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2023/24 | The Official Matchday Programme | £2



Saturday 7th October 2023
Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands

PITCHING IN

PARTNERS WITH



NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

CLUB HONOURS

United Counties League Premier Division South
Winners 2023

Midland Alliance League Cup
Winners 2010

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

Midland Combination Challenge Cup
Finalists 1999
Winners 2002, 2005

Coventry Evening Telegraph Cup
Winners 1966, 2005, 2006

Coventry Charity Cup
Winners 2007

BCFA Midweek Floodlit Cup
Winners 2007

Tony Allden Cup
Winners 2007

FA Vase
Quarter Finalists 2008

OTHER HONOURS

United Counties League Programme of the Year
Winners 2023

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

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

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



CLUB OFFICIALS

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

FIRST TEAM STAFF

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

GROUNDS TEAM

Paul Wright, Martin Sutton

MEDIA TEAM

Chris Nee
Liam Cook

PHOTOGRAPHY

Marcus Robinson
Stuart Guest

MATCHDAY HOSPITALITY

Leanne Talbot & Donna Crouch

MATCHDAY VOLUNTEERS

Martin Sutton, Dave Bull, Alan Townsend

Coventry Sphinx Football Club

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

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



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Upcoming fixtures

AWAY



Shepshed Dynamo v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 14th October 2023 | 3.00pm
The Dovecote Stadium
Butthole Lane, Shepshed, LE12 9BN

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Coleshill Town

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 21st October 2023 | 3.00pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

AWAY



Harborough Town v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 28th October 2023 | 3.00pm
Harborough Town Community Football Ground
Northampton Rd, Market Harborough, LE16 9HF

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Anstey Nomads

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 4th November 2023 | 3.00pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

AWAY



Walsall Wood v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 11th November 2023 | 3.00pm
John Sylvester Stadium
Walsall Wood, WS9 9NP



CoventrySphinx



CoventrySphinxFootballClub



CoventrySphinxFC

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If a week is a long time in football then three weeks is an eternity. A few Saturdays ago we were here for our most recent home fixture, winless Coventry Sphinx against winless AFC Rushden & Diamonds.

Sphinx won that game after going behind in the first half. Two weeks later we conceded first against Rugby Town — where we're not too popular, these days — and did the same thing again.

Six points from two games obviously puts us on a better footing in the Pitching In Northern Premier League Midlands. Winning first at home and then away represents the hurdling of a couple of fences that were starting to look significant.

Yet again, I find myself full of admiration for John, Shaun and the players for what they continue to achieve. Losing some games was to be expected after stepping up a level. Winning some is tough.

Following the win against Rushden with another at Rugby should be a big boost to the team's confidence. There's no reason to think they can't compete at this level and now they've proved it.

It's worth taking a step back, though, to consider the magnitude of where we are. Several months removed from the euphoria of winning the league, our club is at its highest ever point at this moment.

That's something we should enjoy and it's also a fitting tribute to our late friend Dick McKinnon. Dick's as missed today as he was when he passed away early this year and we welcome his family to Sphinx Drive this afternoon.

Dick's loss left a hole in every matchday and I think of him at each game. I know he played a big part in the title win because the boys had him in mind throughout. Today, his ashes come home.

This afternoon's test on the pitch is another yardstick against which to measure our progress in 2023. If we're to take anything against a better standard of opponent we must improve again.

We welcome the supporters, players, management and officials from Corby Town to the Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena for our first meeting of the 2023/24 season.

Our visitors arrive in excellent form away from home in the league this season and I expect them to have claimed their first home win from their midweek fixture by the time this programme goes to print.

As well as a lot of new faces in opposition today, we have a few new signings who've joined us in the last few weeks as John and Shaun have sought to tweak and strengthen their playing staff.

Both Will Edjenguele and Finlay Shorrock played here against Rushden & Diamonds and will be familiar, but there were fresh additions on the bench at Butlin Road last Saturday.

Forward Khaellem Bailey-Nicholls has loads of experience at this level and came on to make his debut at Rugby Town. Midfielder Alfonso Castellano is also available after signing last week.

Welcome, lads. You've joined a genuinely special club — a club that enjoys its wins, takes its defeats in stride and makes a virtue of team spirit, connection between players and supporters, and punching above its weight.

With Corby Town lining up against us today, punching above our weight is the minimum standard this afternoon. I'm sure it'll be another fantastic game and a day to savour. Up the Sphinx.

Chris Nee
Programme Editor



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OUR HISTORY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



STUART GUEST



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MEET THE SQUAD

	Khaellem Bailey-Nicholls	Explosive forward player with high-level experience. Signed for Sphinx in the autumn of 2023.	 024 7644 2838
	Harvey Billing	Former Sphinx youth team captain who returned to the club after spells with Stratford Town and Easington Sports.	 HELPING GOALKEEPERS SINCE 1999
	James Bryson	Strong and steady central defender with a knack for a goal. A crucial part of the title-winning Sphinx team in 2022/23.	Sponsored by MANDY SEDDON
	Kyle Carey	Incisive and creative attacker who returned to Sphinx in March 2023 to help secure the league title.	Sponsored by STUART GUEST
	Alfonso Castellano	Midfielder who joined Sphinx from Market Drayton Town in September 2023.	Sponsorship available
	Antonio Cristofaro	Skilful former Walsall youth midfielder with dribbling ability, sharp creative instincts and an eye for goal.	 ALWAYS THERE.
	Jack Downes	Versatile, battling midfielder with a tremendous engine. Outstanding since returning to Sphinx Drive and a league winner in 2022/23.	
	Luke Downes	Creative midfield player who returned to Sphinx in 2021 after countless impressive performances here as a youngster.	
	Jamie Draper	Defender who emerged from the Sphinx youth team and has become a regular starter in our best ever team.	
	William Edjenguele	Experienced former Coventry City central defender who joined from Bedworth United after spells with Barwell and Nuneaton Borough.	Sponsorship available
	Sam Ellis	Entertaining attacking midfielder who joined Sphinx after spells with Sutton Coldfield Town and Hinckley in 2022/23.	
	Keelan Fallows	Talented goalkeeper who joined from Tamworth at the start of Sphinx's first season in the eighth tier of English football.	

