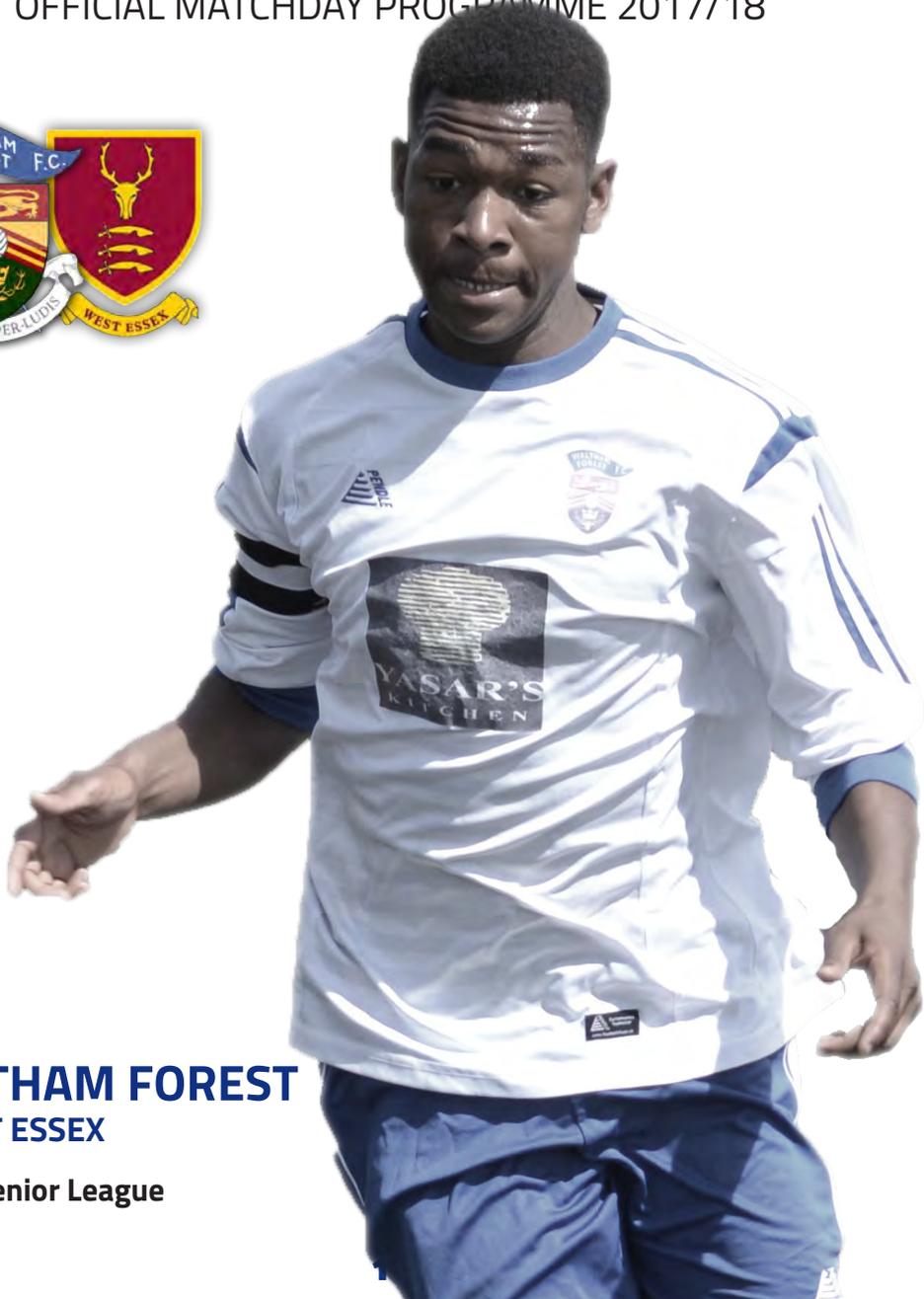


FOREST

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME 2017/18



WALTHAM FOREST
V WEST ESSEX

Essex Senior League

12.8.17



Waltham Forest Football Club

Match Day Centres, Wadham Lodge, Kitchener Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4JP

Chairman: Turgut Esendagli

Vice Chairman: Steve Howe

Company Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer & Hospitality Manager: Vacant

Secretary: Andy Perkins

Communications Manager: Andrzej Perkins (andrzej@walthamforest-fc.co.uk)

Club Historian: David Chapman

Directors: Tony Brazier, June Brazier, Mustapha Cetinkaya, Turgut Esendagli, Kemal Soper

Life Members: A. Brazier M.B.E., J. Brazier, D. Chapman, D. Crabb, C.E. Gross, K.J. Harris, S. Howe, G. Larkbey, A McLean, A. P. Perkins, D. Salmon, C. Ward, D.E. Ward

Club Honours

Waltham Forest F.C. and Leyton Pennant F.C.

1995 – Present

Essex Senior Cup Winners: 2005/6

Essex Senior Trophy Winners: 1995/6

Eastern Frootlit Cup Winners: 1997/8, 1998/9

Essex & Herts Champion's Cup Winners: 1996/7

Essex & Herts Border Comb Cup Winners: 1996/7

London Intermediate Cup Runners-Up: 1996/7

London Challenge Cup Runners-Up: 1995/6, 1996/7

Suburban League Division Winners: 2005/6

Essex County FA Website of the Year: 2012

Youth Teams

EJA Under 18s Trophy Winners: 2003/4

EJA Under 15s Trophy Runners-Up: 2014/5

Conference Youth League: Winners: 2005/6

Pelly Cup Runners-Up: 2005/6

Pennant F.C. and Walthamstow Pennant F.C.

