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Saturday 6th January 2024
Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands

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Midland Alliance League Cup

Winners 2010

Midland Combination Premier Division

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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

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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
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Upcoming fixtures

AWAY



Sporting Khalsa v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 13th January 2024 | 3.00pm
Guardian Warehousing Arena
Noose Lane, Willenhall, WV13 3BB

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Loughborough Dynamo

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Tuesday 16th January 2024 | 7.45pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

HOME



Coventry Sphinx v Harborough Town

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 20th January 2024 | 3.00pm
Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena
Sphinx Drive

AWAY



Coleshill Town v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 27th January 2024 | 3.00pm
Pack Meadow
Packington Lane, Coleshill, Birmingham, B46 3JJ

AWAY



AFC Rushden & Diamonds v Coventry Sphinx

Pitching In Northern Premier League - Midlands
Saturday 3rd February 2024 | 3.00pm
Hayden Road Sports Ground
Hayden Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire, NN10 0HX



CoventrySphinx



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Happy New Year from everyone at Coventry Sphinx and welcome to the Sphinx Industrial Supplies Arena for the first home fixture of 2024.

Sphinx started the year with a frustrating game at Bedworth United on New Year's Day. The result went against us and I think we could have done more to affect the outcome against what ultimately was a pretty poor team by Bedworth's standards.

We also ended the match with nine men thanks to two late second yellow cards. While I would question the match referee on one of them and point out a lack of consistency regarding the other, the upshot is that we've made a challenging January even harder for ourselves.

If you buy our matchday programme regularly you'll be too familiar by now with my personal view on what's required of the Sphinx this season. Acquiring points at a good rate, draws included, will be the key to getting the job done.

Up to now we've certainly done that. The win column might be a little sparse but the boys are plugging away and giving a really good account of themselves at this new level of football.

But we're now in a month that will really test us and we've started it in a manner that should make it clear that there are improvements required to keep up the pace of point gathering.

This afternoon we welcome the supporters, players, management and officials of Spalding United to Sphinx Drive.

The reverse fixture was an early insight into what it takes to compete in this division and we're eager to show we've made some strides since our visit to Lincolnshire.

The Tulips are currently second, a point behind league leaders Harborough Town. 21 matches in, that doesn't happen by accident.

There are some familiar names in the Spalding squad, which goes to show the pulling power they have across the Midlands. If we're not at our very best this afternoon from the first whistle to the last we'll get nothing out of them today.

Next Saturday we travel to Willenhall to face Sporting Khalsa, who were rather more fortunate to beat Sphinx earlier in the season, and then we have two big home games in a week: Loughborough Dynamo on Tuesday 16th January and Harborough United the following Saturday.

Loughborough Dynamo, like Spalding and Harborough, are in the top five. They've played fewer matches than everyone above them. These are games that demand that Sphinx give it everything we've got.

At this stage in the season, though, I'm not interested in the league table — at least not as an excuse. We need to take something from our matches this month. We're good enough to do so.

Look back at our Boxing Day win over Lye Town, at some of our battling draws, even the recent loss to Quorn, and you'll see a team capable of competing at this level.

We shouldn't lose sight of that or how far we've come in a year. But we owe it to ourselves to raise our expectations for the new year.

This is a Step Four football club on merit and our aim has to be to prove we belong. That begins on the pitch and it's been solid so far. But now we need to sharpen up to see it through. Up the Sphinx!



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OUR HISTORY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





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MEET THE SQUAD

	Jamal Adams	Talented striker who was part of Sphinx's title-winning team in 2022/23 and returned to the club in November 2023.	 024 7644 2838		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
	Harvey Billing	Former Sphinx youth team captain who returned to the club after spells with Stratford Town and Easington Sports.	 HELPING GOALKEEPERS SINCE 1999		Alex Lock	Highly rated midfielder signed from Rugby Town in October 2023.	Sponsorship available
	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		Callum Martin	Pacy former Coventry City junior full back who loves a tackle and causes opponents problems in the attacking third.	 Windows & Doors
	Antonio Cristofaro	Skilful former Walsall youth midfielder with dribbling ability, sharp creative instincts and an eye for goal.	 ALWAYS THERE.		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.	
	Gio Dainty	Experienced and versatile midfield player who returned to Sphinx in 2023 after a long and successful spell with Coleshill Town.	Sponsored by STUART GUEST		Leigh Phillips	Experienced wide player who returned to Sphinx ahead of 2023/24 after a successful career in armed forces football.	 024 7644 2838
	Jack Downes	Versatile, battling midfielder with a tremendous engine. Outstanding since returning to Sphinx Drive and a league winner in 2022/23.			Joe Pursey	Sturdy defender who came in late in 2022/23 and had an instant impact in Sphinx's title quest.	Sponsorship available
	Luke Downes	Creative midfield player who returned to Sphinx in 2021 after countless impressive performances here as a youngster.			Jac Redhead	Creative midfield player with experience at Barwell and Halesowen Town.	Sponsorship available
	Jamie Draper	Defender who emerged from the Sphinx youth team and has become a regular starter in our best ever team.			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
	William Edjenguele	Experienced former Coventry City central defender who joined from Bedworth United after spells with Barwell and Nuneaton Borough.	Sponsorship available		Finlay Shorrocks	Versatile left-sided player who joined Sphinx in September 2023 and debuted in our first win in eighth tier football.	INSTARMAC®
	Sam Ellis	Entertaining attacking midfielder who joined Sphinx after spells with Sutton Coldfield Town and Hinckley in 2022/23.			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.	
	Keelan Fallows	Talented goalkeeper who joined from Tamworth at the start of Sphinx's first season in the eighth tier of English football.			Callum Woodward	Long-serving legendary club captain, a battling mainstay in the Sphinx midfield and a vital source of goals and creativity.	 Exhibitors · Displays · Bespoke Fixings
	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.					

