

# Touchline

Wootton Bassett Town FC Newsletter Issue No. 13

## Chairman's Welcome

Well, what a season! We have been successful on and off the pitch. I think we all deserve a rest to be honest. For me personally I feel we have achieved a lot this season. I set myself a couple of goals: to put greater support in place around our Executive committee, which I have achieved, and to ensure we are financially sound now and in the future. Again, I would say "we" have made solid progress on this too.

Someone pointed out that "I don't know a lot about football". The Chairman's role is more business driven at a club of our size. Danny Groom was invited to take on the Vice Chair role at the start of the season, and Danny has been a great sounding board around football matters for which I'm grateful. Our club is structured in such a way that our football knowledge is in the right places and I have to say it's strong, which is great for our long-term future.

Like most of us in the club I got involved as a parent supporting my son, in a positive way of course (well most of the time!) some 11 years ago now. I knew nothing of our senior section. I just followed our youth section, who like most of our current teams, did not know where Rylands Way was located.

The club's youth section was growing and soon became a Chartered Standard club, driven by Mark, Chairman at the time, and Claire Smedley - a great achievement. The relocation project was now in full swing; even back then this drove the club forward as we achieved Development club status, which was driven by the need to have a five year Development Plan and was a requirement for our relocation. WBTFC commenced delivering football coaching into five of the local Junior schools, through Community Football. This was well received and allowed us to become a Community Club. In fact WBTFC was the first in Wiltshire to achieve such status. Since this our club has moved from strength to strength to the point we now host football for the disabled as well as adding to our coaching teams by brining on our youth.

I'm not naïve to the fact we don't always get it right, but when you consider our size - some twenty four teams run by volunteers - I strongly believe we are in good shape right now and our future looks bright.

Talking about our future, there has been significant movements in our relocation plans. We have seen funding agreed in principle, designs refined, groundshares established. We would not be moving forward if it was not for Paul Harrison. Paul has put his heart and soul into this project to ensure it is successful. Just recently the relocation team made a visit to Thame United FC. This was a real eye opener. To actually walk around a facility that will be close in size and structure to ours was great but also a little frightening. The scale of what is around the corner hit home: quality bar area, decent changing rooms, a functional kitchen and a function room that will be the making of many a sore head. The playing facilities support the club house magnitude, offering player security and delivering quality surfaces for football, whether that's on grass or the latest 3G artificial pitch. With this will come the loss of the "Bassett bobble", which has been a feature at Rylands Way catching out many a player.

There is no gain without pain - this will be very true in the coming two seasons. I would like to ask all of you for your support during what will be difficult times.

Finally, a large thank you to all our volunteers. I can't name them all - you know who you are. We have built a club that we all should be proud of, something that will leave a great legacy for our children's, children - a great accomplishment.

**Andy Walduck**

## Club Directory:

**President:** Ron Stone  
**Chairman:** Andy Walduck (07980 730905)  
**Vice Chairman:** Danny Groom (07500 764275)  
**Secretary:** Ian Thomas (07714 718122)  
**Match Secretary:** Paul Curtis (07801 836946)  
**Treasurer:** Dave Topping  
**Development Officer:** Jeff Tidy  
**Head of Senior Section:** Chris Jones (07774 851563)  
**First Team Manager:** TBC  
**Reserve Team Manager:** Simon Paish (07919 483800)  
**Development Team Managers:** Wayne Petrie and Dave Terry (07917 469344)  
**Head of Youth Section:** Pete Yeardley (07778 936868)  
**Deputy Head of Youth:** Nigel Deane  
**Youth Section Secretary:** Gill Gascoigne (01793 840075)  
**Youth Section Database Administrator:** Gill Welsman-Clarke  
**Youth Section Manager Liaison:** Sarah Turner  
**Youth Section Pitch Bookings:** Hayley Gillie  
**Head of Women and Girls' Section:** Bryan Wood (07847 639406)  
**Ladies Team Manager:** Ann Nicholas (07785 660236)  
**Soccer Skills Academy:** Nick Bolton (07745 230226)  
**Press Officer:** Stuart Smedley (07985 367772)  
**Website Editor:** Scott Smedley (07849 334072)  
**Programme Compiler/Club Historian:** Mark Smedley (07887 634887)  
**Welfare Officer:** Maggie Amos

**Life Members:** Mick Woolford (1995), Rod Carter (2008), Roger Williamson (2008), Paul Harrison (2012), Pete Yeardley (2012)

## Upcoming Events:

### Youth Section Presentations:

**Sun 19th May** - U7s, U9 B+Y  
**Fri 24th May** - U18s  
**Sun 26th May** - U11 B+Y, U12 B, U13 B, U16 B+Y, U10s  
**Thu 30th May** - U8 B+Y  
(TBA - U13Y)  
**Sun 2nd June** - Parents' 6-a-side tournament  
(Rylands Way)



## Senior Section -

Another season over, now a time to reflect and plan the oncoming season.