1965 – 1995

London Senior Cup Runners-Up: 1990/1

London Junior Cup Winners: 1974/5

SW League Junior Cup Winners: 1968/9

SW League Intermediate Cup Winners: 1969/70

SW League Senior Cup Winners: 1970/71

SW League Premier League Winners: 1972/3

London Metropolitan League Winners: 1974/5

London Metropolitan League Runners-Up: 1978/9,
1979/80, 1981/2

London Metropolitan League Intermediate Cup

Runners-Up: 1977/8, 1978/9

Spartan Reserve League Winners: 1980/1, 1990/1

Spartan Reserve League Runners-Up: 1987/8

Spartan Reserve League Cup Winners: 1980/1,

1988/9, 1990/1

THE EDITOR

ANDRZEJ PERKINS



Good evening everyone, welcome to Wadham Lodge for our first home game of the season. We take on our neighbours West Essex, and extend a warm welcome to their players, supporters and officials.

This was, of course, due to be our second home game of the season, but Wednesday's FA Cup replay against FC Romania was unsurprisingly postponed because of a waterlogged pitch. At the time of writing no new date has been confirmed, so please check the club's website and social media channels for the latest news.

Today's opponents West Essex have made a fantastic start, and 'second season syndrome' couldn't be further from their thoughts. After finishing a credible 13th last season (just one point behind Forest), they've beaten Sawbridgeworth Town twice (3-1 in the League and 3-0 in the cup), as well as drawing 2-2 with Sporting Bengal United. This unbeaten start means they currently sit 3rd in the table, behind Takeley and FC Romania - the only teams with

two wins from two games so far.

We played West Essex three times in their debut season at step 5, and came out victorious in all three - 1-0 and 3-0 in the League, and 4-1 in the Essex Senior Cup. I'm sure today's encounter will be a much tighter affair.

In player news, we've lost the services of Nana Boakye-Yiadom and Muhammadu Faal to Dulwich Hamlet in the Isthmian Premier - we wish them all the best. This hopefully shows players that if they assert themselves at ESL level, the big moves they desire could be just over the horizon.

A reminder that you can sign up to receive free digital copies of our programme; email andrzej@walthamforest-fc.co.uk to get on the fast-growing mailing list.

Enjoy the game,

Andrzej

THE TREE SURGEON

CHARLIE WARD

I was shocked at the postponement on Wednesday, mainly because, it did rain in the West Midlands, but, nowhere near enough to cause a postponement.

Yet another game to crowd into an already hectic fixture programme - the fixtures seem bizarre to me - why have we started so early?

It must be because next season is a World Cup year and the ESL must think that Gareth Southgate has a list of player from Essex Senior League clubs waiting to make his squad, so they like to give players a maximum time to prepare.

Already we have lost some players to Isthmian clubs, but, I know that Qayum has, what seems like an inexhaustible supply of new players.

We seem fated to have a list as long as your arm of players signed on already - this seems to happen year after year, but, the difference this season is that the players we are recruiting seem to be a much better standard than previously (apart from the team that started last season) and at least those coming in are as good a match as those leaving.

It is a sad fact of life that until we are able pay a reasonable standard of wages/expenses (delete where applicable), we will be prisoner to players leaving for clubs who can offer more and also for players unable to get to matches because they have to work.

But, we have to hope that the players recruited this season are good enough, whilst they are with us, to set us up for a good season. If they have any sense they will listen carefully to the manager and coach, because they do have decent ideas on how to help these players make the most of their careers.

Tonight's opponents have started the season

with a win and a draw and are currently third in the table, so we know it will not be an easy first appearance at the Lodge, for us.

Their debut season last season was a mixed affair - they began very well and were well to the fore until late September and then went on a spiral of defeats and seemed, for a while, to be in freefall, but, steadied the ship and finished a creditable thirteenth place in the table - they will obviously be looking to do better than that this term.

We have to hope that players will be available for the next few weeks, as after today, we have five of our next six fixtures away from home, including an FA Vase match and also it could include a long trip to Suffolk against Long Melford in the FA Cup, if we get past FC Romania.

The only scheduled home game (apart from the re-arranged FA Cup game) is against fellow tenants, Wadham Lodge and I mention the match to bring up an interesting fact about former manager Tony Ilevoli.

Of course he was manager at Wadham Lodge, before leaving half way through last season and in the summer took over the newly named Woodford Town 2017 FC (formerly Greenhouses London & Sports/Haringey & Waltham Development).

His second game in charge was a trip to the Lodge to take on his former club and he left with three points in his pocket after a comprehensive 5-2 win - he would not have been human if he did not also have a massively wide grin on his face.

Enough of going off on a tangent - today we must hope that we will walk away with massive grins on our faces with our first win of the season.

Wednesday's postponement was a disappointment; we were really looking forward to taking on FC Romania at our place.

I had intended to make a couple of changes to the line-up in that game, now I will have to decide if I still with that starting line-up against West Essex today.

I am finding things slightly frustrating at present as I am aware that some of the lads who I want as regular players will be tempted by offers from other clubs and quite rightly, want to move up the non-league ladder.

Both the two strikers who started for us at Hullbridge, Nana Boake-Yiadom and Muhammadu Faal, have joined Isthmian Premier side Dulwich Hamlet and whilst the move for them is a good one, obviously it is never easy replacing players of that quality. The door is always open for them however, and I will still maintain regular contact with both these players, and of course wish them the best for the upcoming season.

Fortunately, I have several other good strikers on the books who can still give us a goal threat and was very impressed by the debut of Abiola.

I am able, with the assistance of coach, Anton Smith, and Chairman Turgut able to gain access to many young talented players who seem interested in coming to our club.

I just hope that they will take my advice/guidance for the best way forward to achieve their aim of playing full time professional football.

I know this squad has the ability to play excellent football, but, they

must all work together for the good of the team - if I tell players to do specific jobs, it is not on a whim, it is for the best results (literally), for the team and players have to trust my judgement.

