



# THAME UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

Official Programme

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Saturday 13 August 2022

Thame United

V

Ware







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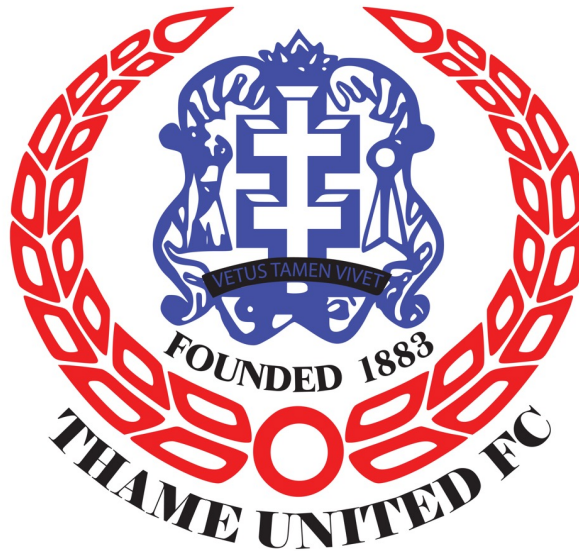
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# WELCOME



Good afternoon and welcome to the ASM Stadium for this Pitching In Southern Football League Division One Central match between Thame United and Ware. A warm welcome to all the players, officials and supporters from Ware and we wish them all an enjoyable stay and a safe journey home.

After the best part of six weeks of friendly fixtures, it is good to finally get going with competitive matches. And we could not have asked for a much tougher start as today we welcome the losing play-off finalists from last season, Ware. Then, on Tuesday evening, we make the trip to Cirencester Town who themselves lost in the South Division play offs last season. This is followed by a trip to Marlow (on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August) in the FA Cup – a match that will be shown live on the BBC Red Button, Sport website and iplayer – with a 12:30pm kick off.

Preparations for the season have, for whatever reason, seemed somewhat busier this year than previous years. Mark and the management team have overseen some significant changes in the playing squad, with a number of the squad from recent seasons having departed, with even more new faces having arrived. That, perhaps, is not unusual for many sides, but as a Club we have had a very settled squad for a number years, and

the level of change this year has been comparatively significant. That is not something that concerns us – on the contrary we see it as an exciting opportunity and, from what we have seen so far, those new faces have settled in well and contributed positively to the overall quality and breadth of the squad.

Whilst that has kept the management team busy, there have also been a number of administrative changes behind the scenes, largely as a product of improvements introduced through the FA and Southern League that, from my perspective, have added further challenges.

All that is insignificant when we reflect on the sad and unexpected loss, only a few weeks ago, of Steve Gilmore, father of George. I used to work with Steve 20 years ago and knew of his love of football at the time, but only really appreciated how much he did for such a strong footballing family in recent years. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with Tina, George, Libby and Freya.

Enjoy the match today.

Jake Collinge





[joma-sport.com](http://joma-sport.com)



THAME UNITED (FROM)			WARE (FROM)
Josh Hill		1	No Details
Lewis Thorne		2	No Details
Matt Peake-Pijnen		3	No Details
Clinton Nosakhare		4	No Details
David Lynn		5	No Details
Jack Tutton		6	No Details
Adam Smith		7	No Details
Jack Gardner		8	No Details
David Pearce		9	No Details
Dan West		10	No Details
Harry Mepham		11	No Details
Harry Williams		12	No Details
Harry Alexander		13	No Details
Kyle Blair		14	No Details
Finlay Murray		15	No Details
Owen Pearce		16	No Details
Hayden Beadle		17	No Details
Connor Ferguson		18	No Details
Mark West	Manager		No Details
Stuart Blaik	Assistant		No Details
Ben Johnson	Coach		No Details
MATCH OFFICIALS			
(Ref) M Stetakovic	(Asst 1) E Unuafe		(Asst 2) M Bright



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# THAME UNITED HISTORY

Thame United were formed in 1883 making it one of Oxfordshires' oldest clubs. The early years were spent in various Oxfordshire Leagues and in 1906, 1909 and 1910 Thame won the Oxfordshire Senior Cup and the Senior League in 1907, 1908, 1910, 1930 and 1931. A switch to the Hellenic League then brought further success culminating in the Hellenic League title in 1961-62 and 1969-70, as well as being runners up in 1960-61, 1976-77 and 1980-81. The Oxfordshire Senior Cup was won in both 1976 and 1981 but a poor spell in the mid eighties preceded a crossing of the pyramid in 1988-89 to join the South Midlands League. The Club finished runners up in both 1988-89 and 1989-90 before eventually winning the title in 1990-91.