Firstly, many thanks to all our sponsors who have continued to support WBTFC and have allowed us to push ahead and create a real team ethos within the senior section. It was our goal at the start of the season to bridge support across all three senior teams, starting with tracksuits to ensure that all the teams look the same. Although we still have some challenges ahead, we have made inroads into achieving this. To our magnificent, award-winning programme put together by Mark Smedley and printed by CATS, we have had many ground hoppers commenting on its content and professionalism way above our standard. To all our fantastic volunteers who devote so much time and effort ensuring that on match days the nets are up, the pitch is cut and the kit is available, we must not forget this effort is free (well maybe a cup of tea at half time ). Also many thanks to my valued committee colleagues from Paul Curtis joining us as match day secretary, Ian Thomas club secretary and Andy Walduck our supportive Chairman.

At the start of the season we decided to move from a Floodlit u18s side to running three teams on a Saturday by bringing in a Development team in the Wiltshire League. This created more resource for us all but we didn't need to be concerned as everyone rallied around to ensure a smooth transition This was managed by Dave Terry and Wayne Petrie and also supported by our Vice Chairman Danny Groom. What has pleased me more than the finished league position or reaching a cup final in their first (where they were only beaten 2-0 by a side who decided to bring in players who had not played for them all season), but the standard of football that they continued to play, which brought many plaudits. Many congratulations for an excellent season.

You may have heard me stating that the hardest side to manage is the Reserves, but both Simons (Paish and Packer) have ensured that despite getting phone calls on a Saturday morning and having to change their squad at the last minute, they have created a strong team ethic where all players want to play for each other. Finishing in a credible 5th place, the tarnish was slightly taken off their end of the season by both Cricklade and Cheltenham Saracens pulling out of the last two games. Surely the league need to reflect on teams being allowed to continue to do this. We will be placing our views on this with the league officials who will hopefully change the rules to ensure that it's fair for all. Many thanks and congratulations for a great season.

As you are probably aware, Dave Turner and Andy Brien have stepped down as first team manager and assistant, Dave after five extremely successful seasons. Together they have done a brilliant job this season and our final year at Rylands Way will certainly be one to remember. To begin the season, the firsts had a superb, memorable FA Cup run where they lost to Conference South Dorchester Town in the second qualifying round. To top it off, in the league they achieved runners-up to secure promotion to the Hellenic Premier for next year. Many thanks to both of them and best wishes for the future from WBTFC.

Obviously we will be looking to appoint the new manager for next year soon. Next season, with the groundshare, will be a tough one for all involved in the senior section, so everyone's support will continue to be vital as we progress towards our bright future and moving to the new facility.

**Chris Jones**

## Youth Section -

As yet another season draws to a close we can all reflect on yet another period of sustained growth and progress in the youth section.

With the club now running several teams at virtually every age group from U7 to U13s and three teams from U16 to U18s this should offer playing or training opportunities for all abilities and sexes.

League and cup results and individual team achievements are covered elsewhere in this bulletin. Instead I would rather acknowledge the tremendous commitment displayed by all the registered players. I would hope that each one could reflect on progress made both in their individual as well as their team development.

As a club we are constantly evolving not only on the pitch but also in the personnel off it. Rest assured all our managers and coaches are constantly being given the necessary training to ensure the best possible coaching principles are being delivered to the players.

As parents you can play your part by offering positive encouragement from the sidelines.

You should refrain from technical advice as this may well conflict with instructions or guidance delivered by the team manager. Sadly, at most youth games I have attended this year (not all involving our club) I have witnessed different instructions to the same player from both sides of the pitch!! This invariably leaves the player both confused and in some cases demoralised.

Our philosophy at this club is to allow the players to develop without peer pressure and the fear of failure. We encourage them to play with a smile and be decision makers on the pitch. Your continued support with this aim is both vital and appreciated.

Looking forward you will all be aware of our impending relocation to a new purpose built site opposite Ballards Ash and the exciting prospects this will offer.

Before we achieve that aim, however, our firm resolve, as a club will be severely tested.

Firstly we will adopt the new FA youth development guidelines that will involve four different size pitches, goals and team formats (5 v 5 , 7 v 7, 9 v 9 and finally at 13 years and above 11 v 11)

Secondly, and perhaps the biggest headache, facilities..... We are literally exploring every venue from Calne to Swindon in an effort to find adequate playing facilities for all our teams. We will ALL have to pull together, keep spirits up and remember the short-term pain will ultimately be worth the long-term gain.