The cancellation of the FA Cup replay foiled my chance to look at a new centre back combination that I hope will be a perfect fit and today will be tested by high flyers, West Essex, who have started the season extremely well.

I am not trying to be arrogant when I say that I am more concerned on what team we put out than the relative strengths of the opposition.

This League is notoriously inconsistent, that has been reflected in the opening two games played so far.

So I prefer to concentrate on how I want my team to play and getting the right players to fit the formation I select and then to carry out the team plan as well as they can

There were signs against FC Romania last Saturday that things were starting to come together, I just hope that we can get our first three points today with an improved performance from Saturday.

As long as the team seem to be moving forward then I will be happy and I am positive the decent results will follow.



PIRATE PROGRAMMES

DAVID CHAPMAN

Today you have two programmes for the price of one. One is the official Wembley programme for the FA Amateur Cup Final played at Wembley in 1952.

The other is a pirated version. Can you tell which is which? I remember in the late fifties going to White Hart Lane and walking from Northumberland Station and they had pirate programme sellers standing near the station waiting to catch unsuspecting supporters.

I suspect the same scam applied to Wembley Stadium. The official programme was priced at one shilling, the pirate has no price shown at all.

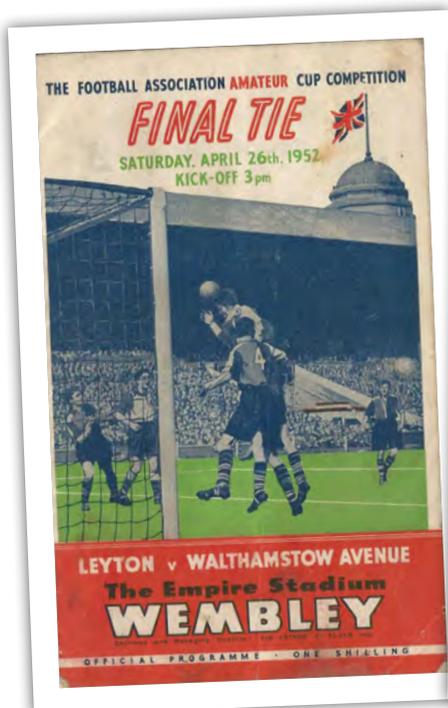
The interesting thing is that the pirate programme has Dennis Hall in for the injured

Ron Horsley, so must have been printed just before kick-off. It was Dennis Hall who scored Avenue's late winning goal late into extra time, also becoming the only Australian to do so.

It was Leyton's 13th match in the Amateur Cup that season having fought through from the extra preliminary round against – Wembley!

The final was played in front of 98,000 spectators, just 2,000 short of the record achieved the previous year. Compare this with last seasons FA Trophy Final which attracted just over 38,000.

Will we ever see those figures again?



STUFF WHAT WE LIKED THIS WEEK

THEM TONS GET AROUND

"I spotted a Clapton Ultras sticker on a nearby lamppost. As a Hereford fan, the last couple of years have seen me become far more familiar with the lower reaches of the non-league pyramid than I ever expected (or, indeed, wanted). Still, I am reasonably sure that Clapton have not played in Bristol any time recently, if ever. It seems that these stickers get everywhere."

An extract from a letter in the latest issue of When Saturday Comes magazine from Shane Roberts in Bristol



WHEN YOU SEE IT...

Kingstonian manager Craig Edwards was a surprise addition to Letherhead's 2017-18 team photo, lurking in the shadows.



ROY HODGSON'S COAT



WHEN?!

Some people were less than impressed about a few hours delay in confirming when our FA Cup replay would be played:

"How did this manage to happen?"

@RobManaley

Still confused! Haha.

@OilyWard2

Surely the team I support shouldn't be punished for poor administration / communication by others

@TheCastlemen

FAMILY ADDITIONS

Leyton's Signature Brewery added two new cans to their offering. Find out more at their open day on the 26th of August (after you've come to our game against Wadham Lodge, of course). @SignatureBrew



THERE'S NO BANTER LIKE MLS BANTER

No idea. Link: inbedwithmaradona.com



THE MOST DEDICATED HOPPER IN TOWN?

Tony Incenzo will be known to some as the voice of TalkSport. But in the non-league community, he's an oracle of football groundhopping, and has knocked up over 2,000 visits to date. Here, Tony tells us his story.

IN THE BEGINNING

I've been watching Non-League football on a regular basis since I was 10 years old. What I like most is that the players, club officials and supporters are there for the love of the game. The true spirit of football exists at Non-League level.

I grew up in North-West London and I was taken by my family to see my local club QPR as a child in the 1970's.

I've always supported the R's, but when they were playing away

from home I started going to see my local Non-League clubs – Hendon primarily, but also Finchley, Barnet and Edgware Town.

GROUNDHOPPER

From there, I decided to visit every Non-League club in London as my groundhopping bug began. By the time I was 17, I had visited all 92 Football League grounds and I visited all the Scottish League grounds whilst still a teenager.

I take notes from every game I go to and get an official from each ground to sign it. In 2004, I was actually part of a ground-hopping trip that set a Guinness World Record by going to five games at five grounds in a day.

of a world record in March 2004. I joined 250 other



Since then, I've continued travelling all around the country to visit Non-League clubs. Last season, I chalked up my 2,000th ground at FC United of Manchester.

WORLD RECORD

One of the best groundhops was being part

groundhoppers to watch five matches at five different football grounds in one day in the Central Midlands League.

This is listed in the Guinness Book of Records and we received certificates confirming the world record at the end of the fifth game.

INSIDE PRISON!

In December 2011, I set about watching a match inside Feltham Prison in Middlesex.



This featured a team called Phoenix FC, who had to play all their fixtures at home (for obvious reasons!) as inmates of the Young Offender Institution at Feltham.

I received special permission by email to attend a fixture, but I was told not to bring a phone or a camera with me. I was instructed to arrive in the main car park along with the match referee and the visiting players from Hanworth Villa Vets.