Thame received the green light to join the Diadora League in 1991/92. 1994-95 saw the Club win the Division 2 Championship with 93 points - an 11 point margin. In 1995/96 the Club reached the 3rd Round Qualifying in the FA Cup and the FA Trophy. In the league we finished a creditable 13th in our first ever season in the Isthmian League Division One. Andy Sinnott was appointed first team manager in June 1997 and, with a dramatically reduced operating budget, the side were relegated into Ryman Division Two. The Club bounced straight back into Ryman Division One and reached the semi-finals of the FA Vase. 1999/2000 saw the Club come within two points of achieving promotion to the Premier Division.

2000/2001 season the team lead the way for most of the season, putting together a club record of 12 consecutive league wins but a slump in form in the latter part of the season resulted in a 5th place finish. A mid-table finish followed in 2001/2002 season but the Oxfordshire Senior Cup was retained. Mark West was appointed player/manager when Andy left United during the Summer of 2003. In October 2003 the Club reached the 4th qualifying round of the FA Cup for the first time in its history, before being beaten 1-2 by Conference side Farnborough Town.

After a mid-table finish the Club moved to the newly formed Southern League, Division 1 West. In October 2004 the Club again reached the FA Cup 4th qualifying round and finished the season 11th in the league. Mark West left to join Slough Town and defender Tony Joyce was appointed player /manager.

By July 2005 the Club were in financial trouble and, following a visit from Bailiffs acting on behalf of HMRC, the landlord enforced a clause in the tenancy agreement and evicted the club from Windmill Road. However, shortly thereafter Thame United reached a formal agreement with the new owners of Windmill Road that secured £1.7 million to enable a new facility to be constructed in the town and, after several options had been explored and found to be available, settled

on Church Farm on the northern edge of the town. Whilst the Club progressed procurement of the new site, and the necessary planning permission, a ground share agreement was reached with neighbours Aylesbury United and, with the side struggling at the foot of the Southern League Division 1 West, Tony Joyce resigned in December 2005, with a new joint managerial partnership of Richard Searl and Alan Thorne appointed. Relegation to the Hellenic League was confirmed later in the season. A ground share agreement was reached with AFC Wallingford for the 2006/07 season. Mark West returned to the Club mid-way through the season but could not save the Club from relegation to the Hellenic League Division 1 East. The 2007/08 season provided greater stability for the Club, with Mark West and new assistant, Frank Thompson, looking after first team affairs. A mid-table finish resulted, which was followed by a ninth placed finish in 2008/09. 2009/10 saw the Club win the Division 1 East title by six points and reclaim their place in the Premier Division.

The 2010/11 season was the most significant in the Club's recent history. With work on a new £3.1m ground at Meadow View Park commencing in March 2010, United returned to Thame at the ASM Stadium on 11 December 2010, just over five years after their enforced eviction from the town. Boasting eight pitches, a floodlit 3G training pitch and 8000sqft clubhouse, United now have one of the best sporting facilities in the County. The official opening against Oxford United on 18th January 2011 set a record crowd of 1,382.

Season 2016-17 was one of the most successful in the recent history of the Club. Going the whole league season without losing at home, United were crowned Hellenic League Premier Division Champions on the final day of the season, defeating Henley Town 9-0 to over-turn a seven goal deficit. United were duly promoted to the Southern Football League, returning after a spell of twelve years away. In the first season back at Step 4, United finished in a comfortable mid-table position, enjoying a successful run in the FA Trophy. In 2018/19 United secured an 8<sup>th</sup> place finish with the side occupying a mid-table position when the 2019/20 season was curtailed due to the pandemic. The 2020/21 season never really got going, with only seven league matches completed before the league was again curtailed, although the side reached the First Round Proper of the FA Trophy before losing out to Bognor Regis Town.