Finally, thank you to all the parents for your continued support (not least financially) towards the officers and development of our club. I hope to see most of you either at your team's end of season awards or the parents' 6 a side tournament on Sunday 2nd June.

**Pete Yeardley**



## Women and Girls' Section -

The Ladies team have held their own in Division One of the Gloucestershire County Women's League this season after gaining promotion last year. With the Ladies winning their final two games, it means they finished fourth, just three points off third place AEK Boco.

The remit for the new management team of Ann Nicholas and Becky Gammon was survival and securing Division One football again next season. The Ladies played in the FA Cup for the first time in the club's history, giving a good account against Southampton Ladies FC before running out of legs in the second half to a very experienced side.

In the Wiltshire Cup we were unable to get past Swindon Supermarine, who also play in a league above us in the pyramid.

The Ladies' hard luck continued in the League Cup, taking league winners Bitton to extra time and again running out of legs. In the early part of the season we had some very solid performances but as we reached Christmas the squad started looking very thin on numbers, and at times it has been a challenge to get eleven players on the pitch. The difference for me this season has been the players going off to university and not re-signing; last season we were always able to pull one or two in when needed and most wanted to play when back home. Credit must be given to last season's top goal scorer April Polden, who stayed loyal and re-signed after a lot of other club's wanted her services. From signing on she has made a big effort to come back weekends to play.

On paper with 17 signed on at the start of the season, Ann looked to have a strong squad. This soon changed after three games with assistant player-manager Becky suffering from a knee ligament injury that has seen her out for the season, and added to that two players leaving left Ann to put on her boots as cover most weeks.

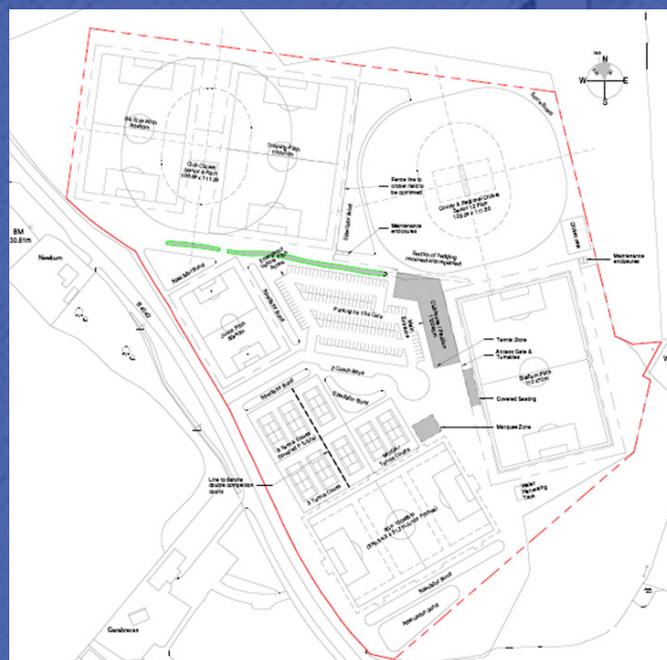
It is only right I take this opportunity to thank Ann for her time and effort in running the Ladies side this season and going forward how refreshing it is to have ladies managing the team. I know well the dread of your mobile going off late Saturday night or early Sunday morning. This season we have been lucky to have Ann's brother Mickey with us doing the line - he has not missed a game and it just takes the pressure off behind the scenes when you have a reliable person week in, week out.

**Bryan Wood**

## Thame Football Partnership: how our future could look...



## Wootton Bassett Sports Association relocation plans



## Relocation update: Sport England Grant secured

Wootton Bassett Sports Association have secured a £300,000 grant from Sport England, which will go towards the development of the Association's new £6 million facility opposite Ballards Ash. Specifically, the money will be used to fund a full size artificial 3G pitch that will be available for the football club as well as other sports throughout the year.

Speaking to the Gazette and Herald, relocation manager Paul Harrison said: "This grant from Sport England is a huge help. The new artificial pitch will be there for all of the different sports clubs to use and we're hoping to encourage the nearby rugby club to make use of it for training. League rules mean that the first team of the football club wouldn't be able to use it as their pitch, but there's nothing to stop youth football and other sports from using it.

"Work on the project has been going on for ten years now and it's been a challenge but we're getting closer. We're hoping to begin building work by the end of the year at the new base."

Football Club chairman Andy Walduck was similarly enthused by the news, commenting: "I'm so pleased that Sport England have confirmed their support towards our relocation project by awarding £300,000 from their Improved Facilities Fund, which will allow the Artificial Grass Pitch to be constructed at our new facility. This demonstrates we are moving forward.