	Louis Guest	A former Sphinx junior and now a leader in our squad, Guesty is a long-serving central defender and the club's vice captain.	
	Jordan Hayward	Former Long Buckby wide player who scored on his debut in August 2022 and went on to win the UCL Premier Division South in his first season.	Sponsored by IAN AND PAULINE MCINTOSH
	Max Johnson	Classy former Bedworth United midfielder who debuted for Sphinx in October 2022 and went on to claim a league winner's medal.	
	Callum Martin	Pacy former Coventry City junior full back who loves a tackle and causes opponents problems in the attacking third.	
	Dylan Parker	Dangerous forward player who signed for Sphinx in November 2022 and has been a consistent scorer ever since.	Sponsored by DANNIE CAHILL
	Dawid Peplinski	Future Pro Academy scholar and former Sphinx youth central defender who joined the first team ranks after playing Step 5 football in 2022/23.	
	Leigh Phillips	Experienced wide player who returned to Sphinx ahead of 2023/24 after a successful career in armed forces football.	 024 7644 2838
	Joe Pursey	Sturdy defender who came in late in 2022/23 and had an instant impact in Sphinx's title quest.	Sponsored by LENA MELLOR
	Jac Redhead	Creative midfield player with experience at Barwell and Halesowen Town.	Sponsored by JOHN MELLOR
	Matthew Shipman	Physical and mobile striker who led the line in the UCL Premier Division South title season after signing from Long Buckby in 2021/22.	Sponsored by BF ESSENTIALS 07927 649288
	Finlay Shorrock	Versatile left-sided player who joined Sphinx in September 2023 and debuted in our first win in eighth tier football.	Sponsorship available
	Callum Whiteside	Versatile defensive player who joined Sphinx at the start of 2022/23 and quickly became a reliable regular for John Woodward and Shaun Thomas.	
	Callum Woodward	Long-serving legendary club captain, a battling mainstay in the Sphinx midfield and a vital source of goals and creativity.	 Exhibitions • Displays • Bespoke Fixings

FIRST TEAM MANAGEMENT

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

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2023/24 Player Stats (all competitions)

Player	Apps	Mins	Starts	Full 90	Sub On	Yellows	Second Yellows	Straight Reds	Goals	Assists	Goals Per 90	Assists Per 90	G+A Per 90
Bailey-Nicholls, Khaellem	1	11	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bryson, James	2	113	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Carey, Kyle	5	396	4	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Castellano, Alfonso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cristofaro, Antonio	4	105	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Downes, Jack	10	871	10	8	0	5	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Downes, Luke	8	456	6	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Draper, Jamie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edjenguele, Will	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ellis, Sam	8	194	1	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fallows, Keelan	7	630	7	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Guest, Louis	10	900	10	10	0	4	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hayward, Jordan	5	308	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hedge, Zach	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Jackson, Sam	1	28	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Johnson, Max	8	442	5	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Martin, Callum	6	427	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Parker, Dylan	10	758	8	5	2	2	0	0	1	3	0.011	0.033	0.044
Peplinski, Dawid	4	168	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phillips, Leigh	3	125	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pursesey, Joe	7	630	7	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Redhead, Jac	4	333	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Shipman, Matty	8	720	8	8	0	2	0	0	4	1	0.044	0.011	0.056
Shorrock, Finlay	2	180	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Whiteside, Callum	10	863	10	8	0	4	0	0	1	0	0.011	0.000	0.011
Woodward, Callum	8	640	8	4	0	2	0	0	1	2	0.011	0.022	0.033

2023/24 Player Stats (NPL Midlands only)

Player	Apps	Mins	Starts	Full 90	Sub On	Yellows	Second Yellows	Straight Reds	Goals	Assists	Goals Per 90	Assists Per 90	G+A Per 90
Bailey-Nicholls, Khaellem	1	11	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bryson, James	2	113	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Carey, Kyle	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Castellano, Alfonso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cristofaro, Antonio	3	91	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Downes, Jack	8	691	8	6	0	4	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Downes, Luke	6	304	4	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Draper, Jamie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edjenguele, Will	2	180	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ellis, Sam	6	138	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fallows, Keelan	5	450	5	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Guest, Louis	8	720	8	8	0	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hayward, Jordan	4	218	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hedge, Zach	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Jackson, Sam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Johnson, Max	6	352	4	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Martin, Callum	6	427	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Parker, Dylan	8	614	6	4	2	1	0	0	1	3	0.011	0.033	0.044
Peplinski, Dawid	4	168	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phillips, Leigh	2	63	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pursesey, Joe	6	540	6	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Redhead, Jac	3	243	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Shipman, Matty	6	540	6	6	0	2	0	0	4	1	0.044	0.011	0.056
Shorrock, Finlay	2	180	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Whiteside, Callum	8	697	8	7	0	4	0	0	1	0	0.011	0.000	0.011
Woodward, Callum	7	578	7	4	0	2	0	0	1	2	0.011	0.022	0.033

SUTTON COLDFIELD TOWN 4 COVENTRY SPHINX 1

Pitching In NPL
Division One Midlands
Saturday 2nd September 2023

Coventry Sphinx's frustrating start to life in the Pitching In Northern Premier League Midlands continued with their first loss from a winning position. After a 4-1 defeat at Sutton Coldfield Town, the search for a win goes on.