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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Steven Naismith must have felt as if the whole world was watching.

Having ironed out a few issues, he took his Heart of Midlothian team into their penultimate Scottish Premiership match of 2023 in fine form. They followed a poor run by winning all three of their league matches in November and their first of December before defeats by a resurgent Rangers and struggling Aberdeen.

A win at Celtic Park gave Naismith just the boost he needed heading into the festive period and Hearts saw off St Mirren two days before Christmas. Two days after Christmas the Jam Tarts went to Easter Road for an Edinburgh derby against Hibernian. Their stoppage time winner was scored, with searing inevitability, by Lawrence Shankland.

The Hearts captain had hit the post with a penalty earlier in the match but the last gasp goal was the 28-year-old's fifth in the four consecutive league matches

in which he'd scored (now five not out at the time of writing). The derby was the eighth Premiership match he'd scored in out of the last eleven. Despite an early-season drought of seven matches, Shankland ended the day two goals clear of James Tavernier and Matt O'Riley in the scoring charts.

No wonder he was in demand and on a hundred January shopping lists. As December rolled on, speculation about Shankland's future grew ever more intense. Former Hearts, Rangers and Southampton player Neil McCann, now a pundit, recommended his old club handcuff their skipper in a locked room and get a new contract signed quicksmart.

The way Shankland's been able to unpick match after match in the autumn and winter one might wonder whether even that would be enough should the right offer come along to take him away from Tynecastle with just a year and a half remaining on his contract. Up to and including their late win at Easter Road, Hearts

had scored twenty league goals in 2023/24. Shankland was responsible for more than half of them and that's exactly what he was there to do. He's a striker's striker – a magnificent throwback ageing just nicely in a league that's not for the faint-hearted.

Shankland plays with strength and power without being a physical colossus. He has pace but not the electrifying kind and a good deal of it is in his brain. He's a nuisance, a hustler, as capable of making runs off the shoulder of the last defender as he is instinctive in the penalty area.

He's got two good feet and loads of aerial ability, not to mention an almost magnetic knack for finding the top corner. His movement is the kind of constant threat that keeps defenders honest and nervous in equal measure.

Stick the captain's armband on him and ask him to lead the line for ninety minutes twice a week, and you've got a legitimate leader in both word and deed – a proper, old-fashioned but modern, bustling, natural striker.

The fact that you already know his shirt number based on all that says it all. In Premiership terms, Shankland is in his best scoring form not only over the winter months but for the last season and a half.

In that period he's scored league goals at a rate of 0.66 per 90 minutes, a return he's only bettered in the Championship. He hasn't had more shots on target per 90 since he was a teenager. In 2022/23 and 2023/24 Shankland is shooting more, scoring more, and scoring from more of his shots, than ever before.

Statistically he's more important in terms of his team's goal difference with and without him on the pitch than at any other time in a career that hasn't quite followed the path that might have been expected of him when he burst into the senior team and made an instant impact at Queen's Park in 2012/13.

Shankland was born in Glasgow and it was at Queen's Park that he played his youth football before he graduated into the first team.

The Spiders sold a few youngsters in the summer of 2013, among them both Shankland and future Scotland captain, Premier League champion and Champions League winner Andy Robertson.

The destination for Shankland was Aberdeen, where he spent four years without ever quite cracking the first team. He was loaned away from Pittodrie on several occasions and eventually left permanently to sign for Ayr United in 2017.

Shankland rediscovered his scoring touch. His record outside the Premiership with both Ayr United and Dundee United was terrific and played a big part in the former winning League One and the latter the Championship with Shankland as their foremost marksman.

In the summer of 2021 he made the unusual move to Antwerp to play for Saudi-owned Beerschot, part of a multi-club stable that includes Sheffield United. One season and five Shankland league goals later they were relegated from Belgium's top flight and they remain in the second tier after just two seasons at the top.

With his Belgian sojourn ended by the drop, Shankland returned to Scotland and the Premiership. This time he headed for the capital, joining Robbie Neilson's Hearts having previously played under him at Dundee United. His first goal? Why, it was against Hibs at Easter Road, of course!

There's been interest from England in the past. There presumably is now, too, and there will be again in the future. There's not a team in Scotland who wouldn't want him and there will have been European eyes peering over Naismith's shoulder on derby day too.

Whatever else Shankland does in the remainder of his career, wherever he goes or doesn't go from this point forward, he will surely look back on this season and last with huge affection.

Midlothian has been the making of the man. Shankland has grown in stature. He walks taller, wears the armband with evident pride and busts a gut in every match to prove himself worthy of it. He might not be long for Edinburgh but maroon looks good on him and he probably won't look quite right in anything else.