"Currently we are putting the finishing touches to the clubhouse design as well as reviewing our operational needs for our senior teams covering the next season. Exciting times are certainly ahead."



## Carter at the double

Shaun Carter earned a clean sweep of first team awards at the Wootton Bassett Town senior section presentation, receiving both the Players' Player and Manager's Player prizes following an outstanding season for the centre half.

In his fourth season with Bassett, Carter made 32 appearances in all competitions and helped ensure his side's defence finished with the third best defensive record in Hellenic League Division One West. Carter's year began somewhat inauspiciously as he was hauled off at half time of Bassett's FA Cup extra preliminary round tie with Calne Town after conceding a penalty in an off the ball incident. But, as departing manager Dave Turner emphasised, this led to the veteran defender knuckling down and demonstrating for the remainder of the campaign why he is one of the best centre backs in the area.

Following another successful season for the Reserves, in which Simon Paish's team finished fifth in Hellenic League Division Two West, Mike Yates picked up their Players' Player award thanks to his classy, assured displays at the back. Long serving, industrious midfielder Tyron Connolly was handed the Manager's Player trophy.

It was a fantastic year for the Development team in their inaugural season too as they finished third in Wiltshire League Division One, while also reaching the final of the Fountains Trophies Junior Cup, which they lost 2-0 to NALGO Wanderers. Top scorer Lewis Petrie, who wound up with fifteen goals, received the acclaim of his peers, picking up the Players' award. Meanwhile, promising midfielder Aaron Dainton, who also made a handful of first team appearances in 2012/13, was awarded Managers' Player by joint bosses Dave Terry and Wayne Petrie. Tom Titcombe picked up the Development team's Clubman of the Year award.

Chairman Andy Walduck received the overall Clubman of the Year prize for his tireless efforts off the field.



**Hard to beat:** Shaun Carter in action vs Brimscombe and Thrupp (Picture from Swindon Advertiser)



## WBTFC Soccer Skills Academy



The next Soccer Skills Academy Holiday camp will run from Tuesday 28th May until Friday 31st May and takes place at Rylands Way. Daily sessions will last from 9.30am to 2.30pm. Boys and girls from school years one to eight are welcome. Cost will be £60 per child for the four days or £17 per day, with additional children from the same family costing £55 for the week or £15 per day. All courses are now regularly oversubscribed and a first come, first served policy is therefore run. So please book early to avoid disappointment! For more information and to book your child's place please contact Nick Bolton or visit <http://www.advancedsportscoaching.co.uk/>

## Disability Football



Wootton Bassett Town will be relaunching its drive to establish an under 16s Ability Counts disability football team, who it is hoped will play in the Wiltshire and Dorset Ability Counts League in the 2013/14 season. Starting Saturday 11th May, free sessions will be held at Ballards Ash for young footballers with a disability. These will run from 10-11am and will be led by Joe Hockham. For more information please visit: <http://wbtfc.co.uk/development-disability-football.php> or contact Club Development Officer Jeff Tidy.

## Parents' 6-a-side tournament

With the cancellation of this year's youth six-a-side tournament, it is necessary that the club comes together to organise other fundraising activities. One such event - a parents' 6-a-side competition, initially proposed by under 10s' manager Jeremy Smith, will take place at Rylands Way on Sunday 2nd June.

It should be a fun-filled day for old and young, with plenty going on off the field too as food and the bar will be available. The action will start at 12.30 and run on throughout the afternoon. Excitement should abound as those surely too old to be playing battle to emerge triumphant in front of their peers and admiring families. As Jeremy put it, the day will forever be engraved upon the eventual winners' souls!

The majority of spaces for teams have already been filled, but please contact Jeremy if you are interested in taking part, just in case there any late withdrawals. Cost is £5 per player, with a deposit of £10 per team.

## Website Photo Gallery

To submit photos from the 2012/13 season for inclusion in our online photo gallery please contact **Scott Smedley**.



**Thank you for your support this season!  
Enjoy the summer break!**

# 2012/13 WBTFC Success Stories



**First team:** Hellenic League Division One West runners-up, FA Cup second qualifying round;  
**Development team:** Fountains Trophies Junior Knockout Cup runners-up;  
**Under 18s:** North Wilts League Division one runners-up; **Under 16 Yellows:** North Wilts League Division Two champions; **Under 13 Blues:** Wiltshire County Cup runners-up; **Under 13 Yellows:** North Wilts League Division Two runners-up; **Under 10 Blues:** North Wilts League Knockout Cup winners



# Goodbye Rylands Way!



**It won't be remembered as the most picturesque ground in the world. And the only thing about its playing surface that will be recalled in years to come is the (in)famous Bassett bobble.**

But for those who have been associated with Wootton Bassett Town in the previous few decades, Rylands Way will forever be known as the club's spiritual home. It is a place rich not in beauty, but in character, which has served as the stage where plentiful memories – good, bad and brilliant - have been forged.