Sphinx were able to welcome back goalkeeper Keelan Fallows and striker Matty Shipman, both of whom went straight back into the starting eleven.

Joint managers John Woodward and Shaun Thomas moved Joe Pursey to right wing back in the absence of the injured Jordan Hayward, so Dawid Peplinski made his first Sphinx start in defence alongside Callum Whiteside and Louis Guest.



Stuart Guest

Pursey's opposite number on the left was Callum Martin, who ended the day in hospital after sustaining an ankle injury that thankfully turned out to be less serious than initially feared.

Shipman was paired up front with Dylan Parker, ahead of a midfield featuring a new face. New signing Jac Redhead started with Jack Downes and captain Callum Woodward.

Shipman's return and the introduction of Redhead made a big difference in the first half. After an even start with little in the way of chances, the Sphinx striker forced Royals goalkeeper Jonothan Brown into the first save of the match, whipping his effort towards the top corner after being teed up by Pursey.

Sutton Coldfield played their way into the game with a patient move after quarter of an hour but their first effort of note sailed over. Sphinx went closer with the next attack, which led to Redhead chipping Brown from thirty yards only to see his improvised attempt drop just wide.

A few minutes later Sphinx had Brown working again, this time with a terrific move of their own. Redhead's pass out to the right for Parker was beautifully weighted. Parker cut it back for Shipman. The goalkeeper was able to hold on to his shot relatively easily.

Brown was also equal to Parker's strike after Shipman returned the favour but Sphinx were opening the home side up as an entertaining game emerged.

In the 25th minute the visitors wanted a penalty for a foul on Pursey, who was causing problems from his higher position on the right flank, before Sutton Coldfield went just over with a sharp shot on the turn.

The deadlock was broken with 27 minutes played. Parker's pass into the left channel for Shipman got a slight touch from a defender that seemed to take the sting out of it, playing right into the hands of Shipman as he went clear to collect the ball. He slotted it past Brown and into the far corner to put Sphinx in front.

The home team saw a volley go over the crossbar after a free kick but Sphinx were on top as half time approached. Playing good football in the Sutton Coldfield half, the visitors also looked dangerous on the break but just couldn't create the all-important opening for a second goal.

Fallows had to make a solid save with his feet a couple of minutes before half time at the end of a threatening break that had his team in real trouble. That problem dodged, there was no avoiding the stoppage time equaliser that knocked Sphinx for six.

Sam Fitzgerald's ambitious shot from distance had tons of venom in it and took a nick as it curled away from Fallows and into the corner. It took the wind out of the away team's sails after a good first half. The Royals brought their Step Four experience to the fore in a clinical second.

They came out firing and Fallows made one save before Sphinx eventually settled, only to be unsettled again by a long delay and the injury to Martin. The wing back was stretchered off ten minutes into the half, replaced by Leigh Phillips, and taken to hospital. The good news later was that his scans revealed no break.

The game lost its shape after the injury. Redhead had an attempt from outside the box but didn't quite catch it, and Fallows had to save again with

his feet as Sutton Coldfield kicked into gear in the middle of the second half.

They won the game thanks to two goals in four minutes. With Jack Downes on the deck at one end, the Royals exposed Sphinx at the other and Alex McSkeane shook off the attentions of the defence to smash the ball high beyond Fallows' grasp to make it 2-1.

In the 77th minute, a similar route proved fruitful once more. This time it was Ryan Edmunds who got in behind Sphinx on the left – rather more easily on this occasion – before bearing down on the goalkeeper and blasting his shot in off the near post. Fallows had no chance.

Sphinx made a couple of changes and found their feet. Brown saved from Parker after a smart save. Phillips smacked his effort over under determined pressure from a defender. The visitors were pushing but by the time the match ticked into stoppage time it was painfully obvious they weren't going to get any joy.



Stuart Guest

Sutton Coldfield capped a deserved win with a 95th-minute goal that looked, by now, far too familiar. Rhys Hilton had the easiest task of the three players who found space on Sphinx's left after Martin's withdrawal and had all the time in the world to pick his spot for 4-1. It was a poor goal to concede but one Hilton had earned with a fine performance.

The fourth goal was out of keeping with a match that was a little closer than it appeared but it can serve as an important reminder of exactly what Sphinx are up against as they hunt for their first win as a Step Four club.

Sutton Coldfield were ruthless in the second half, doubling their lead soon after getting their noses in front and then

keeping the visitors largely at arm's length before the final stoppage time blow.

Martin's injury changed the mood but the equalising goal before the break changed the game.

The Royals showed their eighth tier nous to put Sphinx away in the second half, but the visitors were the better team for most of the first.

Spalding United aside, Sphinx's challenging start to the season has been offset by their ability to stay in every game and find spells of supremacy.

They did the latter against Sutton Coldfield but not the former. Either way, as the season progresses they need to do more than stay close and look good. Wins must follow.