Chris Nee
hpbp.substack.com

2023/24 Player Stats (all competitions)

Player	Apps	Mins	Starts	Full 90	Sub On	Yellows	Second Yellows	Straight Reds	Goals	Assists	Goals Per 90	Assists Per 90	G+A Per 90
Adams, Jamal	4	133	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bailey-Nicholls, Khaellem	6	96	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Brown, Leo	5	448	5	4	0	1	0	0	2	1	0.022	0.011	0.033
Bryson, James	8	528	6	5	2	1	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	1	20	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cristofaro, Antonio	4	105	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Dainty, Gio	9	534	7	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	0.022	0.011	0.033
Downes, Jack	22	1827	20	15	2	9	2	0	2	0	0.022	0.000	0.022
Downes, Luke	21	1398	16	11	5	6	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Draper, Jamie	1	90	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edjenguele, Will	13	1098	13	10	0	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ellis, Sam	10	239	2	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fallows, Keelan	21	1890	21	21	0	3	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Guest, Louis	21	1770	20	19	1	6	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hayward, Jordan	13	594	7	3	6	0	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Hedge, Zach	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Jackson, Sam	1	28	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Johnson, Max	12	539	5	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lock, Alex	12	730	8	5	4	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Martin, Callum	7	463	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Parker, Dylan	15	1125	12	7	3	3	0	0	3	3	0.033	0.033	0.067
Peplinski, Dawid	4	168	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phillips, Leigh	3	125	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pursey, Joe	21	1848	21	19	0	4	0	0	1	0	0.000	0.011	0.011
Redhead, Jac	14	1057	12	5	2	4	0	0	3	3	0.033	0.033	0.067
Shipman, Matty	22	1980	22	22	0	6	0	0	8	3	0.089	0.033	0.122
Shorrock, Finlay	16	1330	16	11	0	1	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Whiteside, Callum	23	1818	21	17	2	5	0	0	1	0	0.011	0.000	0.011
Woodward, Callum	13	1051	13	6	0	5	0	0	1	2	0.011	0.022	0.033

2023/24 Player Stats (NPL Midlands only)

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Bailey-Nicholls, Khaellem	6	96	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Brown, Leo	5	448	5	4	0	1	0	0	2	1	0.022	0.011	0.033
Bryson, James	8	528	6	5	2	1	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
Dainty, Gio	8	464	6	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Downes, Jack	19	1557	17	12	2	8	2	0	2	0	0.022	0.000	0.022
Downes, Luke	18	1156	13	9	5	5	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Draper, Jamie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edjenguele, Will	12	1008	12	9	0	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ellis, Sam	8	183	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fallows, Keelan	18	1620	18	18	0	2	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Guest, Louis	19	1590	18	17	1	5	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hayward, Jordan	11	468	6	2	5	0	0	0	1	1	0.011	0.011	0.022
Hedge, Zach	3	270	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Jackson, Sam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Johnson, Max	10	449	4	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lock, Alex	11	676	7	5	4	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Martin, Callum	6	427	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Parker, Dylan	12	891	9	5	3	2	0	0	2	3	0.022	0.033	0.056
Peplinski, Dawid	4	168	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Phillips, Leigh	2	63	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pursey, Joe	19	1668	19	17	0	3	0	0	0	1	0.000	0.011	0.011
Redhead, Jac	13	967	11	4	2	4	0	0	3	3	0.033	0.033	0.067
Shipman, Matty	19	1710	19	19	0	6	0	0	8	3	0.089	0.033	0.122
Shorrock, Finlay	15	1276	15	11	0	1	1	0	0	0	0.000	0.000	0.000
Whiteside, Callum	20	1562	18	15	2	5	0	0	1	0	0.011	0.000	0.011
Woodward, Callum	12	989	12	6	0	5	0	0	1	2	0.011	0.022	0.033

QUORN 4 COVENTRY SPHINX 2

Pitching In NPL
Division One Midlands
Saturday 23rd December 2023

Farley Way has been an unhappy hunting ground for Coventry Sphinx in the 2023/24 season.

After losing heavily in the FA Trophy they were beaten by Quorn again in the Pitching In Northern Premier League Midlands in the final match before Christmas.

Despite the concession of two late goals, the difference between these away losses was significant.

Sphinx put in maximum effort and made a real game of it, scoring twice before ultimately succumbing to a team who were clinical in front of goal.

Luke Downes captained the side from the start of a league match for the first time, playing in midfield with Jack Downes and Alex Lock. Jac Redhead played off striker Matty Shipman.

Callum Whiteside, Will Edjenguele and James Bryson made up the back three in front of goalkeeper Keelan Fallows. Joe Pursey and Finlay Shorrock continued in the wing back positions.

The visitors made a positive start and immediately demonstrated more intent than their last visit to Quorn. A short burst of early pressure culminated in a goalbound Redhead shot being blocked before the home side really got a foot on the ball.

The match settled into an even pattern, both teams putting together attacking plays in the first quarter but unable to carve out a proper opening before Quorn had two decent looks at goal just before the half hour.

Courey Grantham held off Edjenguele and dragged his shot across goal from right to left with 25 minutes played. Paddy Webb also pulled a shot across the face, this time from left to right, two minutes later. Fallows was untroubled by those two efforts but beaten by the next.