Having started playing at the ground in the 1930s while in the depths of the Calne & District League, the club and ground have developed near enough in tandem. The building of the clubhouse and the stand in the mid-1970s ushered in a decade of Wiltshire League success, which saw the team secure Hellenic League status by 1988. At the turn of the millennium, the erection of floodlights was followed instantly by a five year spell in the Hellenic Premier Division.

A bump came in 2011 when ground grading issues meant demotion. However, there was no better way to begin the final stretch of the journey to a state of the art facility than securing promotion back to the Hellenic Premier Division.

Nor could there be a more fitting finish to life at Rylands Way. Again, the club is on an upward trajectory.

In just a decade the ground has provided me with a catalogue of timeless memories, which are made even richer by the fact Bassett's lowly non-league status means these are shared only with a select group.

Thousands will remember unimaginable games, unbelievable moments of skill and major controversy that played out at storied old haunts like Wembley, Highbury and Maine Road. Yet that they are shared by so many arguably makes them less meaningful, less personal.

Few will be able to recall personal favourites such as the FA Vase visit of St. Blazey and their travelling band in 2001; a 0-0 draw against reigning champions North Leigh in 2003 with Ken Regan - signed following a chance encounter with then manager Pete Yeardeley in a supermarket - in goal; the amazing 1-1 FA Vase draw against Christchurch which saw Bassett hang on with nine men and defender Steve Yeardeley in goal; heroic FA Cup wins over Highworth Town and Bracknell Town in 2007; the battling 0-0 draw for the under 18s against Corsham Town in the final game I played at the ground in 2008; or Sam Collier's majestic lob against Slimbridge in the 2009/10 promotion campaign....

Nor can they bring back the hurt associated with the day Highworth claimed the 2004/05 Hellenic Premier Division title at Rylands Way, while also confirming Bassett's relegation. This season alone has provided numerous moments that will be tough to forget. Most notably, there were the three Friday night FA Cup victories – games played in front of bumper, fervent crowds - against Calne Town, Hamworthy United and Highworth.

That trio of successes bolsters the argument that Rylands Way is transformed when the sun sets and the vast expanse of turf stands alone in the spotlight.

As evidence of this, they join the night Andy Youngsam scored

screamer to defeat Shortwood United in August 2004; a pair of heroic comeback victories against Winterbourne United, the first in August 2005 (4-3), the second in April 2008 (3-2); and a dramatic December 2008 showdown with Oxford City Nomads when Stewart Thompson made a stunning penalty save to prevent the visitors going 2-0 up before Shaun Terry scored twice to seal a win by the odd goal in three.

Indeed, in the ground's final first team game there was some midweek magic, with Steve Robertson netting a quickfire hat-trick in a 3-0 triumph against Malmesbury Victoria.

Enough of my thoughts though. The following pages detail the favourite moments of numerous people to whom Rylands Way has meant much over the years, with contributions from players, managers and club officials.

I hope you enjoy reading it, and that in doing so it will provoke memories from Wootton Bassett Town's spiritual home that you hold dear too...

**Stuart Smedley, Press Officer**

## FA Cup games at Rylands Way

1946/47 - v Dilton Rovers W5-0

1947/48 - v Pewsey Vale L0-2

1949/50 - v Warminster Town L4-5

1950/51 - v Spencer Moulton W2-1

2007/08 - v Highworth Town W2-1; v Bracknell Town W2-1;  
v Brockenhurst L1-5

2008/09 - v Flackwell Heath L1-6

2009/10 - v Westbury United D2-2; v Brockenhurst L0-1

2010/11 - v Bradford Town D3-3 (Won 4-3 on pens);  
v Hamble ASSC L0-2

2012/13 - v Calne Town W4-2; v Hamworthy United W1-0;  
v Highworth Town W3-1



## Danny Groom

Having joined the club in 1980 I have a huge amount of memories of Rylands Way, but probably the top ones would be:

**1981** - U18 Mid Wilts semi-final against Tetbury, which we won 2-0. I was fortunate to get both of the goals in front of a packed ground, but my overriding memory would be the reaction of the two joint managers JR (John Reynolds) and a certain Mr Dick Smedley jumping up and down hugging each other after the second goal was scored minutes from the end of the game.