TEAMSHEET

- 1 Keelan Fallows
- 2 Callum Whiteside
- 3 Callum Martin ▼ Phillips (55)
- 4 Jack Downes
- 5 Louis Guest
- 6 Dawid Peplinski
- 7 Joe Pursey
- 8 Callum Woodward @ ▼ Woodward (80)
- 9 Matty Shipman ⚽
- 10 Jac Redhead ▼ Ellis (80)
- 11 Dylan Parker
- 12 Luke Downes
- 14 Max Johnson ▲ Woodward (80)
- 15 Sam Ellis ▲ Woodward (80)
- 16 Leigh Phillips ▲ Martin (55)
- 17 Antonio Cristofaro

SPHINX MAN OF THE MATCH
JOE PURSEY

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Foundation

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



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



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

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

SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN THE YOUNG (SCD)

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

OUR MISSION

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

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

Find out more

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

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

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

QUORN 4 COVENTRY SPHINX 0

Isuzu FA Trophy
First Round Qualifying
 Saturday 9th September 2023

Coventry Sphinx's first outing in the Isuzu FA Trophy was a short one. They were beaten 4-0 by league rivals Quorn at the first hurdle, exiting in First Round Qualifying on a scorching day in Leicestershire.

This loss will live long in the memory for all the wrong reasons, stark in its contrast from the consistent highs of 2022/23.

Sphinx should have had all three points against Quorn in the league less than a month before this Trophy defeat and the difference will be cause for concern for the management team.

Joint managers John Woodward and Shaun Thomas handed a debut to new signing Will Edjenguele, who played in defence with Louis Guest and Callum Whiteside in front of goalkeeper Keelan Fallows.

The wing back positions were taken by midfielder Jack Downes and winger Leigh Phillips. Luke Downes and Callum Woodward started in midfield behind Jac Redhead, with Dylan Parker and striker Matty Shipman more advanced.

Quorn handled the searing heat better throughout and had plenty of possession right out of the gate.

Sphinx felt their way into the match but had more of the ball than any meaningful territory before Fallows had to make a good save with his feet at the end of a dangerous counter-attack with quarter of an hour played.

At 0-0 this had the makings of a poor game in the heat. Two teams that wouldn't naturally do so were sitting off each other, eschewing the press in the name of energy preservation in the first quarter of the match.

The home team took the lead in the 25th minute. Quorn worked the ball in from their left and a pass across the box found Paddy Webb with plenty of time and space to tuck the ball past Fallows for 1-0. Sphinx were chasing a game they really didn't want to be chasing.

Now ahead, Quorn did what they needed to do and kept the ball moving around the Sphinx half for five minutes to take the sting out of any potential Sphinx response.

The visitors produced a lively move on the half hour, protecting the ball and passing with purpose.

Eventually it was clipped into the channel for Shipman, who showed good strength as he strode

into the box but could only hook the bouncing ball just over the crossbar.

That chance ushered in the most positive spell of the game for Sphinx. Parker cut a cross back to the edge of the box from the right flank and skipper Woodward met it with an ambitious header that had plenty of power but was saved and held by Quorn goalkeeper Charlie Woods.

Sphinx improved in the latter part of the first half but were building primarily from Guest's patient quarterbacking out of defence, which made life relatively straightforward for his opposite numbers at the other end.



Stuart Guest

Quorn managed stoppage time well and saw themselves safely to half time. After the break the match quickly regained its previous shape and the contest was effectively killed off by Webb's second goal six minutes into the half.

Poor defending left the striker with a simple finish under Fallows and the chances of Sphinx scoring twice looked wafer-thin.

Woodward and Thomas turned to the bench, bringing the returning Kyle Carey on for Parker in the 54th minute, but the visitors were on the brink



Stuart Guest

of collapse one week on from a gutting second half at Sutton Coldfield Town in the league. Sure enough, sleepy defending and sharp play from the home team gave Quorn a 3-0 lead inside an hour.

They moved the ball quickly from back to front and Webb's clever flick around the corner sent Charlie Marzano clear in the right channel. His neat finish put the game to bed once and for all.

Sphinx were playing for pride in the last twenty minutes and they didn't do much to achieve even that.

Fallows had to save again in the 71st minute and Webb missed a golden opportunity to complete a hat-trick – from a terrible Sphinx corner – before the Sphinx goalkeeper was called into action again ten minutes from time.

Substitute Max Johnson gave Woods some work to do at 3-0. His deflected 25-yarder forced a good save, and a central free kick from even further out was well struck and smartly saved. That was really all Sphinx had to shout about.

There was still time for Redhead and substitute Sam Ellis to have attempts on goal, for Whiteside to clear two Quorn shots off the line in the space of a minute, for Fallows to tip one over, and for a Guest own goal to cap a dreadful afternoon by making it 4-0.

Losing by four clear goals is always a horrible experience, especially when it fairly reflects the nature of the game. To do so against a fellow promoted side – albeit in cup action rather than the league – is chastening.

Sphinx's start to life at Step Four didn't yield the points the early performances warranted.

Since then, injuries have caught up with Thomas and Woodward's team and they are struggling to find a foothold.

There were several occasions last season when the team, including many of the players still with Sphinx now, were challenged to show their mettle. They passed test after test in pursuit of the positive goal of winning the league.

Now, they must do it again. The objective is different but the expectation is the same: give everything, get yourselves out of a hole and show us what you can do.