We were met by members of the prison staff who escorted us all in together...via an airport-style metal detector, a body search, numerous locked gates and along a path to the changing rooms.

This process took 45 minutes. After the players and ref got changed, we were then accompanied through more locked gates out to the playing area.

A high mesh fence with barbed wire on top surrounded the football pitch. There were

dug-outs along one touchline and I watched the match from there as the only spectator.

THE FUTURE

I have now been to 2,150 football grounds and have completed visits to all the grounds in the top 16 divisions of English football down to Non-League step 4. Then at Step 5 I need 26 grounds and another 67 at Step 6.

There are endless possibilities at step 7 and below, where I've already visited many grounds. Also, I've been to 35 European countries plus the USA for football – so it would be nice to visit more countries.

Follow Tony Incenzo on Twitter: @TonyIncenzo

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE

Latest Essex Senior League Table (12-8-17)

		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Takeley	2	2	0	0	5	6
2	FC Romania	2	2	0	0	5	6
3	West Essex	2	1	1	0	2	4
4	Hackney Wick	2	1	1	0	2	4
5	Redbridge	2	1	1	0	1	4
6	Ilford	2	1	0	1	2	3
7	Basildon United	1	1	0	0	2	3
8	Clapton	2	1	0	1	1	3
9	Great Wakering Rovers	2	1	0	1	1	3
10	Barkingside	1	1	0	0	1	3
11	Southend Manor	1	1	0	0	1	3
12	Stansted	2	1	0	1	-1	3
13	Woodford Town (2017)	2	1	0	1	-2	3
14	Hullbridge Sports	2	0	1	1	-1	1
15	Tower Hamlets	2	0	1	1	-1	1
16	Sawbridgeworth Town	2	0	1	1	-2	1
17	Sporting Bengal United	2	0	1	1	-2	1
18	Waltham Forest	2	0	1	1	-3	1
19	Burnham Ramblers	2	0	0	2	-3	0
20	Enfield 1893	1	0	0	1	-3	0
21	Wadham Lodge	2	0	0	2	-5	0

LEAGUE TOP SCORERS

	Player	Club	Apps	Goals
1	Jeffrey Cobblah	Clapton	2	3
2	Luca Frankis	Hullbridge Sports	2	2
=	Dion Lewis-Kirwan	Woodford Town (2017)	2	2
=	Calvin Poku	Redbridge	2	2
=	Mohammad Sagaf	Waltham Forest	2	2
=	Stuart Zanone	Takeley	2	2

THE BEER HUNTER



A very warm welcome to one and all for this, the first home game of the season and the first step on the Road to Wembley. First, the big pub news since the end of last season is that the Lodge's Chingford Road local, the Dog & Duck (pictured), has reopened after a prolonged period of closure - revamped, refurbished and thoroughly reinvented. The pub now typically offers three guest ales, and pizzas are a speciality - it also now has a garden. A very welcome addition to a part of Walthamstow that has been a beer desert for far too long - well worth investigating!



Thanks to the eccentricities of the ESL fixture list, we've already notched up three away trips, including the opportunity to return to Hullbridge's two contrasting pubs - the upmarket but very sound Anchor, and its quirky neighbour the Smuggler's Den with its faintly disturbing Rolling Stones "mouth logo" urinals in the Gents. Our next Away trip is to the Mile End Stadium for the encounter with Tower Hamlets. The area around the ground is, alas, another beer desert, and the nearest pub - the New Globe in Mile End Road - is nearly half a mile away, with Sharp's Doom Bar as its solitary real ale. A little further away are the Queens Head in Flamborough Street (Youngs), a delightful street-corner local near Limehouse station, and the Crown in Commercial Road, a one-beer local (typically Fullers, Sharps or Greene King).

Infinitely more variety can however be found at CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival at Olympia, which opened yesterday and runs until Saturday. More beers than you can shake a whole forest of sticks at, from all over Great Britain and all around the world, plus food stalls, live bands, sales stands, breweriana auctions and more. Thoroughly recommended - for ticket details and opening times, see www.gbbf.org.uk. Enjoy!!



FIXTURES, RESULTS & STATS

		F-A		Cmp	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Jul	Sat	29	A	Hullbridge Sports	2-2	ESL	Warren	Agebane	Harris	Curran	Kipeya	Sagaf 1
Aug	Tue	1	A	Takeley	1-4	ESL	Warren	Agebane	Harris	Longe *	Curran	Foxe
	Sat	5	A	FC Romania	2-2	FAC	Ahmed	Harris	Agebane	Okoye	Kipeya	Toonga *
	Sat	12	H	West Essex		ESL						
	Tue	15	H	FC Romania		FAC						
	Sat	26	H	Wadham Lodge		ESL						
	Tue	29	A	Clapton		ESL						
Sep	Sat	2	A	Sawbridgeworth Town		ESL						
	Wed	6	A	Tower Hamlets		ESL						
	Sat	9	A	Framlingham Town		FAV						
	Tue	12	A	Woodford Town 2017		ESL						
	Sat	16	H	Sporting Bengal United		ESL						
	Tue	19	H	Hackney Wick		ESL						
	Sat	23	H	Barkingside		ESL						
	Sat	30	A	Southend Manor		ESL						
Oct	Wed	4	H	Burnham Ramblers		ESL						
	Sat	7	H	Great Waking Rovers		ESL						
	Tue	10	A	Woodford Town 2017		ESLC						
	Sat	14	A	Stansted		ESL						
	Mon	16	A	Enfield 1893		ESL						
	Sat	21	H	Basildon United		ESL						
Nov	Sat	4	A	Ilford		ESL						
	Sat	11	H	Woodford Town 2017		ESL						
	Sat	18	A	Barkingside		ESL						
	Wed	22	H	Hullbridge Sports		ESL						
	Sat	25	H	Takeley		ESL						
Dec	Sat	2	H	Tower Hamlets		ESL						
	Sat	9	H	Sawbridgeworth Town		ESL						
	Sat	16	H	Southend Manor		ESL						
	Sat	23	A	Hackney Wick		ESL						
Jan	Sat	1	H	Clapton		ESL						
	Sat	13	A	FC Romania		ESL						
	Sat	20	A	Sporting Bengal United		ESL						
	Sat	27	H	Redbridge		ESL						
Feb	Sat	3	A	Burnham Ramblers		ESL						
	Sat	10	H	FC Romania		ESL						
	Sat	24	H	Enfield 1893		ESL						
Mar	Sat	3	A	Basildon United		ESL						
	Sat	3	A	Wadham Lodge		ESL						
	Sat	10	A	Great Waking Rovers		ESL						
	Sat	24	A	West Essex		ESL						
Apr	Sat	7	A	Redbridge		ESL						
	Sat	21	H	Stansted		ESL						
	Sat	28	H	Ilford		ESL						



