



Welcome to this month's Newsletter for Eastbourne Walking Footballers. April 2023

Editorial

It came as a tremendous shock to the Committee to hear that the Priory Lane site has been sold. Club CEO, John Bonar told us that, as the land was so valuable for housing and a great price had been offered by Redrow, which the Borough committee voted unanimously to accept, so that the club can recruit better players and win promotion to the National League. The club will groundshare with Eastbourne Town and some of the funds will be devoted to developing the Saffrons. We were reassured that our WF club can continue to play until the end of July, which gives us time to explore alternative venues.

Best wishes,

Terry Stubbings

1st April

Steve Duffy 1958 - 2023

It was with great sadness that we learned that Steve Duffy died, following a short illness, on March 13th. Although Steve had not played with us for long, he was well known to some of us, as he had been playing on Saturdays at Hampden Park and also playing for Crisp Walkers.

Rest in Peace

Birthdays:

Congratulations and happy returns to those with an April birthday:

Mark Childs on 4th April

Ray Rowlands on April 14th

Ahmed Lalmahomed on 15th April

Get well soon

We hope to welcome back these players back soon:

Dave Waller, Antonio Forte, Ian Corfe, Roger Powell, John Barry, Chris Smith, Keith Andrew

Our website

There are still some of you who haven't signed up to the members area on our website (eastbourneboroughwalkingfootball.com). As well as previous newsletters, club officials etc, EBWF Documents can be accessed. Here you can find the club constitution, minutes of AGMs, insurance details, WFA rules and guide to the game and **OUR NEW DISCIPLINARY POLICY**.

Eastbourne over 50s Summer Tournament

Will be on Thursday 15th June 2023 10am - 4pm. This will be 6-a-side (squads of 9) and 16 teams are expected, which will be split into 4 groups, for round-robin games, with top 2 to qualify for knock out games (and bottom 2 to play in the *plate* competition).

Andy Dixon would like volunteers to help with the event. Members should speak to Andy if they are happy to help.

Borough beat Bexhill and Hastings

Sometimes we struggle on the walking football pitch but victory was sweet for a Borough Quiz team, which came out on top of a dozen teams at the Little Common Charity Quiz, including beating teams from our walking football rivals Bexhill and Hastings. Congratulations to Terry Bellamy, Mike Bridger, Ian Nisbet, Terry Stubbings, Adam Wood and Paul Lockwood,

Southern Combination League

Hastings United 3 Eastbourne Borough 1 Saturday 4th March

Hastings United went top of the league by beating Borough 3-1.

Borough were well-drilled, well-organised and hard to break down, with Mark Reed and Gary Farthing at the back.

Hastings got off to a flying start and scored, in the first minute, after intercepting a Borough pass. This galvanised Borough into action and they had the better of the rest of the first half, making chances but not managing to beat the Hastings keeper, who had a good game. Richard Brook, Mike Gonnella and Adam Wood were moving the ball about well and Borough looked threatening throughout the half.

Early in the second half it was all square, as Mike Gonnella waltzed past two Hastings players and let fly with an unstoppable drive. At this stage it was anyone's game.

Unfortunately, Borough defenders were a little slow in getting to the Hastings striker, who took the ball with his back to goal, turned and drove home in one fluid motion.

And despite Tony Edwards having a good match and making some great saves, there was another goal to come, as Hastings broke, crossed and buried the ball in the Borough net.

Thanks to Phil Cousens, who reffed the game fairly.

Borough squad: Tony Edwards, Gary Farthing, Mark Reed, Brian Barber, Adam Wood, Mike Gonnella, Richard Brook

Eastbourne Borough 3 Hastings Hornets 1 Saturday 25th March

A welcome and thoroughly deserved victory came on a blustery day at Priory Lane against Hastings Hornets. Borough played against the strong wind in the first half and immediately settled into the game with a change in formation paying dividends when Mark Reed scored from close range inside the first few minutes.

After the goal several chances were created to increase the lead but these were not taken and it was against the run of play that the visitors equalised with a shot from their front man who took the chance to drive a low shot past Tony Edwards.