TEAMSHEET

- 1 Keelan Fallows
- 2 Callum Whiteside
- 3 Leigh Phillips ▼ Ellis (62)
- 4 Luke Downes
- 5 Louis Guest
- 6 Will Edjenguele
- 7 Jack Downes
- 8 Callum Woodward @ ▼ Johnson (62)
- 9 Matty Shipman
- 10 Jac Redhead
- 11 Dylan Parker ▼ Carey (54)
- 12 Max Johnson ▲ Woodward (62)
- 14 Kyle Carey ▲ Parker (54)
- 15 Antonio Cristofaro
- 16 Dawid Peplinski
- 17 Sam Ellis ▲ Phillips (62)
- 20 Zach Hedge

MATCH HIGHLIGHTS



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YOUTH TEAM FIXTURES

Thursday 17 August	1-4	L	Solihull Moors	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 31 August	2-1	W	Rugby Borough	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 7 September	5-2	W	Stourport Swifts	FA Youth Cup Preliminary Round
Thursday 14 September	1-1	D	Inkberrow	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 21 September	0-6	L	AFC Wulfrunians	FA Youth Cup First Round Qualifying
Thursday 28 September	3-1	W	Stratford Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 5 October	19.45	A	Rugby Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 12 October	19.45	H	P S Olympic	Joel Richards Memorial Cup R1
Thursday 19 October	19.45	H	Bedworth United	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Tuesday 24 October	19.45	A	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Alvechurch	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Alvechurch	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Bedworth United	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Halesowen Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Halesowen Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Inkberrow	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Kidderminster Harriers	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Kidderminster Harriers	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Rugby Borough	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Rugby Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Solihull Moors	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Stratford Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division



THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS OFFSIDE

Luis Díaz finished brilliantly. After the Liverpool forward streaked clear at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, the Reds thought they had the lead until the assistant referee raised his flag.

In the Premier League that means a review by the video assistant referee (VAR) team, headed up in this case by Darren England. The check passed quickly. The on-field decision was confirmed. Play went on and Liverpool went on to be beaten 2-1 by Spurs and end the match with nine men.

England made a very bad mistake. According to the now customary statement after the fact from the Professional Game Match Officials Board (PGMOL), the VAR team cleared the check in the mistaken belief that the assistant referee in North London had allowed the goal.

As human error goes, it's a doozy. The check was short because Díaz was evidently inside and nobody thought to make sure the original decision had deemed him so. Nothing the officials, the PGMOL or the Premier League could have said in the aftermath would have eased Liverpool's sense of injustice.

The predictably disgusting and irresponsible online reaction notwithstanding, from some people who should know better and some dangerous idiots who make a living from riling up their fellow morons, the Reds were on the wrong end of a pretty appalling embarrassment of balls-ups.

Liverpool's disallowed goal came in the first half of the match and the outrage was thick in the London air long before half time. The repercussions were swift and the mistake pored over in minute detail. The remainder of the weekend was dominated by talk of lines, of black and white decisions, and of the fundamental inability of VAR to get remotely close to achieving its stated purposes.

It's long been held that VAR (I'll refer to VAR as "it", while recognising that "it" is largely human), while imperfect for subjective decisions, is at least infallible when it comes to objective, binary facts.

Goal-line technology has the ultimate football fact covered but has been shown to be far from flawless. VAR's yes or no situation, its black and white, is offside. It's considered clear enough that a degree of automation has been brought in to make decisions about it.

Semi-automatic offside-detecting robotics would have spared England's blushes at Spurs. His error wouldn't have been possible and there's no way the technology would have failed to distinguish inside from offside when it was, frankly, an easy call.

But automation of offside decisions under VAR merely furthers the great myth behind VAR, the lie behind the line: that offside is objective. It's not. It cannot be. Believe what you want but football doesn't have the technology to make a perfect true or false decision on

offside. It never will because there's no such thing as offside.

Football has become a sport of millimetres, far removed from the original intention behind the offside rule. The game is attempting to reduce offside to a line across a frame. In the game's futile quest for pure officiating, accepting the rank inadequacy of this solution is bizarre.

Offside is nebulous and cannot be satisfactorily handled by VAR. There's a margin of error that nobody speaks about anymore.

That doesn't tally with the microscopic policing of the magical mystery line. A margin of error once said – years ago, admittedly – to be as large as 30 centimetres warranted further scrutiny. Somehow, it's been dismissed as inconsequential.

We live under the tyranny of red and blue lines, each fatter than the slivers of reality they're supposed to patrol. To disallow goals by such ludicrously tiny margins is nonsense of the highest order.

An offside decision involves many pieces of information being processed all at once yet accuracy is demanded to the thousandth of a second even though the technology deployed is wholly incapable of keeping up.

When was the ball played? Is any part of the attacker in an offside position at that inaccurately defined moment? Can they use that part of their body to score?

The collective decision in world football is to conveniently pretend these information points don't matter with the same specificity as the almighty offside plane drawn at the arbitrary moment of truth.

If VAR is to adjudicate offside, either semi-automatically or by providing the materials for a corporeal official dressed in match gear for some reason, then it must reproduce the exact moment of offside with no margin of error at either end of the physical space involved, no temporal discrepancy whatsoever between the striking of the ball and the drawing of the line, and no grey area between body parts that can play the ball and those that can't.

VAR can't do that. VAR offside is a lie.

The alternative method of adjudication is a fleshy, fallible human assistant referee. The flaw in VAR isn't 30cm or an armpit or a toe or a split-second, but its ability to convince football that the offside line is a line when it's not.

VAR draws a digital line where only an imaginary line once stood. A tight offside is a judgement call as much

as a foul or a handball. It's as much art as science and no technology in existence can take in the essence of that crucial moment as well as an assistant referee.

Technology can't know when a ball is kicked like a person can. It's not as good as we are at seeing two things happening at once while ten other things happen in between, often in multiple and contradictory directions. Technology cannot, now or in the future, understand offside – really, truly understand it.

VAR's great unspoken truth is that no millimetre-thin offside call made with the aid of the technology will ever be right or wrong. Offside is there when we know, in our eyes and our brain and our experience and our gut, that it's there. VAR can't do the same because the line doesn't exist.