TODAY'S Oponents

WEST ESSEX

West Essex FC are based in Highams Park, East London. The club caters for players of all ages and abilities with 2 senior sides, 3 veteran's sides, 2 Sunday teams and a successful and rapidly expanding colts section. The 1st team have now entered a ground share agreement with Barking FC and will play home games at Barking's stadium near Mayesbrook Park during 2015/16 season. The Reserves and Vets sides continue to use the Rolls Sports Ground in Highams Park.

The brainchild of former West Essex Cricket Club stalwart John Spinks, West Essex FC formed in 1989. Initially the objective was to keep some of the Cricket Club members in touch throughout the winter and generate a bit

of much-needed income through the club bar on a Saturday afternoon.

After 4 seasons of considerable success in the Ilford & District League, an 'A' team was added for the 1993-94 season and the 1st & Reserve teams moved to the Essex Business Houses League.

As we entered the new millennium, founder John Spinks left for the Emerald Isle and current Chairman Stuart Higson took over the day to day running of the club. The junior and Veterans sections continued to perform well, but success was harder to come by for the senior sides.

In 2007-08, the 1st XI effectively folded and

the club ran one senior side which finished rock-bottom of the EBHFL Division 1. Towards the end of that season, Gary Lefley became involved with the side. Gary forged a strong partnership with existing player/manager Dan Reading and their first full season together proved to be a very successful one as West Essex lifted the EBHFL Division 1 title in 2008-09.

With success came an influx of new players and we were fortunate enough to reinstate the Reserve team who, under the guidance of Wesley Sotherton, won a trophy in their first season. The resulting celebrations culminated in them actually losing the trophy, but that's a story for another day.

At the end of the 2009-10 season, the management took the decision to withdraw the 1st XI from the Essex Business Houses League and move them to the Middlesex County Football League. The season that followed will live long in the memory as, in May 2011, it culminated with another trophy being added to the cabinet as West Essex were crowned champions of the MCFL Division 1 Central & East.

Promoted as Champions, in August 2011 West Essex had their first taste of Step 7 Football. Despite the season being blighted by injuries and suspensions, they finished it stationed safely in mid-table and took a few memorable scalps along the way.

Further progress was made in 2012/13 as West Essex consolidated their MCFL Premier Division status with another mid-table finish, but with a bigger points total and a better record in all departments. Towards the end of the season new coach Kwame Kwateng joined with a view to adding some style to our obvious substance.

2013/14 was a memorable season for the club. Injuries, poor form and some appalling luck saw us staring down the barrel of relegation at the turn of the year. Thankfully, due in no small part to the tireless work of one of the most

enthusiastic coaches around and a return to fitness of some key players, a team which had such obvious potential finally started to deliver. A fantastic run of form saw us finish the season sitting comfortably in mid-table and emerging victorious in the Alec Smith Premier Division Cup final. Lifting the trophy was an incredible achievement for everyone involved with West Essex FC and that Spring evening in Uxbridge will live long in the memory. In 2014/15, we continued to make progress by attaining our highest ever MCFL Premier Division finish of 6th. We also gained more points, scored more goals and conceded less than in any previous season.

In 2015/16, with our ground-share agreement in place, we took the decision to apply for promotion from the MCFL. We didn't lose a game from August 8th until January 2nd which included a run of 11 straight victories, but couldn't shake off our fellow title chasers and promotion candidates. A successful run in the Essex Premier Cup nearly derailed our league campaign and our second appearance in 3 years in the Alec Smith Cup Final, you might argue, was another unwanted distraction. We lost the Alec Smith Final on pens having been 2 nil up with less than 30 mins to go. On the coach back from the final, devastated as we were, a chorus of "WE'RE GONNA WIN THE LEAGUE!!" broke out. 14 days later, that's exactly what we did. After losing to New Hanford on April 9th, we took 23 of the 27 points available to take the title from under LPOSSA's noses. We were crowned champions of the MCFL Premier Division. In doing so, we guaranteed promotion to the Essex Senior League.



Today's visitors West Essex part in something increasingly less common for non-league clubs: a tour friendly. West beat French side Étoile Sportive Fossatoise 1-0 in late July.

Somnath Sengupta takes us on the journey of renowned globetrotters Islington Corinthians.

Five slightly bewildered children on a railway track, cast in bronze. For present day visitors to the Liverpool Street Station in London this sculpture is likely to be one of the attractions of the station. Created by Frank Meisler, this 2003 work of art commemorates the arrival thousands of Jewish children to the station as part of the "Kindertransport" rescue operations during 1938 and 1939. Two years before the arrival of Jewish children became a common sight, a more frequent visitor to Liverpool Street Station were football teams, given the multitude of professional and amateur clubs based in the area. It is likely that very few paid attention when an enthusiastic group of 18 amateur footballers gathered for a team photograph in the station on 4th October, 1937. In the middle of the team photograph sat their manager with a serene smile cradling a stuffed toy lion, their mascot. Those who did take notice had just witnessed a historic moment. For this was an ordinary team with extraordinary intents. The journey they were about to embark upon was of a scale that had never been seen before or since. The tour that started on that day would take the football team across the globe, literally, playing 95 games in over a dozen countries and four continents.