**1982** - Another U18 Mid Wilts semi-final this time against Rowde Town, which we won 5-3 after being 3-0 down at half time

**1984** - 1st team top of the table clash in November with Pinehurst which we won 2-0 and ultimately ensured we finished as Champions and gained promotion to Wilts Division One.

**1996** - Playing for Champs Sports in the Wiltshire Sunday Cup at Rylands against a team from Shrewton and winning 4-3 in normal time after being 3-0 down with 12 minutes left to play. Kenny Regan scored a hat-trick, with the 4th goal being the last kick of the game.

**2009** - As a manager, the U16's North Wilts semi-final win against the older Bassett team (we were U15 playing a year up), and also the 6-1 defeat of Cricklade to win the U16 League under floodlights. Also seeing the Groom/Thomas partnership representing the first team again when Steve and Ryan played against Purton.

**2011** - Danny Hale's 6 goal performance against Shrewton in a Wilts U18 Floodlit League which was the best individual performance I have ever seen at Rylands. His main opponent was the England Colleges centre half and Danny wiped the floor with him.

And finally in the same year winning the U18 Wilts FA Floodlit title and receiving the trophy at Rylands Way after a 5-2 win against a strong Melksham side, with a team of mainly 16-17 year olds. As a result we became the first floodlit team

### FA Vase games at Rylands Way

2001/02 - v Calne Town W3-2 (AET); v St. Blazey L0-2

2005/06 - v Christchurch D1-1 (AET)

2006/07 - v Shrewton United - L2-3 (AET)

2008/09 - v Kidlington W3-2 (AET)

2009/10 - v Hamble ASSC L2-3

## Liam Edmondson

Beating Highworth...both times! (August 2010, 2-0 when I scored the opener and September 2013, 3-1 in the FA Cup)



## Sam Farr

My favourite Rylands Way memory was no doubt playing under the lights for the floodlit team every Thursday for Groomy and winning the Wiltshire Floodlit League title on that pitch, which I believe had never been done by a Bassett team before!

## Chris Glead

My memories of Rylands Way start from school where we were allowed time off to mark the pitch and got told off for putting white lines along the road instead of the pitch (our bit of fun)! I played in the 60s under Percy Stone and we had training nights with one light on the old hut shining on the training area, so we used to take the ball out into the darkness and reappear in another part of the training area.

In later years, I lived in Rylands Way and it was as close as a player could get. Off the pitch, home in two minutes, in the bath....no showers then!!!

I remember beating the league leaders 4-2 at the time, two goals from me and two from John Chivers, and we only played because the first team were two players short!!!

I remember the 'volley' from about a 'foot' high that took the goalkeeper almost to the back of the net as well! He tried to save it, bless him!

Many great school cricket, football matches and sports days were played there as well. I could write more but it was the time when players could be lured away to other teams for a few bob, expenses!!

Oh, and the dark path close by.....useful for the odd snog and fumble!!!

## Paul Burke

After watching football at Rylands Way for over 35 years and also having the fortune to play for the youth, reserves and first team before going on to manage the reserves and first team, for me there will be a large touch of sadness when the diggers finally come in to dig up the bumpy but hallowed turf.

There have been so many memories over that time, both as a player and later a manager, but the ones that stand out for me are the FA Cup victories as first team manager over Highworth Town and Bracknell Town, and the season when Pete Yeardeley and I won the Reserves Division Two title without losing a match.

From a playing point of view, the pre-season friendly versus Swindon Town when we shared the pitch with Glenn Hoddle is also a special memory. But all in all every time I was involved in a game at Rylands Way, whether it was as a small boy, player or manager, will always hold a special memory for me as it was a place that had character and plenty of friends to remember.



## Paul Harrison

One particular memory for me is when Swindon Town played a friendly at Rylands Way, with Glenn Hoddle and Micky Hazard gracing the field of play. Quite something to see their masterly control of the ball on the same pitch that I quite often blamed for my lack of control!! Perhaps it was for the best that I was injured and unable to play - heaven knows I showed myself up enough against Hellenic opposition, let alone them!

## Sam Collier

I scored a few at Rylands Way. I remember scoring a 25-yarder against Slimbridge when we were chasing the title and we won 2-1, so that was one of the better ones.

## Samantha Wood

Having played football for Wootton Bassett Town Ladies for the last 4 seasons, I certainly have entered the field on many of occasions, and was proud to say I enjoyed wearing the badge of WBTFC while playing here. Although Rylands has its own special bobble, it was certainly a pitch where we as the Ladies team had several high points, as well as some lows! However a big and unforgettable memory on Rylands Way was our first ever Women's FA Cup game this season. Promotion to the top division in the Gloucestershire County League allowed us to represent WBTFC in the Women's FA Cup against Southampton Ladies. Although we bowed out to a 6-2 defeat, for me personally it was a great achievement as I was able to compete in the FA Cup for the first time with a great, passionate club!