Despite the two prior chances, Quorn's opening goal with 30 minutes played punctured some Sphinx possession. Ryan

Beswick was given time and space 20 yards out and thrashed a fine drive beyond Fallows to make it 1-0.

Sphinx responded well to the setback. Webb drew a simple save from Fallows in the 38th minute but Sphinx drew level in the 40th.

A Jack Downes goal has been a long time coming but it was a beauty when it arrived to make it 1-1. His excellent close control in the box took him away from a couple of defenders before he fired the ball beyond Quorn goalkeeper Charlie Woods and into the bottom corner.

Fallows had to move his feet quickly to touch a dangerous cross over his crossbar shortly before half time, keeping the score even at the break.

Sphinx came out swinging in the second half. Tenacious play at the top of the attacking third led to a sight of goal for Redhead, who fired one in but saw it parried to safety by Woods in the Quorn goal.

Not for the last time, the home team landed a suckerpunch in the 49th minute with Sphinx looking in decent shape. Quorn's second goal was a near carbon copy of the first. The powerful strike from Devon Kelly-Evans was just as accurate as Beswick's but into the opposite corner.

Sphinx responded well again, enjoying good spells of possession but taking a few minutes to really start making chances. They should have equalised on the hour when a Jack Downes flick-on diverted Redhead's corner kick into the path of Shipman but the striker headed over.

The visitors kept on pushing after a pair of substitutions brought Jamal Adams and Jordan Hayward into attacking positions but the spectacular second equaliser was conjured by two players who'd been on the field since the start.

With 20 minutes remaining Shipman won a header out wide on the left to guide the ball in-field. Redhead watched it bounce once and hit

a venomous, dipping 30-yard strike over stranded goalkeeper Woods and into the net. Even in a game of fantastic goals, this was outstanding.

The visitors were in the ascendancy at 2-2 but were soon undone by Quorn's sharpness in Sphinx's half and another calm finish. Cain Noble made it 3-2 in the 76th minute, slotting the ball past Fallows and into the bottom corner.



Stuart Guest

Now chasing the game again, Sphinx set about the task of finding a third equaliser. It showed the right attitude to the game and on another day it might have paid off.

Shipman again went close from a corner with ten minutes to go. His header was on target and beat Woods but Quorn substitute Reece Fyfe cleared it off the line.

Adams zipped the ball back in and Edjenguele, right in front of goal, wasn't able to snag it as it took a ricochet to his feet.

Three minutes from time Hayward did well to keep the ball alive to tee up Redhead, who curled his shot over from the edge of the box before Quorn put the game to bed in stoppage time.

With the visitors looking for a third goal, they were caught in possession high up the pitch and Ant Carney's clinical finish on the break made it 4-2, finally ending Sphinx's challenge.

Although they were caught out in stoppage time, Sphinx can take some credit from a much improved Farley Way performance. They were more determined and braver with the ball, and with a stroke of luck or another bit of magic they might have dug out a third equalising goal.

Quorn were good value for the victory, though, and Sphinx had no complaints about the outcome of a match that was, despite some bizarre commentary on their social media, a match devoid of controversy. Specifically naming multiple opposition players who they felt should have been sent off – nonsense in this case anyway, bias or not – is poor form.

Sphinx move on to a Boxing Day clash at home against high-flying Lye Town before a New Year's Day visit to The Oval to take on even more familiar opposition in the form of near neighbours Bedworth United.

TEAMSHEET

- 1 Keelan Fallows
- 2 Callum Whiteside ▼ Dainty (78)
- 3 Finlay Shorrock ▼ Hayward (67)
- 4 Luke Downes @
- 5 Will Edjenguele
- 6 James Bryson
- 7 Joe Pursey
- 8 Jack Downes ⚽
- 9 Matty Shipman ■
- 10 Jac Redhead ⚽ ■
- 11 Alex Lock ▼ Adams (61)
- 12 Callum Woodward
- 14 Jordan Hayward ▲ Shorrock (67)
- 15 Gio Dainty ▲ Whiteside (78)
- 16 Jamal Adams ▲ Lock (61)
- 17 Khaellem Bailey-Nicholls

SPHINX MAN OF THE MATCH
JAC REDHEAD



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

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



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

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

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

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COVENTRY SPHINX 2 LYE TOWN 0

**Pitching In NPL
Division One Midlands**
Tuesday 26th December 2023

Coventry Sphinx shook off the disappointment of a defeat at Quorn to claim a crucial Boxing Day win over Lye Town in the Pitching In Northern Premier League Midlands.

A goal in either half by Jack Downes and Jordan Hayward gave Sphinx a 2-0 victory against a Flyers team sitting high in the league table, further proof that they can be competitive in Step Four football.

Joint managers John Woodward and Shaun Thomas started Downes in midfield with captain Callum Woodward, who returned to the side after sitting out at Quorn three days earlier, and playmaker Jac Redhead.

Keelan Fallows played in goal behind a back three of Callum Whiteside, Will Edjenguele and James Bryson. Joe Pursey and Finlay Shorrock played in the wing back positions and Gio Dainty was given a start off striker Matty Shipman.