The Islington Corinthians FC was founded in 1932 in the district of Islington in Greater London by Thomas Smith, a former chairman of Tufnell Park FC and an eminent London-based Rotarian. Composed largely with amateur players from Greater London area they participated in charity matches and mid-week football, becoming a regular fixture in Metropolitan Midweek League. They would play games against the reserve teams of Arsenal, Chelsea and Fulham, often upsetting them, like a 3-2 victory over Chelsea Reserves in the 1934/35 season.

They were rapidly making a name for themselves in the amateur football scene but the event that would make IC really stand out in the quagmire of non-league football was developing half-way across the globe. Playing their first major football tournament the 1936 Olympics, China conducted an elaborate selection process to compile a team with best ethnic Chinese players from different parts of China as well as South Eastern Asia. This team embarked on a long preparatory tour of Asia before finally arriving in Berlin. Their

preparation bore fruit till half time as China held Great Britain to a goal-less score line before eventually succumbing to a 2-0 loss.

After their exit the Chinese Olympic team continued the tour, making stops at Paris, Vienna, Geneva and Amsterdam before finally arriving in London. There the team would meet Arsenal icons Ted Drake and Alex James but more importantly, play a match against Islington Corinthians at Highbury on 31st August, 1936. The Corinthians won 3-2. After the final whistle the Chinese extended a casual invitation to visit their country for a re-match – this hatched the idea of a full blown world tour. It was not an idea born of a momentary whim as they already had some experience of foreign tours, playing Ajax and Sparta Rotterdam in '35 and '36.

A team was assembled with young amateurs, a number of them unmarried. The Islington Rotary Club provided financial support for the tour, contributing £8000. Smith accompanied the team as tour manager while former Tottenham Hotspur centre-half Horace

"Harry" Lowe took over as coach. Lowe had an impressive CV having tutored Real Sociedad for five years and was coaching Espanyol when the outbreak of the Spanish civil war saw him return to England. Before leaving Spain, he set a unique record which stands till date. In the 1934/35 season when one of the Sociedad players fell ill before a game against Valencia, Lowe slipped his boots on, becoming the La Liga's oldest ever footballer at 48 years and 226 days. Two ladies Mrs. Searle (a journalist) and Ms. Starr (secretary) also accompanied the team.

Starting the tour on 4th October Islington Corinthians crossed the English Channel and landed in The Hague, The Netherlands. On 5th October IC opened their tour with a 0-0 draw with VUC in The Hague. A day later they eased to a 2-0 win in Amsterdam against Haarlem FC with Johnny Sherwood scoring the first goal of the tour. Playing their third consecutive game in three days, they rounded off their Dutch stay with a 1-1 draw against DWV.

Next stop – Switzerland. On 10th October IC tasted their first defeat against FC Winterthur in Zurich. They overcame some of their disappointment the next day, picking up a handsome win over FC Berne.

On conclusion of the European leg of the world tour the Islington Corinthians made their way across the Suez Canal to Egypt. As they landed in Alexandria IC members would first experience the enthusiasm of crowd and local officials which would continue for rest of the tour. On 22nd October IC played their first match in Cairo, a 1-1 draw against Cairo XI. King Farouk I was present in attendance in the second match two days later as IC picked up a battling victory.

After a few days rest Al-Zalamek were Islington Corinthians' next opponent. Zamalek had Mohamed Latif in their ranks – a former Glasgow Rangers player who had played in both the 1934 World Cup and 1936 Olympics. Despite the quality of their opponents IC had no problems chalking up yet another win. Reeling

OUR TEAM WITH THE ISLINGTON CORINTHIANS 1938



STANDING (Left to right):—

V. Vijendram, V. Ponniah, A. Gunaramam, R. Rozario, S. Maniam, Jahn Mohd.

SEATED:—

T. Nadarajah, Mohd. Ismail, A.L. Henry, Sebastian (Captain); J. Govindasamy.

with a spate of injuries they faced a heavy 4-1 in defeat in the last match in Port Said.

On 11th November 1937 Islington Corinthians landed in Bombay (present Mumbai) to start the Indian leg which was to become the busiest of the world tour. Upon reaching Bombay IC were invited to a lavish luncheon in the posh Taj Mahal Hotel. After a brief stop IC travelled to the Eastern city of Calcutta (present Kolkata) where they would play out the most vital matches of the Indian tour.

After an arduous train journey IC reached Calcutta on 13th November and by the afternoon of the same day, they lined up against Mohammedan Sporting Club, the strongest football team in India and winner of an unprecedented five consecutive league titles between 1934 and 1938. IC struggled, scraping a goal-less draw.

On 16th November, 1937 Islington Corinthians played local favourites Mohun Bagan. Bagan were one of the best known clubs in India and they created history in 1911 by becoming the first Indian club to win a major trophy – the IFA Shield. Mohun Bagan had played a number of India based British teams by that time but the Islington Corinthians is till date remembered as the first foreign side to play the club in their 126 year old history. The well contested match ended in a 1-0 win for the visitors.

In midst of the Calcutta leg IC were invited to a luncheon in the Great Eastern Hotel where they sampled the famous Indian mutton korma curry and met two of the most important early pioneers of football in India – the Maharajah of Santosh and Pankaj Gupta. IC won their remaining matches in Calcutta, defeating IFA XI and All Indian XI, the second match being attended by over 55,000.

