 goals with FC St Helens. Currently on dual registration with Burscough.

DAMOLA SOTONA – Attacking Wing-back

Born 25/11/2000 in Nigeria who was signed from Trafford FC in mid-December. Made 52 appearances for them netting 5 times since he joined in late October 2023. Played for Altrincham Reserves in 2019 and had a 29 match spell with our ground sharers at the time, Northwich Victoria, in 22/23. From then he was briefly with Ramsbottom, Bury & Squires Gate at the start of last season.

ADAM WATSON – Forward

Stoke-on-Trent born on 22/2/06, a Stoke City Under-21s striker who's joined us in early December on a one-month work experience deal. Represents New Zealand at Youth level and spent a period on loan with Hanley Town earlier this season (1 start in his 10 appearances), a club against whom he made his Albion debut. It's his third spell gaining senior experience following a temporary switch to Hanley Town in February when he netted 3 times in his 12 appearances (8 starts).

HARRY WOODS – Midfielder

Born 21/1/2008 in Torquay who has progressed through the Albion Academy and signed following impressing in our Under 18's team. The son of ex professional Steve and grandson of Tony who played a couple of time for us in 1966 but more familiar known as Barnton's manager for many years.



MANAGERIAL STAFF

BEN HARRISON

Appointed full-time in October 2024 following a successful interim spell as caretaker manager. Warrington born on 29/10/90 who had three playing spells with Witton clocking up 306 appearances scoring 18 goals. Commenced his football with local sides Barnton, Lostock Gralam and Mid-Cheshire College. Three spells at Nantwich making 169 appearances and 54 matches for Altrincham along with briefly at AFC Telford, Trafford and Winsford United are also on his football cv.

JAMES LAWRIE

Assistant to Ben Harrison and also an attacking midfielder born in Dundonald, County Down on 18/12/1990 but brought up in Middlewich, who initially joined us in October 2021 from Nantwich Town. Came through the youth ranks at Port Vale to make 8 starts in his 30 appearances scoring twice, loaned to Kidderminster (3+7-1) before signing for AFC Telford United (25-4) for the 2010-11 campaign. Following an initial loan Jimmy signed permanently for Altrincham (2011-17) and made 231+43 appearances scoring 51 times for the Robins. Signed for Hednesford Town (37+10-7) for the 17/18 season before joining Nantwich Town for whom he'd made 101 appearances netting 16 times. James as well as making 23 Under 17-21 Youth International appearances, scoring 8 goals, earned himself 3 full Northern Ireland international caps in 09/10. Made 28 appearances, 3 goals before opting to join Hanley Town in August 2022 but after 26 appearances, 5 goals re-signed in early January 2023 and took his Albion appearances up to 82 and goals tally to 7 by the end of last season.

MIKE ALCOCK

First Team Scout and Currently involved assisting Ben Harrison. Did play for Albion 40 years ago but better known locally in his associations with Barnton, Middlewich, Lostock, Winsford & Rudheath football clubs, some of whom he has Managed and Assistant Managed over the past years.

CHRIS APPLETON

Goalkeeping coach who moved to us from neighbours 1874 Northwich last season. Chris also manages the Albion's Under 18's Academy Team. Amongst his other sports coaching roles Chris is also involved with the fitness regime at Northwich Cricket Club.

PAUL HOUGHTON

Title of Kit Manager but does far more than that and having come from Norton United, with a previous managerial team at the beginning of the 2015-16 season, remained loyal to us and has proved himself truly invaluable throughout the club. Known affectionately as "Square"

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CLUB INFORMATION

CLUB OFFICIALS:

CHAIRMAN: Charles Porter
 SENIOR FOOTBALL: Chris Rowley
 SECRETARY: Ken Mead
 MEDIA: Adam Gosling

FIRST TEAM:

MANAGER: Richard Duffy
 ASST MANAGER: Louis Dodd /
 Oliver Simpson
 CLUB PHYSIO: Abi Blythe

RESERVE TEAM:

MANAGER: Martin Cornes

UNDER 18'S:

MANAGER: Paul Heler

GRANDSMAN: Paul Minshull
 CLUBHOUSE: Rebecca Young
 PHOTOGRAPHER: Elliot Treanor
 KIT PROVIDER: Fused Sport

CLUB CHARITABLE PARTNER:

Mind Body & Sole (Mental Health)



WEBSITE: www.ctfc.club
 CLUB SHOP: shop@ctfc.club
 TWITTER/X: @CongletonFC
 INSTAGRAM: @CongletonFC
 FACEBOOK: @CongletonFC
 EMAIL: admin@ctfc.club



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THE BEARS



Ever thought of volunteering to help your local football club?

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