Prior to the 2021/22 significant enhancements were completed to Meadow View Park, including a new full-size 3G training pitch, together with associated organisational changes. Last season, after a slow start, United finished eighth in Division One Central, and until the final month of the season were within touching distance of a play-off place.

# THAME UNITED SQUAD

**Josh Hill:** Goalkeeper (Age: 27)

Joined at the start of the current season from Biggleswade Town. Started his career with Oxford United before a spell in New Zealand, playing for Napier City Rovers and Hawkes Bay United, returning initially to Swindon Supermarine – with whom he won the league – before moving to Biggleswade Town.

**David Lynn:** Defence (Age: 27)

Solid and assured left back with good technical ability. Now in his eighth season with the Club having previously been with Oxford United, Chesham United and Banbury United.

**Lewis Thorne:** Defence (Age: 20)

Stepped-up to the First Team last season from Thame Rangers, having previously been with Oxford United. A player with an abundance of pace, energy and defensive qualities, whilst also dangerous going forward.

**Harry Mephram:** Defence (Age: 24)

Joined at the start of the 2017/18 season from Beaconsfield Town and has been a virtual ever-present since. Versatile defender/midfielder who reads the game well and with good technical ability.

**Owen Pearce:** Defence (Age: 19)

Left-sided defender who joined the Club at the start of the season, having spent much of last season in Spain with Alicante City FC

**Clinton Nosakhare:** Defence (Age: 18)

Central defender who joined at the start of the season from Oxford United. Assured and reads the game well – rarely beaten in the air.

**George Gilmore:** Defence (Age: 20)

Joined mid-way through last season from Didcot Town, having come through the youth ranks at Oxford United. Imposing centre half who can also play at full back.

**Kyle Blair:** Defence (Age: 22)

Joined at the start of the season having recently returned to the UK from the United States, where he played for Houston FC. Imposing central defender.

**Luke Massingham:** Defence (Age: 20)

Another central defender who joined at the start of the current season from Kempston Rovers, following a season beset with injury. Previously with Wycombe Wanderers

**Finlay Murray:** Defence (Age: 21)

Came through the ranks at Barnet FC. Solid and assured defender who can play anywhere across the back four.

**Matt Peake-Pijnen:** Defence / Midfield (Age: 24)

Versatile player who is comfortable on either flank. Joined United in December 2018 from neighbours Aylesbury United. Previously with Oxford City and Banbury United.

**Greg Hackett:** Midfield (Age 26)

Signed at the start of the 2019/20 season having spent the latter half of 2018/19 with Didcot Town. Another wide player who contributes his fair share of goals. Previously with Oxford United and Ardley United.



# THAME UNITED SQUAD

**Jack Tutton:** Midfield (Age: 23)

Joined United from North Leigh in January 2019 having previously been with Oxford City. Energetic and hard-working midfield player who gets forward and causes problems in the opposition area.

**Jack Gardner:** Midfield (Age: 19)

Another signing at the start of the season, joining from Gottne IF (Sweden), having previously been with Oxford United. Hard working midfield player with extensive passing range.

**Hayden Beadle:** Midfield (Age 17)

Product of the youth section, who broke in to the Reserves last season and has impressed during pre-season.

**Harry Williams:** Midfield (Age: 20)

Energetic wide player who joined at the start of the season from Slough Town. Previously with Kidlington.

**David Pearce:** Midfield/Forward (Age: 30)

Vastly experienced player who joined the Club in October 2021 from Chesham United for whom he played over 300 games. Previously with Oxford City and Hemel Hempstead Town

**Daniel West:** Midfield/Forward (Age: 29)

Joined ten years ago from Oxford United, initially as a midfield player, but moved forward scoring 25 goals in the Championship winning side of 2016/17 before claiming the Golden Boot in the Southern League East Division in 2017/18.

**Adam Smith:** Forward (Age: 18)

Quick and pacy forward who joined at the start of the season from Oxford United, having previously played at youth level for Thame United.

**Connor Ferguson:** Forward (Age: 19)

Joined the club at the start of the season – strong and versatile forward with good crossing ability. Previous clubs include Oxford United, Didcot Town and Abingdon United.