The last game of an historic 2023 started with the home team dominating the ball and seeking to cause problems for Lye from kick-off. The rhythm evened out but Sphinx's threat led to a corner being worked back towards Redhead with ten minutes played. His shot was blocked by a defender.

The home team got themselves on top but not without a fight. Fallows had to hold on to a shot from the edge of the box in the 13th minute and make sure his angles were right to safely see over an ambitious long shot from Joe Palmer six minutes later.

Sphinx were a little sloppy in some areas in difficult conditions, but they produced moments of quality that mattered. In the middle of the half Dainty sprung the offside line on the right and headed towards goal. As he moved into the penalty area he squared the ball for Shipman, whose shot was blocked by a last-ditch defensive effort by Rio Sawyers.

On the half hour mark, Jack Downes went one better to put his team in the lead. Shorrock took a quick throw-in on the left and gave Redhead time to assess his options, turn, and slide the ball into the path of Downes. After

scoring at the weekend, the midfielder struck a 25-yard drive that took a very slight nick but had the power and direction it needed to leave Ben Newey helpless in the Lye goal.

The hosts didn't sit on their single-goal lead and set about searching for a second before half time. Shorrock, Redhead and Downes superbly linked up again with five minutes left in the first half, this time creating a half chance for Dainty. He did well to get across his marker at the near post but the angle was too tight and his left-footed shot could only find the side netting.

Shipman called Newey into action two minutes later, getting his shot away at the end of another nice move that took Sphinx all the way from left to right and stretched the Flyers defence thin as Shipman found the space he needed to fire towards goal.

Thomas and Woodward's team might have felt some frustration at going into the break just one goal to the good but they were decent value for it and the task ahead of them for the second half was clear.

They started well again. Jack Downes had Newey on the move five minutes into the half. His sliced cross was heading for the top corner before the Lye goalkeeper tipped the ball over his crossbar for a Sphinx corner.

After that corner had been cleared out of the box, Redhead pinched the ball high up the pitch and showed great feet to create a shooting opportunity. He cut across the finish and sent the ball wide of Newey's goal. Soon after that, Newey had to save from Shipman again after the striker had chopped back onto his right foot and curled a tame shot on target.

Lye found their feet in the second half as they had in the first. One minute the match was end to end and gave Sphinx some chances to get the visitors turned and make some chances, the next it was an attritional battle that tested their fortitude as much as their ability.

The away team had their best spell of the match with an hour played and it culminated in a corner from their left that was delivered deep

and resulted in a header at the back post that drifted well over. Ten minutes later Fallows got down smartly to hold a low shot from Demico Burton.



Marcus Robinson

Sphinx were still having a say going forward. Downes tried his luck from distance again and his shot zipped off the surface but Newey was equal to it. The home team were digging in with time ticking away but looking to score too. Lye had them on edge but were guilty of trying to force the issue at times when composure might have served them better.

The second goal was just the sting in the tail that Sphinx were looking for. Nice wing play by Shorrock on the left sent substitute Jordan Hayward into the penalty area.



Marcus Robinson

He showed excellent tenacity to force his way through the defence as they snapped at his heels to get the ball cleared before using the outside of his left foot to shoot across the goalkeeper and into the far corner. At 2-0 with a minute of stoppage time played, the points were secure.

Hayward's late goal put the gloss on a vital win. Sphinx had been under some late pressure without the

insurance of a second but would have been disappointed to drop points after keeping the Flyers attack largely at arm's length.

Adding three more points will go a long way towards Sphinx's aims in 2023/24. The NPL Midlands table is tight and every win has a big impact. Steadily picking up points is the name of the game for the boys in sky blue and white.

They now move on into 2024 with a New Year's Day fixture against near neighbours Bedworth United at The Oval, followed by a home match against Spalding United. January promises to be a tough month, full of games against teams in the top half.

Sphinx have shown themselves capable against top teams on their day and a challenging month could be the making of them.

TEAMSHEET

- 1 Keelan Fallows
- 2 Callum Whiteside
- 3 Finlay Shorrock
- 4 Jack Downes ⚽
- 5 Will Edjenguele
- 6 James Bryson
- 7 Joe Pursey
- 8 Callum Woodward Ⓜ ▼ L. Downes (76)
- 9 Matty Shipman Ⓜ
- 10 Jac Redhead Ⓜ ⚽ ▼ Lock (76)
- 11 Gio Dainty ▼ Hayward (66)
- 12 Luke Downes Ⓜ ▲ Woodward (76)
- 14 Jamal Adams
- 15 Jordan Hayward ▲ Dainty (66)
- 16 Alex Lock ▲ Redhead (76)