Ahead of its first use in a World Cup I was asked to write an article about VAR for *New Scientist* magazine. On that occasion my doomsaying was largely unfounded but I stand by my view that VAR is an attempt by football to achieve perfection it doesn't need, shouldn't want, and can never achieve.

By way of a conclusion, I wrote:

"Is the juice of marginal – and debatable – improvement worth the squeeze on football's unique character? For all its riches, all the infrastructure it commands, all the cultural value it offers, football is a game. Every once in a while we should remember how absurd it is that we take it so seriously. It's the best game in the world, but it's still a game. That's precisely why it's beautiful."

That was in the summer of 2018. There was a worthy rebuttal published by NBC News that placed more trust in the data, albeit FIFA data, that proved (loosely) an increase in accuracy of decision-making. Offside will have accounted for a great deal of that improvement and that, in my view, was problematic.

Regardless, VAR has one failing that matters above all others. Even when the decision is right, whatever that means, the process that gets us there is too damaging to the wonderful imperfection of what is, in the end, supposed to be sport – not to mention the way it compromises the joy of the only moment in the game that really matters.

It simply isn't worth it.

Chris Nee
hbbp.substack.com

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CORBY TOWN

The club was established in 1948, taking over from Stewarts & Lloyds as the main team in the town. The new team contained a mix of Stewarts & Lloyds and new players, and took over from Stewarts and Lloyds in the United Counties League. Their first league match saw them win 5-1 against Wellingborough Town.

They went on to win back-to-back league titles in 1950-51 and 1951-52, after which they joined the Midland League as it was expanded to 24 clubs, with the reserve team taking the club's place in the United Counties League.

Having signed sixteen new players, many of whom had played in the Football League, they went into the final match of the season on 1 May 1953 sitting level at the top of the table with Nottingham Forest reserves, who were the visitors to Corby for the final match.

In front of a crowd of 6,294, Corby lost the match and Forest reserves won the title by two points. In 1954-55 the club reached the first round of the FA Cup for the first time, losing 2-0 at home to Watford.

In 1958 Corby transferred to the Southern League, spending their first season in the North-Western Division, before being placed in Division One for the 1959-60 season. Despite only finishing sixth in 1961-62, Corby applied for election to the Football League. However, they failed to receive a single vote.

After finishing seventh the following season the club applied again, and again received no votes. In 1963-64

they reached the first round of the FA Cup for a second time, losing 3-1 at home to Bristol City. They appeared in the first round again the following season, losing 3-1 at home to Hartlepool United.

The season also saw them finish fourth in Division One, earning promotion to the Premier Division, as well as making another failed bid for Football League membership.

In 1965-66 Corby progressed beyond the first round of the FA Cup for the first time; after beating non-League Burton Albion 6-3 in the first round, they won 1-0 at Luton Town in a second round replay after the first match ended 2-2. In the third round they were beaten 6-0 at Plymouth Argyle.

The club applied for Football League membership for a fourth time, and for the first time received a single vote for their unsuccessful bid. The club made their final application in 1966-67, again receiving no votes.

The following season saw another FA Cup first round appearance (a 1-0 defeat at Boston United) but ended in relegation to Division One. In 1971 the club were placed in Division One North after league reorganisation.

Further reorganisation in 1979 and 1982 saw them placed in the Midland Division and then the Premier Division.

Corby remained in the Premier Division until being relegated at the end of the 1989-90 season, but made

an immediate return to the Premier Division after finishing as Division One Midlands runners-up in 1990-91.

After finishing bottom of the Premier Division in 1994-95, the club were relegated again. In 1998 they were moved to the Division One South, and then were placed in Division One East for the 1999-2000 season.

After being transferred to Division One West in 2004, they were moved back to Division One East the following season. In 2005-06 they finished second, and were promoted to the Premier Division.

The 2008-09 season saw Corby win the Premier Division, earning promotion to the Conference North.

In 2010-11 the club reached the first round of the FA Cup for the first time since the 1960s, losing 4-2 to Luton Town in a replay.

They appeared in the first round again the following season, losing 3-1 at Bristol Rovers.

After four seasons in the Conference North, Corby were relegated at the end of the 2012-13 season. They were Southern League Premier Division champions again in 2014-15 and were promoted back to the renamed National League North.

However, another relegation in 2015-16 saw the club relegated to the Premier Division of the Northern Premier League.

The club were transferred to Division One East of the Southern League at the end of the 2017-18 season as part of the restructuring of the non-League pyramid.

The following season saw the club transferred to Division One Central of the Southern League. At the end of the 2020-21 season they were transferred to Division One Midlands of the Northern Premier League.



PEN PICTURES

GARY SETCHELL

Appointed manager in January 2023 having managed Bedford Town to promotion in 2021/22 before being sacked in November 2022. Gary previously managed his home town club Kings Lynn for a total of 384 matches and also had two spells in charge at Wisbech Town. During a lengthy playing career Gary appeared for Kings Lynn, Wisbech, Kettering Town, Rushden & Diamonds, Tamworth and AFC Sudbury.

DARREN EADY

Appointed assistant manager in January 2023. As a player Darren appeared for Peterborough United, Kings Lynn, Stamford, Spalding and St Neots. He has also worked with Gary Setchell at Wisbech and Bedford.

BEN HEATH

A vastly experienced 28-year-old goalkeeper. Ben was a youth team player at Northampton Town before joining Daventry Town in July 2014. A year later he moved on to Rugby Town and in October 2016 signed for AFC Rushden & Diamonds. Ben went on to make over 100 appearances for Diamonds and the high spot of his four years there came in 2017/18 when he kept 22 clean sheets in 42 matches and conceded just 25 goals in all. In August 2021 he signed for St Ives Town and Gary Mills brought him to Corby Town in December 2021. Ben made his Steelmen debut against Stamford on New Years Day 2022 and went on to make a total of 17 appearances during the remainder of 2021/22. He joined Stamford in the summer of 2022 and helped the Daniels win the divisional title in 2022/23 – also appearing for Cogenhoe United on a dual registration. Ben returned to Corby Town in July 2023.