## Bryan Wood

Lots of football memories of Rylands playing and watching, from promotion to the Hellenic Prem in my first season at Bassett, the FA Cup games against teams higher up the pyramid with big crowds watching. Rylands has been a place where I have had the fortune not only to play and then manage but make many a good friend.

Not having grown up in Bassett, my first visit to Rylands was for Purton back in season 97/98, a local derby where the support for both teams that day was very vocal. The game itself was very competitive with some tasty tackles. A win in the local derby was of high priority for both sides - not quite the same these days - and, yes, Purton won 1-0 on that day.

Another personal memory for me was to watch my daughter Samantha play her first game for Bassett Ladies at Rylands against Cirencester Town Ladies Res. In the side that day there were five other girls that had been with the club since they all started playing football together at under 11s and played together through to adult football.

As said, not all my memories of Rylands are on the pitch, with many a Saturday night drinking in the bar, with Crazy more often after games. The presentations evening at the end of season 2005/06 with Steve Bunting dancing is still a memory that will never be forgotten. Still not sure if it's a good or bad memory - it would probably depend on where you were sitting that night in the club!

## Alan Wilson

I enjoyed 10 years at the club playing in the first team in the Hellenic League under the then manager Mick Woolford. It was a special period in my life and one I will never forget. I joined the club in 1988 and retired in 1997 due to injury. I played with some really good players over the years, of which Paul Harrison, Damon York, Neil Timbrell, Roger Frost, Gary Bartlett, Colin Valters, Mark Ayres and Gerry McKay were some, and I have many fond memories of playing for the club, especially at Rylands Way. Also, the people off the pitch too, namely Alan Blyth, Mick Woolford, Roger Williamson and Rod Carter to name but a few. They are special people who made sure everything was done so we could go out on a week to week basis to represent the Town.

It was an absolute pleasure to play games at Rylands Way, and at the time I was fond of the song Delilah by Tom Jones. Many times the song would be sung by me and I would be joined by the rest of the team in changing room after games, especially when we'd won and on trips home in the mini bus back from away games. We had seasons of success over the 10 years and it was great to be a part of it.

Wootton Bassett Town and Rylands Way will always hold a special part in my life. I get to see Bassett a few times a season since I retired. I will miss the old place a lot and I'm really disappointed that I was not be there for the last game as I was out of the country.

Times move on and I wish the club all the best in its new home and hope that it will also have good memories for the players and officials just like the old one.

## FA Youth Cup games at Rylands Way

2003/04 - v Bitton L3-4 (AET)

2004/05 - v Brislington D2-2 (Won 3-0 on pens); v Mangotsfield L2-5

2005/06 - v Witney United W3-0; v Taunton Town L1-2

2009/10 - v Chard Town L-2

## FA Women's Cup games at Rylands Way

2012/13 - v Southampton Women's L2-6



## Steve Yeardley

Having just achieved 300 appearances for the first team alone - the majority at Rylands Way, here is my team that I played with and the team I would most like to play in!!

GK - Ian Gill - Without doubt the best keeper I have played with.

Grew up with him at Brunel Boys, had a good couple seasons with him at Bass and another 2 good seasons with Gilly with Highworth.

Gilly was a great keeper, fantastic shot stopper, dominant from crosses and an excellent talker/organiser. Made a defender's job a lot easier!!

RB - Me

LB - Paul Patel - Probably the most under-rated and hardest working defender I played with at Bassett!! He had a great left foot and fantastic understanding of the game which made his positioning for defending seem easy. Pets rarely looked troubled and I can hardly remember him making a last ditch tackle - apart from at Pewsey away when he broke his collar bone!!!

CB - Stuart Lamont - An immense defender who would win everything, whether it be in the air or on the floor. He was a great leader from his actions and a real 'hard man' in the team. He was my first skipper and really helped me learn how to defend properly!

CB - Paul Davis - Without doubt the best player I have played with at Bassett!! PD epitomised everything that was and is Wootton Bassett Town FC. He won every tackle and for his size never got caught behind! I was lucky enough to watch PD when I was growing up and then played with him. Never afraid to dish out a bollocking to any of us, and we wouldn't think twice about answering back. Whenever I see him watching now I still feel I have to impress him!!!

RW - Matty Bennett - Having grown up through the U18s with him and 10 years on still playing together, Matty was the best person to play in front of me. He would kill every defender he played against and also score some wonder goals. He's fast, strong and has two great feet. Just wish he wasn't ill so much!!!