**Harry Alexander:** Forward (Age: 18)

Broke in to the First Team last season having scored plenty of goals for the Reserve team, having stepped-up from youth football.

**Mark West:** Manager (Age: 56)

Former player with Thame United who re-joined the Club for his second spell as Manager in January 2007. Prolific goalscorer with Wycombe Wanderers, Slough Town and Farnborough Town.

**Stuart Blaik:** Assistant Manager (Age: 51)

FA Level 3 Coach now in his eighth season with the Club. Previously with Aylesbury United, Corby Town, Nuneaton Borough, Brackley Town, Buckingham Town and Tring Town.

**Ben Johnson:** Coach (Age: 36)

Former player who has since gone on to manage the Development side and Reserve Team. Stepped-up to First Team level in 2018/19

**Jen Pilcher:** Physio

Joined the Club at the start of season 2020/21 and has become an invaluable member of the management team.

# WARE FC HISTORY

The Club was founded in 1892 and although first called Ware Town soon changed its name to plain Ware FC. This unassuming title makes it probably the shortest named affiliate of the Football Association and has caused problems for programme editors and journalists ever since.

In fact, the Club has been anything but unassuming. It has held senior status from its very beginning, entering the Herts Senior Cup for the first time in 1893, and winning the cup on the first of five occasions in 1899 with a 2-1 win over Hitchin at St Albans. By this time Ware had been instrumental in founding the East Herts League and had won its championship on two of the three times it had been competed for. The club was to win it five more times before moving on to the North Middlesex League in 1907 and then also to the Herts County League in 1908. The Championship of the latter came that season in a three-way play-off against St Albans City and Welwyn.

After the First World War the Club gained a league and cup double with a second Herts County League Championship and a fourth Herts Senior Cup win in 1922. The scenes in Ware when the team returned with the Senior Cup tell us something about the hold that football had on local loyalties at the time. The local paper reported that "Large crowds awaited the return of the special train to Ware, everybody being in high spirits. The Cup was marched through the town in front of a cheering throng." Indeed, it was later recalled that the cup was taken through the town on subsequent nights and that stops were made outside public houses where it was charged with beer before being drained by the crowd.

Shortly after this Ware joined the Spartan League in which they were to enjoy several successes, winning the Division 2(B) Championship in 1926, Division 1 in 1951 with the highest "goals for" total ever achieved by a club in the Spartan League, and the Premier Division in 1952. In these later years the Club also made significant progress in the old Amateur Cup meeting many famous sides on the way. One of these was Hendon, against whom Ware drew their largest attendance of 3,800 in the 1st Round in January 1957.

Moving on to the Delphian and then Athenian League, Ware enjoyed another successful period. Two promotions, two league cup wins and two reserve championships paved the way for progress in the FA Cup. In this Ware reached the First Round proper for the first time in 1968 when they travelled to the then Third Division side Luton Town. The opposition had a 100% home record but the game was scoreless with 30 minutes to go before a judicious substitution broke the stalemate and left Ware beaten 6-1 at the final whistle.

In these successful circumstances it was not surprising that Ware pressed for entry to the expanding Isthmian League. This was achieved for season 1975/76 and they have maintained their place at that level ever since. This is thanks most recently to their Division 2 Championship season of 2005/6 under manager Glen Alzapiedi which carried them into Division 1 just before Division 2 was disbanded. Alzapiedi's side brought further distinction with another FA Cup First Round appearance in 2007 which saw a narrow home defeat against Kidderminster Harriers in front of 2,123 spectators, a record for the current ground at Wodson Park.

Before that a tenth Herts Senior Cup Final in 2001 and another in 2008 have emphasised the club's long history and continuity. Ware is the first of only three possible candidates to appear in this final in three separate centuries, evidence that it is still one of the county's leading clubs.

League form has varied in recent years and after a disappointing period in the 2017/8 season John Dreyer took over as manager. With fortunes improving John stepped aside and his assistant Paul Halsey has taken over the managerial reins.