SPHINX MAN OF THE MATCH
JACK DOWNES



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YOUTH TEAM FIXTURES

Thursday 17 August	1-4	L	Solihull Moors	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 31 August	2-1	W	Rugby Borough	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 7 September	5-2	W	Stourport Swifts	FA Youth Cup Preliminary Round
Thursday 14 September	1-1	D	Inkberrow	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 21 September	0-6	L	AFC Wulfrunians	FA Youth Cup First Round Qualifying
Thursday 28 September	3-1	W	Stratford Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 5 October	1-4	W	Rugby Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 12 October	4-0	W	P S Olympic	Joel Richards Memorial Cup R1
Monday 23 October	1-0	L	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 9 November	3-4	L	Stourbridge	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 16 November	3-0	W	Atherstone Town	Joel Richards Memorial Cup R2
Tuesday 5 December	*1-1	D	Rushall Olympic	Colin Lowe Memorial League Cup R3
Thursday 14 December	1-6	L	Stourbridge	Joel Richards Memorial Cup QF
Thursday 4 January		H	Halesowen Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Monday 8 January		A	Bedworth United	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 11 January		A	Inkberrow	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Monday 22 January		A	Halesowen Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
Thursday 1 February		A	Stratford Town	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Alvechurch	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		A	Alvechurch	MFYL Southern Premier Division
TBC		H	Bedworth United	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

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SPALDING UNITED

For decades it has been documented that Spalding United was formed in 1921, but research into club history has revealed that in fact, its existence goes back much earlier.

A chance sighting of an early team photograph on social media prompted some investigation and evidence gained shows that the club was formed back in 1905 following the amalgamation of the Fulney Institute and Victorias clubs was confirmed at a meeting in a local hostelry when it was decided that the name should be Spalding United.

A committee was formed and the home ground as to be the Low Grounds, but references were also made of games being played on Pinchbeck Road (Black Swan Field) which is now known as The Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field.

In 1952 the Tulips recorded their ground record attendance when playing Peterborough United, then a Midland League side, in a qualifying round of the FA Cup. A crowd of 6,973 packed into the ground and saw Spalding leading 2-0 with ten minutes to play but Posh fought back to equalise and went on to win the replay 3-0. Further progress followed with success in the Lincolnshire Senior A Cup in 1953.

The club has reached the first-round proper of the FA Cup on two occasions. In 1957/58 they lost 3-1 to Durham City and in 1964/65 they played Football League opposition for the first time, being beaten 5-3 in a thrilling encounter at Newport County.

Spalding became United Counties League champions for the first time in 1955, having been runners-up in 1951, 1952 and 1953. They joined the Eastern Counties League but were without success and joined the Central Alliance League. They stayed just one season before transferring to the re-formed Midland League in 1961. In 1968 they rejoined the United Counties League and won the title for a second time in 1975.

In 1989/90 Spalding enjoyed an excellent run in the FA Vase, progressing to a home quarter-final tie with Guiseley, who included former Leicester City and England striker Frank Worthington in their side. A crowd of 2,020 saw Guiseley win 3-1 in extra time, having equalised in stoppage time. Things took a down turn with relegation back to the United Counties League the following season.

In 1998 they finished third in the league and again reached the quarter-final stage of the FA Vase, losing 2-1 at home to eventual winners Tiverton Town in front of 2,038 spectators. In 1998/99 the club won the United Counties League championship, the Lincolnshire A Cup and the Hinchingsbrooke Cup. As UCL champions Spalding regained membership of the Southern League and competed in the Eastern Division for season 1999/2000. They finished in a creditable 15th position.

Year (2011/12) started on a high with a partnership deal with top local junior club Spalding Athletic JFC, putting us in contact with age group football from under-7 to under-18.

Sadly the season ended in relegation but despite this set back they aimed at a return to step 4. In 2012/13 they narrowly missed winning promotion by one point but won the UCL Knockout Cup, beating promoted St Ives Town 4-0 in the final.

The UCL championship trophy, however, was brought back to town in convincing style in 2013/14 season with the title secured with four matches of the season remaining. Looking to build on the success of winning promotion to Level 4, the "Boardroom" was strengthened by the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer in local businessman and former player, Malcolm Gray.

With the formation of a reserve side and a commitment to strengthen the club as part of the local community, the club look forward to the challenge of establishing itself at step 4.

A return to the Evo-Stik NPL for the 2014/15 season was highly successful with the team always placed in the leading group and eventually finished in a very respectful seventh position in Division One South. The season also saw the introduction of an under-18 team.

The 2016/17 campaign evolved as their best, finishing in their highest ever placing in the modern Football Pyramid. The Tulips finished in third position in NPL First Division South, just missing out on promotion from Level Four when losing by the odd goal in three away to second placed Witton Albion.

The Tulips had, in fact, never been outside the top three all season. In addition, the club had three players – Nathan Stainfield (for the third time), Michael Duggan and Bradley Wells named in the South division team of the year.

Following an indifferent start to the 2018/19 season manager Chris Rawlinson and chairman Andy Gay mutually agreed to part company. Assistant manager Matt Easton was put in temporary charge of the team but formally took over the reins towards the end of September.

The season, however, was largely disappointing with the team languishing in the lower regions almost throughout and ultimately just avoiding relegation.

The end of October, 2019 heralded a new era with new ownership of the club with an influx of new shareholders and directors in a complete restructure of the company and board. The new emphasis being putting the community of Spalding at the heart of everything the club envisaged. Existing shareholders Rod Quinton and Graham Chappell

welcoming local businessman and solicitor Paul Turnell as a new shareholder. The three were joined by shareholder/director positions for Andrew Gay, Jennifer Gay, Eddie Reeve and Phil Brennan. Successful businessman Iain Crawford was also welcomed onto the 'board'. Andy Gay would continue as chairman with wife Jennifer as club treasurer.