The goal seemed to galvanise Borough who continued to get into goal scoring positions but found the Hornets goalkeeper in great form. The pressure finally paid off when Adam Wood scored with a fine shot to give the home side a deserved half time advantage.



The team talk at the interval focused on using the strong wind to get as many shots on goal as possible and the pattern of the game continued from the first half with Borough fashioning more goal scoring opportunities but being thwarted by the visitors goalkeeper.

The third goal arrived a few minutes from time when a deflected shot from Mike Gonnella found its way past the keeper to seal a deserved three points.



Borough squad: Terry Bellamy Richard Brook Dave Edwards Tony Edwards Gary Farthing Mike Gonnella Mark Reed Les Ward Adam Wood

Burwash 2 Eastbourne Borough 0 Monday 27th March

Borough were unable to follow up Saturday's home success when they travelled to Robertsbridge Community College on Monday evening, losing 2-0 to Burwash.

The game was played on the indoor pitch with a lighter ball and the home side, who play there on a regular basis, forced the visitors back from the first whistle. The high press was difficult to pass through and the different playing surface caused Borough problems. Dave Blackledge was forced to make several saves in the first half but was beaten by a powerful close range shot giving Burwash a half time lead.

The second half mirrored the first with Borough reduced to speculative shots which rarely troubled the home goalkeeper. The second goal came towards the end with an angled shot which went in at the near post.

Playing at this type of venue certainly offers a different challenge for visiting teams so the result needs to be put in perspective and perhaps next season the league organisers will look at the issue of playing games indoors.

A busy week ends with a home game against The Atha on Saturday and Borough will be hoping to replicate the performance of the last home game.

Borough squad: Terry Bellamy Dave Blackledge, Richard Brook, Tom Chapman, Mike Gonnella, Ian Nisbet, Les Ward, Adam Wood.

Remember Spain 2017



Interview with an old new romantic (Mike Gonnella)

Q. *How did you get here?*

Born and brought up in Leeds, I went to university in Newcastle in 1977 and moved close to London for work in 1980. I moved to Ulm on the Danube in southern Germany in 1986 and then spent most of my career in Europe - never too far away from the Alps as it turns out. I was lucky enough to live on Lake Como for six years as well as spending several winter seasons in Courmayeur next to Mont Blanc. From 2007 to 2021 I returned to Ulm for a second time, before retiring to Eastbourne so we'd be close to Claire's Mum.

Q. *Your family life?*

On December 5th 1985 I met Claire at a club in Watford, called Paradise Lost. How apt! We fell madly in love and were married on December 21st ... 31 years later ... no point rushing these things!!! We've got 2 lovely boys, Joe who's at uni and Fred who's doing his A levels.

Q. *Your sporting life?*

I was a fan of Leeds United like my Dad and we lived within walking distance of Elland Road. Football was my sport as a kid and when I went to university. However, when I started work I was tempted by a friend to go to pre-season training at the local rugby club and got completely caught up in the game and the club / team spirit. I never returned to "serious" football after that. Until now !)

In 1986 we moved to Germany, where Claire and I discovered the joys of skiing, we loved it and it's been our shared passion ever since, as a couple and later on as a family, influencing where we've lived, worked and spent our holidays (and money).



A young Mike (he's hardly changed at all)

Q. Your working life?

I spent most of my 40 years career working on the design and development of electronic warfare systems for a number of aircraft including Tornado ECR, Eurofighter / Typhoon and more recently the new Airbus A400M military transport. It was an exciting and dynamic field to work in and I was fortunate to be so majorly involved and trusted in many important decisions working for Marconi and British Aerospace in the UK, AEG Telefunken and Airbus in Germany as well as Galileo and Alenia in Italy. And Neilson Holidays - so in the middle of all this secret squirrel stuff I spent several winters skiing full time including two seasons working as a ski guide together with Claire for Neilson in the Italian alps. Great days and I even managed to go back to my old job in Milan after the season end. Three times.

Q. And the future?

Some exciting Leeds United victories would be nice (me and Joe are on the season ticket waiting list). Apart from that, no grand plans for now, just more walking football, mountain biking and pub lunches around the Downs ... plus the odd ski trip so long as the old knees hold out.