LW - Ben Gascoyne - My best friend on and off the pitch growing up. Gazza was a great footballer as his CV shows. Loved to get forward and run at people with pace, Gazza has two great feet and would shoot from everywhere. Shame he never stayed at WBTF for longer but had a massive impact in the dressing room when here!

CM - Mark Vaughan - Vaughny without question is the hardest player I have ever played with!! Loved a tackle and never once shirked a challenge. Would lead by example and drive the team on alone through his passion and desire. Best box to box midfielder I played with for Bass, would score double figures every year (when not suspended)!

CM - Dave Jones - Chogi was a great character to have around as a young lad, would talk you through the game and make your job easier. He was an excellent passer of the ball and had a great engine. With Vaughny next to him in the middle we had everything you would want from the middle of the pitch.

CF - Geoff Swatton - Only played with Swatts for 2 seasons and even then not every week!! He was direct and aggressive, fast and explosive with raw talent. He would get a chance and shoot early and scored some remarkable goals. Never really got to know Geoff off the pitch, but then I don't think anyone did!!

CF - Shaun Terry - His record for every club speaks for itself. An all-round footballer with a special left foot and great vision for the game. Good both on the ball and off the ball, can score and create goals from nothing. Also need him in my team to make my disciplinary record look good!!

There are so many other good players I played with; Richie Stevens, John Haines, Andy Hallett, Mark Simpkins, Mark Barnes to name a few. But this is the team I chose to pick!! Am sure Barnesy would be in there when I have played a few more games with him!!

I'm not going to name 1 manager. But I will go with a Crazy/Dave Turner partnership - If that would ever work!!!!!!

Favourite Games at Rylands Way:

Can't really give you too many details as some are very old!!! But definitely:

FA Cup v Bracknell (2007/08) - I scored both goals, including the winner from the penalty spot in front of the 'Barmy Army'

FA Cup v Calne and Highworth (2012/13)

FA Vase v Christchurch (2005/06) when I went in goal towards the end!

Comeback v Winterbourne at the start of Crazy's first season

There is something about a midweek fixture and big crowds!!!

Worst moment without doubt is 3-1 loss to Highworth in 2005.

Relegated captain - will never forget that feeling!

### FA Amateur Cup games at Rylands Way

1946/47 - v Melksham Town W2-1; v Chippenham Town W4-3

1949/50 - v Welton Rovers W2-1; v Peasedown W1-0

1950/51 - v Westbury United L0-1

1951/52 - v Peasedown W4-3; v Swindon B.R. W3-1

1953/54 - v Warminster Town L1-3

1957/58 - v Paulton Rovers D2-2

1959/60 - v Clandown W2-0; v Pinehurst Y.C. D1-1;

v Radstock Town D2-2; v Welton Rovers D3-3





## Rylands Way Timeline

**May 1930** – opening of the Gerard Buxton Sports Ground

**World War II** – the ground is used mainly by local children and evacuees from London but was also the sight of an observation post

**Sep 1946** – Bassett record first home FA Cup victory, beating Dilton Rovers 5-0

**1959** – Bassett win their first major honour, finishing as Wiltshire League Division One champions

**1959/60** – during an epic 9 game FA Amateur Cup run, one win and three draws are recorded at home

**1976** – stand is built by chairman and manager Bob Thomas

**1988** – Bassett secure promotion to the Hellenic League as Wiltshire County League Division One champions

**July 1991** – a friendly against a Swindon Town side including Glenn Hoddle sees a record attendance of over 2,100 at Rylands Way

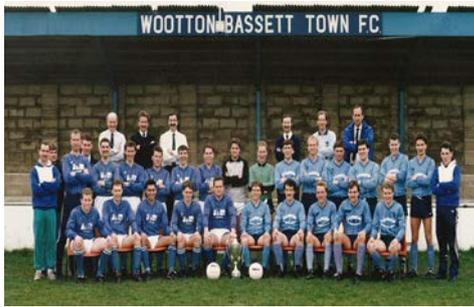
**2000** – floodlights installed in time for Bassett to take place in Hellenic League Premier Division for 2000/01 season

**Sep 2001** – Bassett make FA Vase debut, defeating Calne Town 3-2 after extra time

**2009/10** – following relegation in 2005, Bassett secure a return to the Hellenic Premier as Division One West runners-up

**2011**- Bassett controversially demoted from Hellenic Premier due to ground grading issues

**2012/13** – three home FA Cup wins secure passage to second qualifying round, Bassett then finish the season as runners-up in Division One West to claim promotion in final season at Rylands Way



**Farewell  
Rylands Way!  
Thanks for  
the wonderful  
memories!**