In early December manager Matt Easton rocked the club by unexpectedly resigning. His assistant Lewis Thorogood stepped up to fill the breach on a temporary basis as the season was forced to a premature end due to the Covid 19 virus epidemic, he was handed the position on a permanent basis. However, following a good start to the 2020 season with two wins, three successive defeats led to him stepping down into a new role within the club.

A new era for the club began on August 19, 2020, when it was announced that pending FA and League approval, with AK Holdings agreeing the purchase of Spalding United Football Club. Andrew Killingsworth owner of AK Holdings would be the new and proud owner of SUFC with Leigh Porter installed as the new CEO. Former chairman Andrew Gay will remain at the club as vice-chairman.

For Season 2021/2022 high hopes were expected with ex-Peterborough Star Gabby Zakuani in charge however results were disappointing and Zakuani left the role in December to be replaced by ex-Wisbech Town man Brett Whaley. The Tulips maintained a mid table position despite some excellent results against high flying Halesowen Town, Belper Town, Ilkeston Town and Coleshill Town.

At the start of the 2022-2023 season the Tulips were unbeaten until January and were the last level 8 club to be unbeaten from the start of the season going in to the New Year, however a very poor run of form saw Whaley replaced by interim Senior Player Elliot Sandy. The club reached the final of the Lincolnshire Senior Trophy however they went down 1-0 to Grantham Town.

A fine run of form, including a 2-1 away victory at newly crowned champions Stamford, saw the Tulips in to the Play-offs. A 2-1 semi final win over Sporting Khalsa saw them visit the home of Halesowen Town with over 3500 supporters attending. Heartbreak for the Tulips as an injury time goal from the hosts equalised an early Captain Stainfield header and an extra time winner saw the Yeltz promoted.

Interim Manager Elliot Sandy was then offered the job on a full time basis and he is now building a squad to hopefully have another push for promotion to Step 3.



SPALDING UNITED

Management Team

Elliot Sandy

Experienced and versatile Sandy is another with an impressive football CV having experienced successful spells at Oxford City, Kettering, Rushden & Diamonds and Banbury, he adds just as much value off the pitch as on and is a true leader. Took interim charge of the team during the 2022/23 season and appointed full time player/manager before the start of the 2023/24 season.

James Clifton

James has the pedigree to make a real impression at The Tulips and his football CV is impressive and includes the likes of Oxford City, Nuneaton and Alfreton, James can play in midfield and defence and he can be a real integral part of The Tulips squad. He now is also part of new manager Elliot Sandy's backroom team as player coach.

Stephen Walker

Stephen joined the Tulips to support player manager Elliot Sandy in March 2023 and brings a wealth of management experience, including spells at Bromsgrove Sporting and Stratford Town. Stephen is a UEFA B qualified coach.

Ben Derbyshire

Ben is the Tulips Goalkeeping Coach and is the owner of BD Goalkeeping School, where he coaches children and adults all over Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire.

Ady Woolley - Physio

Previous clubs worked for, Bourne Town, Yaxley, Boston United and PSL. Present, Clinical Director and Owner of The Fane Clinic. Little known fact, 5 appearances for England over 50s.

Nick Langton - Physio

Nick works for the FANE Clinic in Peterborough as well as being the Tulips Physio. Nick attended the EMFAIF course at St Georges Park in August of 2023.

Players

Nathan Stainfield (Club Captain)

Captain Fantastic "Staino" needs no introduction at Spalding...but we will anyway, Nathan cleared the board at the clubs end of season awards and finished off with a place in the NPL Midlands Team of the Year following his impressive campaign last season in the centre of defence.

Sam Cartwright

Sam enjoyed two years at Peterborough United as a professional before joining The Tulips, he's committed to Spalding again and we look forward to seeing what he can achieve in his third full season as an exciting energetic and physical defender.

Sam Warburton

Sam signed for the Tulips from Bedford Town, Sam brings experience of playing at a higher level and was signed by interim Manager Elliot Sandy for his experience, scored a screamer on his debut against Daventry Town.

Connor Peters

Connor signed for the Tulips from Peterborough Sports, he also represented Harlow Town and Yaxley before his permanent transfer to the Tulips. A quick defender uses his pace to great effect in a defence that conceded the lowest amount of goals in the league last season.

Danny Draper

Danny is a tough ball winning midfielder who has experience Step 4 football with the likes of Stamford, Corby and Wisbech.

Kyle Barker

Kyle was a product of the Peterborough United Academy signing his first professional contract in 2021 whilst making a number of first team appearances, joining Wrexham on loan for the remainder of the season. Kyle then signed a two year contract with Peterborough in 2021, also had trials for Scottish outfit Dundee.

Lewis Hilliard

Lewis joined from National League North side Peterborough Sports, who he had helped gain promotion the previous season. Also has experience of playing for Boston United.

Tony Breeden

Joins the Tulips from step 3 side Nuneaton Borough. This experienced stopper is renowned for being one of the best keepers in non league and manager Sandy is pleased to add him to the squad for the forthcoming season.

Dan Sweeney

Dan joins the Tulips from Step 3 side Macclesfield Town and was part of their championship winning squad. Starting his career at Stourport before signing for Solihull Moors the Tulips beat a lot of other clubs to his signature.