KALERN THOMAS

Leicester-born defender Kalern had spells with Walsall, Birstall United and Quorn before joining Loughborough Dynamo. He made seven appearances for them early in 2013/14 before becoming one of the first signings made by new Corby Town joint managers Andrew Wilson and Tommy Wright in September 2013 when aged 21. Kalern made his debut as a substitute in a 3-3 F.A Cup draw away to Mickleover Sports and went on to become one of the biggest successes of the Steelmen's season. Most of his 43 appearances – which produced a single goal – were made at right back but he proved equally effective when asked to play at centre half towards the end of the season. Kalern was again a regular member of the first team in the number two shirt in 2014/15 when he made a further 43 appearances as the Steelmen were crowned Evo-Stik Southern League Premier Division champions. He made the step up to the Blue Square North with ease and scored twice in 41 games

at the higher level in 2015/16. As the championship winning squad began to break up Kalern moved on to Boston United in the summer of 2016 – after scoring three goals in a total of 127 appearances for the Steelmen – and played 34 times for them in 2016/17. He joined Solihull Moors in June 2017 but made only a handful of appearances for them before signing for Kettering Town in December 2017. He played 24 times for the Poppies during the remainder of 2017/18 before moving to Kings Lynn in June 2018. Kalern has spent the past three seasons with Coalville Town, making around eighty appearances, but in May 2022 signed for Ilkeston Town and then rejoined Corby Town early last season. He added two goals at a further 33 Steelmen appearances. Off the field Kalern is a personal trainer at Leicester Fitness and Well Being Gym.

MICHAEL JACKLIN

'Jaffa' began his career with Grimsby Town and also had a spell playing in the USA early in his career. He then played for Brigg Town and Bridlington Town before signing for Harrogate Town in August 2010. Next stop for Michael was Grantham Town and he then spent the 2012/13 season with Stamford. In May 2013 he returned to Brigg Town and in 2014 joined Lincoln United. In February 2017 he signed for Gainsborough Trinity and then had a second spell with Lincoln United. He joined Cleethorpes Town for the 2020/21 season and in June 2021 he signed for Loughborough Dynamo. A no-nonsense centre half, Michael arrived at Steel Park in July 2022 and was immediately installed as club captain. He was a regular member of the side throughout the season and scored 6 goals in 41 appearances.

DANIEL JAMES GORDON

A versatile left sided player equally at home as an orthodox full back, a wing back or as an attacking wide player. Danny started out at Heather St Johns FC and moved to Carlton Town in 2015/16. In January 2018 he joined Loughborough Dynamo and spent four years there before arriving at Corby Town in July 2022. Danny has previously played against the Steelmen for Carlton and Loughborough. His long throw ins are a big feature of his play and he picked up two Player of the Year awards last season as he finished as top scorer with 11 goals in 40 appearances.

CALLUM MILNE

Central defender signed on dual registration with St Ives Town in January 2023. As a youngster Callum spent six years on the books of Aston Villa and has also played for Kettering Town, Wisbech Town, Eynesbury Rovers, Bedford Town and Harborough Town. Last season he scored 1 goal in 9 appearances.

TRISTAN THOMPSON-MATTHEWS

A hard working and skilful midfield player, Tristan joined Loughborough Dynamo from Heanor Town in the summer of 2020. He scored on his debut against Lutterworth in an F.A Cup tie and made twelve appearances before the 2020/21 season was curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021/22 his four goals in 38 appearances included a hat-trick in a 6-1 victory over Yaxley. Tristan signed for Corby Town in July 2022 and scored 8 goals in 42 appearances in 2022/23.

MATTHEW SLINN

Son of former Steelman Kevin Slinn. A former Northampton Town Academy player, Matty appeared in midfield for the Cobblers' Under-18 side. Upon his release from Sixfields he joined AFC Rushden & Diamonds in the summer of 2019 and he scored twice in 43 competitive appearances before leaving to join Corby Town in July 2022. He missed a large part of last season with injury but made 18 appearances and was named Managers Player of the Year.

HILTON ARTHUR

Hilton had youth spells at Boreham Wood and Hemel Hempstead alongside Sidik Atcha but the two teenagers initially came to prominence as Corby Town's successful under-eighteen youth team in 2017/18. Hilton made substitute appearances in pre-season friendlies against Wellingborough Town and Grantham Town at the start of the following campaign and was given his competitive first team debut – again as a substitute – in a 3-2 Southern League Cup defeat at home to Peterborough Sports in September 2018. Hilton made a further three appearances and after leaving Corby had a spell with Burton Park Wanderers before joining Soham Town Rangers in January 2022. After a spell training here at Steel Park he rejoined the Steelmen early last season and scored 8 goals in 30 appearances.

JORDAN O'BRIEN

An attacking player who had a spell with Leicester City before initially joining Corby Town in 2017. He scored 2 goals in 18 appearances in 2017/18 before being signed for s fee by Sheffield Wednesday. During his time there Jordan helped Wednesday win two Under-18 titles and also appeared in the club's Under-23 side. He returned to Steel Park in 2020 and made 6 appearances in the Covid-19 affected 2020/21 season. In 2021/22 Jordan was top scorer with 12 goals in 40 appearances and last season he netted 8 times in 18 appearances during an injury and illness hit campaign.