IC's tour of India was extremely successful. They won most of their matches, losing only once to Dhaka XI thanks to a goal from Pakhi Sen. They travelled across the country to places like Jamshedpur, Varanasi as well as frontier cities. A comment from PB Clark regarding bare feet players has since become a part of

local football folklore – "Indians alone play real football, what they call football in Europe, is after all only bootball".

After their Indian exploits IC played a few matches in Myanmar before starting another major leg of the Asian tour in the Malayan peninsula. They were to play matches scattered across Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Penang, Alor Star, Ipoh Seremban and Malacca. They arrived in Penang on 9th January, playing their first match against Penang Asiatics two days later. This was followed by a 3-1 victory over Penang FA XI. One of IC's biggest wins in the tour was a 6-0 defeat of Malacca XI thanks to a hat-trick from Tarrant. Things were not so easy against local treble winners Kelab Sukan TPCA as that match ended in a 1-1 draw. The most thrilling game of this leg came against Singapore when IC clawed their way back from a 2-0 deficit to eke out a 3-2 win thanks to a late long ranger from Sherwood. They were hosted by the Sultan of Johore in a luncheon before ending their tour with a 7-1 thrashing of Johore. In the Malayan leg IC won 14 of their 16 matches and scored 51 times

The Corinthians were enjoying life on the tour in the Malayan leg and were playing their best football, as Smith recounts in an interview in January, 1938, "The boys are playing better football now than ever on the tour. They're so good in positional play that they waste the minimum effort in passing".

The 28th November, 1937 edition of Straits Times, Malaysia's most circulated newspaper carried an elaborate account about a number of players of Islington Corinthians. It is evident that despite being amateurs Islington had some highly competent players in their ranks.

Captain PB Clark was a full-back who had represented Hibernian and had a Scottish national team cap. Goalkeeper Ted Wingfield represented Romford FC, who would win the Athenian League consecutive times between 1935 and 1937. Cyril Longman another goalkeeper, also didn't lack success having played for Isthmian League winners Kingstonian FC.

Left-back Alec Buchanan had turned out for Chelsea in 1933, centre-half Bill Whittaker earned acclaim for his performances for Blackpool during the war years while right-half Albert Martin had a stint with French side Football Club d'Antibes. Moors Green FC contributed a number of players to Islington Corinthians, like right half George Dance and "very intellectual" inside forward Leonard Bradbury. A year after the world tour Bradbury went on to play for Manchester United, making his debut against Chelsea and scoring the match-winning goal.

Centre-forward Richard Tarrant was one of the first star attractions of Sutton United. In the 1933/34 season Tarrant scored 31 times, helping Sutton win Surrey Senior Charity Cup. On 17th April, 1935 he made his debut for Ireland Amateur national team, scoring once.

A number of Islington Corinthians players had solid amateur careers but in terms of sheer theatre no-one could match that of star striker Johnny Sherwood. Sherwood had notched up appearances for Reading FC and according to some, was an outside bet for the English national team. For Islington Corinthians he had an extremely successful tour – finishing as the top scorer with over 70 goals. Months after the tour Sherwood instead of entering the peak years of his career, was drafted into the army and found himself in the Eastern theatre of Second World War.

After the British surrender at Singapore Sherwood was captured by Japanese troops and imprisoned in nightmarish Japanese PoW camps. Suffering from lack of food, water and constant torture from Japanese soldiers he had to endure hours of forced labour working on



Burma Siam Railways also known as “Death Railways” which by some estimates, caused 90,000 deaths. Sherwood survived the camp and a severe bout of malaria, only to be herded into a freight “hell ship” on its way to Japan with 900 prisoners in its hold. As luck would have it, the freight ship was sunk by an American submarine. Sherwood survived by clinging on to a piece of driftwood but was again captured by Japanese. He was imprisoned and put to work in Nagasaki where he witnessed the dropping of the atomic bomb. Johnny Sherwood survived the war and returned to England. He played a few more games for Reading FC but was never able to match his pre-war exploits due to irreparable physical damage. Decades later he would recount his experience in notes which would eventually get published as “Lucky Johnny: The footballer who survived River Kwai death camps”.

Islington Corinthians traveled to Vietnam and Philippines from the Malay Peninsula before finally reaching the country which first gave rise to the idea of the world tour – China. But by that time, a lot had changed and the men from Islington found themselves in the middle of one of the bloodiest conflicts in modern history. Japan had launched a full scale war on China in mid of 1937. When IC had landed in China some of the most gruesome battles had already taken place in Manchuria and Shanghai along with the infamous and much debated “Rape of Nanking”. It was a miracle that in this tense and pot boiling situation that IC were able to play any football at all.

A 1938 news report at the end of IC’s tour reflects the dangers they faced – “On the way from Hong Kong to Macao, surrounded by Chinese junks, Japanese seaplanes swooped down on the steamers – but the pilots saw





In early April, 1938 Islington Corinthians became the first English team to play in Japan. With 50,000 in attendance in the Meiji Shrine Stadium, IC failed to contain the pace of diminutive Japanese players of All-Kanto XI. The home team took a 1-0 lead in first half and buoyed by the home crowd pumped in three more goals in second half to inflict the heaviest loss the English amateurs faced in the world tour. Years later Sherwood would once again see one of the players from the Japanese team – this time as a PoW camp guard!

Sailing away from the pressure cooker situation in Japan and China, IC made their way across the Pacific Ocean to a calmer atmosphere in USA and Canada. In USA IC defeated San Francisco All Stars 3-2, Los Angeles All Stars 4-1 and eked out a goal-less draw with Douglas Aircraft SC. The Canadian leg started on 7th May

and ended on 27th of the same month with IC playing a dozen games in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec. The free-scoring football which made IC popular on the tour was evident as they picked up handsome victories over Victoria (6-3), Calgary (3-0), Lethbridge (4-2) and Fort William (6-2). They ended their stay in Canada with a thumping 7-2 victory over Montreal in Quebec with Johnny Sherwood scoring five times.