Jordan Graham

Jordan signed from Kettering Town, the forward is a former Leicester City academy graduate and has also played for Mansfield Town, Hednesford as well as Kettering

Callum Westwood

Callum is a full back whose previous clubs include Kettering, Corby and Rushden & Diamonds, Callum brings higher level experience to the Tulips defence.

Glenn Walker

Glenn joins from Step 2 side Brackley Town where he is their record appearance holder with over 400 appearances. Glenn was club captain for Brackley last season and he led them to the NPL North Play off final.

Joe Curtis

Joe joined the Tulips from Bromsgrove Sporting, a former Southampton academy Graduate he has also appeared for Rushden & Diamonds and Corby Town.

Stacey Freeman

Stacey joined from local rivals Stamford AFC, a versatile and experienced defender Stacey has also turned out for Whitehawk and Lewes.

James Snedden

James joined the Tulips from League rivals Shepshed Dynamos. A goalscoring midfielder James started off the season at EFL League Two new boys Notts County. James was the only goal scorer for the Shepshed side in their recent 6-1 defeat at the Sir Halley Stewart.

Tyler Winters

Tyler is a Peterborough United Youth player and has recently joined Spalding on a Loan from the EFL Club. Tyler is a pacy striker who has scored 6 goals in 7 games for the PUFC U18 Team this season.

Ben Heath

Goalkeeper Ben signed for the Tulips from Corby Town. Last season Ben was part of the Championship winning AFC Stamford side, he has also had spells at Northampton Town and Daventry Town.

Dominik Wysocki

Dominik joins from UCL side Melton Town. He was previously selected for final trials for a place in the English Colleges FA National Team. Dominik has also represented Harborough Town in the Northern Premier League.

Riley O'Sullivan

Riley joins from step 3 side Stratford Town, a pacy attacking player he has previously appeared for Hednesford and Redditch. The Tulips saw his talents at first hand when they played against Stratford in the FA Cup, with Riley a stand out player.



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



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PITCHING IN NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE MIDLANDS FIXTURES

Saturday 6th January

AFC Rushden & Diamonds v Gresley Rovers

Boldmere St Michaels v Quorn

Coleshill Town v Corby Town

Coventry Sphinx v Spalding United

Hinckley LR v Bedworth United

Lye Town v Anstey Nomads

Rugby Town v Sporting Khalsa

Shepshed Dynamo v Sutton Coldfield Town

Walsall Wood v Harborough Town

Sunday 7th January

Cambridge City v Loughborough Dynamo

Tuesday 9th January

Anstey Nomads v Cambridge City

Bedworth United v Walsall Wood

Spalding United v Rugby Town

Wednesday 10th January

Loughborough Dynamo v Harborough Town

PITCHING IN NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

DIVISION ONE MIDLANDS LEAGUE TABLE

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Harborough Town	21	15	2	4	50	17	33	47
2	Spalding United	21	14	4	3	48	19	29	46
3	Anstey Nomads	20	13	6	1	48	23	25	45
4	Hinckley LR	22	11	7	4	36	28	8	40
5	Loughborough Dynamo	19	11	5	3	35	20	15	38
6	Lye Town	22	11	4	7	32	28	4	37
7	Sutton Coldfield Town	22	10	5	7	38	31	7	35
8	Quorn	20	9	5	6	40	29	11	32
9	Sporting Khalsa	21	9	3	9	29	34	-5	30
10	Boldmere St Michaels	21	9	2	10	39	30	9	29
11	Bedworth United	23	8	5	10	26	28	-2	29
12	Corby Town	21	8	4	9	46	32	14	28
13	Walsall Wood	18	8	3	7	31	30	1	27
14	Coleshill Town	22	8	3	11	34	43	-9	27
15	Shepshed Dynamo	21	7	4	10	23	35	-12	25
16	Coventry Sphinx	21	4	8	9	21	36	-15	20
17	Cambridge City	21	5	4	12	22	40	-18	19
18	Rugby Town	21	5	1	15	24	49	-25	16
19	Gresley Rovers	23	3	6	14	23	61	-38	15
20	AFC Rushden & Diamonds	20	1	1	18	13	45	-32	4

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MATCH SQUADS



Jamal Adams
James Bryson
Alfonso Castellano
Antonio Cristofaro
Gio Dainty
Jack Downes
Luke Downes
Jamie Draper
Will Edjenguele
Sam Ellis
Keelan Fallows
Louis Guest
Jordan Hayward
Zach Hedge
Alex Lock
Callum Martin
Dawid Peplinski
Leigh Phillips
Joe Pursey
Jac Redhead
Matthew Shipman
Finlay Shorrock
Duncan Van Den Top
Callum Whiteside
Callum Woodward

Kyle Barker
Tony Breeden
Sam Cartwright
Joe Curtis
Danny Draper
Stacey Freeman
Jordan Graham
Ben Heath
Lewis Hilliard
Riley O'Sullivan
Connor Peters
James Snedden
Nathan Stainfield
Dan Sweeney
Glenn Walker
Sam Warburton
Callum Westwood
Tyler Winters
Dominik Wysocki

Referee: Haydn Lavender

Assistant Referees: David Kennedy and Joseph Cannon