CHARLEY SANDERS

A powerful player equally at home in defence or attack. He graduated through the ranks at Boston United from the club's Centre of Excellence through the youth and reserve

team's to make his first team debut in 2012/13. After leaving Boston he played for Kings Lynn, Histon, Spalding, Huntingdon, Grantham, Yaxley and Bedford Town, where he was captain. Charley signed for Corby Town in March 2023 but was injured in just his second appearance.

TOBY HILLIARD

A striker previously with Kings Lynn Town, Dereham Town, Wisbech Town and Spalding United. Toby signed for Corby Town in February 2023 and scored 4 goals in 10 appearances during the remainder of 2022/23.

DREW RICHARDSON

Midfield player Drew joined the Luton Town Academy at the age of 8 In December 2018 he had a spell on work experience with Harlow Town and following his release from Luton in May 2019 he signed for Biggleswade Town. In 2020 He moved to Bedford Town and made around 100 appearances for the Eagles and was a regular member of the promotion winning side under Gar Setchell. He ended 2022/23 with Stotfold and joined Corby Town in June 2023.

JACK KEEBLE

Defender Jack began his football career with his local side Holbeach United as a 6-year-old. He was then taken on by Grimsby Town and captained their reserve side in 2017/18, He was named among the substitutes for the opening two games of that season but never made a senior appearance, Following his release from Grimsby Jack played for Wisbech Town, Stamford, Deeping Rangers and Holbeach United before Gar Setchell signed him for Bedford Town. In June 2023 he was re-united with Setchell at Corby Town.

JOE BUTTERWORTH

Son of former Peterborough United, Rushden & Diamonds and Stamford player Gary Butterworth. Central midfielder Joe has also played for Stamford as well as Yaxley and Bedford Town. He joined Corby Town in July 2023.

DANNY SETCHELL

Son of manager Gary. Danny had a brief spell with Corby Town during the Steelmen's pre-season programme in 2017. He joined Corby after being released by Kings Lynn and then played for Wisbech St Mary, Wisbech Town, Stamford and Bedford Town. He signed for Corby Town in July 2023.





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COVENTRY SPHINX LADIES FC

Sunday 3 September	0-4	L	Solihull Sporting Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 10 September	3-0	L	Shifnal Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 17 September	1-8	W	Crusaders Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 24 September	1-6	L	Worcester City Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 1 October	0-5	W	AFC Telford United	Women's FA Cup 2QR
Sunday 8 October	14.00	A	Solihull Sporting Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 15 October	14.00	H	Stourbridge 1st	BCFA Women's County Cup
Sunday 22 October	14.00	A	Northampton Town	Women's FA Cup 3QR
Sunday 29 October	14.00	A	Kidderminster Harriers Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 12 November	14.00	H	Lye Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 19 November	14.00	H	Shrewsbury Town Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 26 November	14.00	A	Burton Albion Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 3 December	14.00	A	Worcester City Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 10 December	14.00	H	Knowle Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 17 December	14.00	A	Lichfield City Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 7 January	14.00	A	Lye Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 14 January	14.00	H	Crusaders Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 28 January	14.00	A	Shrewsbury Town Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 4 February	14.00	H	Burton Albion Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 11 February	14.00	H	Kidderminster Harriers Women	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 18 February	14.00	A	Coundon Court Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 25 February	14.00	A	Knowle Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
Sunday 3 March	14.00	H	Shifnal Town Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
TBC		H	Coundon Court Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division
TBC		H	Lichfield City Ladies	West Mids Regional Premier Division



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* Subject to match coverage

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PITCHING IN NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE MIDLANDS FIXTURES

Saturday 7th October

Bedworth United	v	Sutton Coldfield Town
Coleshill Town	v	Rugby Town
Coventry Sphinx	v	Corby Town
Gresley Rovers	v	Shepshed Dynamo
Loughborough Dynamo	v	Spalding United

Sunday 8th October

Cambridge City	v	AFC Rushden & Diamonds
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Tuesday 10th October

Harborough Town	v	Coleshill Town
Sporting Khalsa	v	Hinckley LR

Saturday 14th October

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

Tuesday 17th October

Bedworth United	v	Harborough Town
Gresley Rovers	v	Spalding United

PITCHING IN NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE MIDLANDS LEAGUE TABLE

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Spalding United	7	6	1	0	19	4	15	19
2	Bedworth United	9	5	2	2	14	5	9	17
3	Quorn	8	4	3	1	19	11	8	15
4	Hinckley LR	7	4	3	0	13	8	5	15
5	Lye Town	9	4	3	2	15	14	1	15
6	Loughborough Dynamo	8	4	2	2	17	12	5	14
7	Shepshed Dynamo	8	4	1	3	11	13	-2	13
8	Anstey Nomads	6	3	3	0	14	8	6	12
9	Sporting Khalsa	5	4	0	1	8	2	6	12
10	Harborough Town	6	4	0	2	9	6	3	12
11	Corby Town	7	3	1	3	14	8	6	10
12	Coleshill Town	7	3	1	3	12	13	-1	10
13	Cambridge City	7	2	2	3	11	10	1	8
14	Coventry Sphinx	8	2	2	4	7	14	-7	8
15	Boldmere St Michaels	8	2	1	5	11	15	-4	7
16	Walsall Wood	8	2	1	5	12	17	-5	7
17	Sutton Coldfield Town	8	2	0	6	7	13	-6	6
18	Rugby Town	8	2	0	6	7	21	-14	6
19	Gresley Rovers	8	1	2	5	9	20	-11	5
20	AFC Rushden & Diamonds	8	0	0	8	3	18	-15	0

3/10/2023



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