Paul has been a huge success over the four years he has been at the helm at Ware FC and has been unlucky not to have got Ware promoted twice, this being due to the Corona Virus which put paid to Seasons being cancelled and denying any chance of promotion. Paul a popular manager with the Ware FC hierarchy, players and supporters Paul and has taken the club to a new level and is hoping for a play-off position this season.





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# FIXTURES

## FIXTURES

13 August 2022

Barton Rovers	V	AFC Dunstable
Berkhamsted	V	Biggleswade
Biggleswade Town	V	Cirencester Town
Harlow Town	V	Aylesbury United
Hertford Town	V	Didcot Town
Highworth Town	V	Hadley
Kidlington	V	FC Romania
Thame United	V	Ware
Waltham Abbey	V	Kempston Rovers
Welwyn Garden City	V	Walthamstow


## FIXTURES

16/17 August 2022

AFC Dunstable	V	Highworth Town
Aylesbury United	V	Kidlington
Biggleswade	V	Waltham Abbey
Cirencester Town	V	Thame United
Didcot Town	V	Berkhamsted
FC Romania	V	Barton Rovers
Hadley	V	Harlow Town
Kempston Rovers	V	Welwyn Garden City
Walthamstow	V	Hertford Town
Ware	V	Biggleswade Town



# THE NON-LEAGUE PAPER



ESSENTIAL READING FOR FOLLOWERS OF THE NATIONAL GAME

THERE'S NOT much that grinds my gears like the debate around the FA Cup, the magic or lack thereof.

In early January, the usual debate will be trotted out about the FA Cup and how seriously Premier League clubs take it and question whether the competition has lost its lustre.

Maybe it has, maybe it hasn't when the elite clubs join. I still like it, will always watch the final and generally buy into the idea it is a pretty special cup competition.

Perhaps that comes from many years scribbling away for The NLP and having the chance to tell so many stories.

From Lincoln City's remarkable run to the quarter-finals, to speaking to first-timers just happy to have their name in the hat at the extra preliminary round stage.

For me, it is these early rounds where the true heart of the competition really is. Where, for some clubs, just getting through a few rounds and getting, for example, a draw with a Step 2 club is reason to celebrate. Or where reaching the first round is the dream.

I spoke to former Bowers & Pitsea manager Rob Small recently. His side reached the first round proper last term after dumping out National League Aldershot Town in the fourth round qualifying.

They were drawn at Lincoln and, for them, it really was the pinnacle, a day they won't ever forget.

Last Friday night I popped along to Thetford Town and Soham Town Rangers.

Bodies desperately thrown in front of shots at goal, last ditch tackles, full-blooded challenges and a stoppage-time equaliser lashed into the top corner sparking wild celebrations.

Just 83 days after Liverpool lifted the trophy, the world's oldest competition kicked off again.

The sums of money are tiny in comparison, but still a vital £1,125 is up for grabs for the 208 winners in the extra preliminary. Indeed, even the losers at this stage take £375 – all vital pounds for Non-League clubs at the level.

Perhaps there's something to be said for Friday night football, with a healthy crowd in attendance. Fans pour through the turnstile block just before kick-off to pay their £7 - £4 for concessions – and £1 for a programme. Outside the Brecklanders' bar, the air hummed with that early season chatter of optimism and familiar faces catching up.

The game was great. Three goals in four first-half minutes before a net-busting stoppage-time equaliser from Soham's Luke Brown to set-up a replay. You could see what it meant. And we will see similar tales over the coming weeks and the competition bounces from one round to the next.

Maybe those who think the magic has gone aren't looking in the right place...

**Matt Badcock**  
**Editor-at-large**  
**The Non-League Paper**



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League Rule 2.13

Ownership: In accordance with the Football Association Rule 2.13 Publication of ownership in relation to Step 1 to Step 6 Clubs within the Football pyramid, we hereby confirm that the Legal Status of THAME FOOTBALL PARTNERSHIP (Thame United FC and Thame Boys, Youth and Girls FC) Ltd identified by Company Number 07119444, takes the 'Form' of a Company Limited by Guarantee and Not Having a Share Capital (incorporated 07 January 2010).

For the purposes of publication of ownership, we can confirm that the following named person(s) are listed as Directors of the company (incorporated personnel):

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Mr Jake Seth Collinge  
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