During the North American leg of the tour IC visited Hollywood sets, hobnobbed with movie celebrities like Heather Angel, David Niven and were hosted by Victor McLaglen in his nightclub.

the big Union Jack painted on the bridge and no bombs were dropped”.

The results unsurprisingly, were mixed. In Hong Kong IC won 4-2 against Combined Police and Club XI but the game in Macao against a selected Macao XI ended in a one all draw. In Shanghai they were on the verge of being arrested by Japanese soldiers for violating curfew but were let off only after informing that they were scheduled to play in Japan as well! The largest crowd for a football match to that point in Shanghai turned up to watch IC as they took on Shanghai XI. Tired and struggling on a slippery pitch, IC slumped to a tame 3-0 loss.

The world tour also ended with their matches in Canada. They had played 95 games in total, winning 65 times, losing just 8 matches and scored an impressive 237 goals. What makes this record remarkable is the fact that they travelled incessantly and had very little prep time to get accustomed to the constantly varying nature of pitch and opponents.

In England it was expected that their tour would barely last a month. When they did make their way back the Islington Corinthians received a hero's welcome. Present among the welcoming party was William Pickford, president of the Football Association. Pickford praised the IC's incredible achievement saying, "You have kicked the football round the world, and put British sport on the map throughout the world". "We have not left a single enemy behind us", appraised Tom Smith. A team photograph at end of the tour shows a group of jaded players with trunks remarkably plastered with a multitude of stamps from different countries.

When he returned after covering the world in 80 days Phileas Fogg had a booty of £20,000 waiting for him. For Islington Corinthian members the situation was completely different. The tour was a financial disaster - the club lost a chunk of money and many players lost their jobs (news reports described them as "flat broke" and "penniless"). Tom Smith steadfastly argued that any financial downside was trumped by the goodwill generated by IC during the tour.

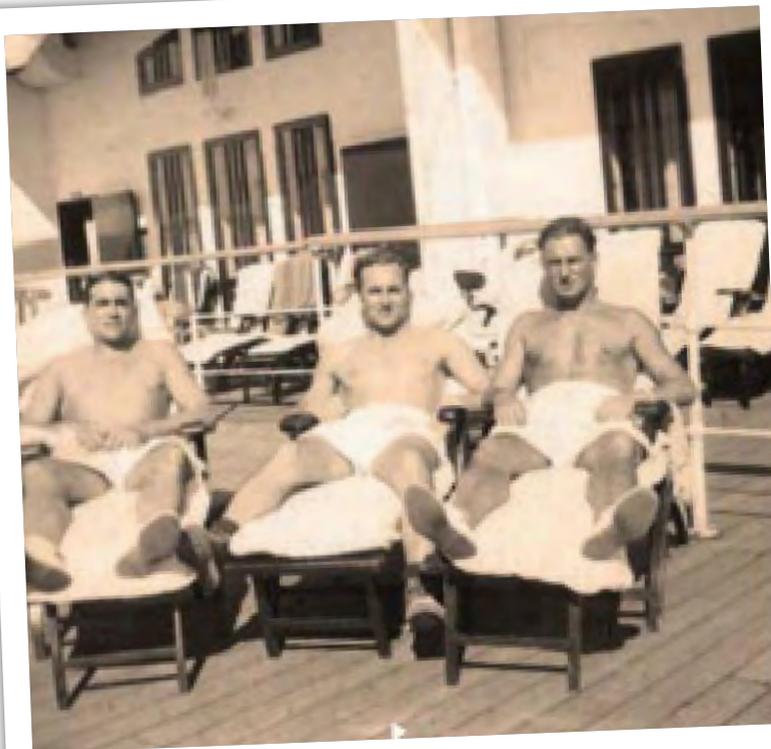
In 1939 Islington Corinthians made a short

tour of Iceland and played five matches. Smith's later plans to tour South Africa were scrapped due to an escalating WWII. Sadly, the club didn't survive the war and was wound up by 1940.

The story of Islington Corinthians was largely forgotten in mainstream media until Rob Cavallini published his "Around the World in 95 Games: The Amazing Story of the Islington Corinthians 1937/38 World Tour" in 2008. A large number of items from their tour, including a dazzling collection of souvenirs can be found on auction sites.

The greatest feature of Islington Corinthians world tour was not the length of it or their performance but the fact that instead of financial reasons it was motivated by the pure philanthropic intention of spreading the game where no English teams had set their foot before. For this, Smith and his team deserve to be lauded.

Somnath is on Twitter: @baggholic.



TODAY'S TEAMS



RECENT FORM

Forest
D-L-D

FC Romania
W-W-D

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Barkingside v Stansted,
Basildon United v Wadham
Lodge, Clapton v Woodford
Town (2017), Enfield 1893
v Ilford, FC Romania v
Burnham Ramblers, Great
Waking Rovers v Southend
Manor, Sawbridgeworth
Town v Hackney Wick,
Sporting Bengal United v
Hullbridge Sports, Takeley v
Redbridge, Waltham Forest v
West Essex

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Dajour Mckenzie-George
Michael Wingate
Robert Bradley

NUMBER

Juelmo Agebane	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Syed Tanvir Ahmed
Mohammed Ahmed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kofi Appiah
Cruz Danilo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	James Bromley
James Curran	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nicholas Carroll
Terry Foxe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jayvon Case-Jarrett
Bradley Harris	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Christey
Mahdi Khan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jack Coker
Boris Kipeya	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew Ford
Arjanit Krasniqi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cameron Gray
Ohimai Long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sanchez Hardy
Azhad Masood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joshua Kane
Nathan Okoye	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maamoon Kaan
Mohammad Sagaf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joseph Lefley
Abiola Tanimowo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Mignot
Glen Toonga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bradley Russell
Harrison Tweddell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nicholas Walk

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