



## **HUNGERFORD TOWN – OPPOSITION PREVIEW**

### **by Corey Eaton-McKnight.**

Recently relegated back to the Southern Premier League South after finishing rock bottom in the National League South last time out, Hungerford Town will be hoping to bounce back at the first time of asking, after spending seven seasons at step 2, including two cut short by Covid-19.

Originally formed in 1886, they won their first cups as a club winning the Newbury Cup in 1904-05. They were formed as Hungerford Swifts and played at the now Hungerford Common until their move to their current home, Bulpit Lane just after the First World War. Late into the 1950's they joined the Hellenic League where they were up and down between the Premier and First Divisions. They have only reached the FA Cup First Round on one occasion, in 1979-80 losing to Wycombe Wanderers, as United did back in 2010-11!

In 1981 they were one of only four British clubs to play in the “Anglo-Italian Talbot International” Cup, where they drew 1-1 against Francavilla, beat Civitanovese 2-1 and then faced current Serie B side Modena, losing 1-0, in front of a crowd of 20,000. The Crusaders finished bottom of the English group, with current Southern Premier South side Poole Town reaching the final before losing 4-1.

Fast forward to 2008-2009 and they won the Hellenic League Premier Division on goal difference, finishing ahead of Shortwood United with a nine goal difference. They survived in their first season just about, finishing 20th out of 22. They improved for the 2010-11 season with Bobby Wilkinson taking over the role as first team manager, finishing only four points behind Thatcham Town who finished in the last play-off place. Play-off heart break the following season against Poole Town meant they had to go again in the Southern League South & West, this time overcoming the barrier to beat Paulton Rovers and Merthyr Town on their way. The Crusaders were only getting started it seemed, finishing in a solid 6th place losing out on a chance of back-to-back play off promotions on goal difference themselves this time, the 2014-15 season saw them finish fourth, losing at Truro City. They held firm and went again, the league goals of Nathaniel Jarvis proved vital, ensuring a fourth place finish to win away at Hitchin Town then a play-off final victory at home over Leamington.

Playing at step 2 for the first time in their history, they comfortably finished sixth despite seeing a chance for another go at the play-offs, eventually fade away – they did however, for the first time in 35 years reach a Berks & Bucks Senior Cup Final. Wilkinson stepped down at the end of that season, financial struggles begun, the club only stayed up on the final day against the recently defunct East Thurrock United, in 2018 and 2019. Patrick Chambers took over the club in 2019, but stepped down at the end of last season.

**The address:** The Town Ground, Bulpit Lane, Hungerford RG17 0AY.

#### **Admission prices:**

**£12 adults**

**£9 Seniors (aged 65+)**

**£9 Concessions (\*as below valid ID required)**

**\*Registered Disabled / Armed Forces / Emergency Services / Student)**

**£4 for ages 11-17**

**Free for Under 10s with a paying adult and carers accompanying a disabled supporter**

**By Car:** From Hayes & Yeading United, the journey takes just over an hour with no traffic on the road and is straight along the M4. Journey distance: 57.3 miles.

**By Train:** Departing Hayes & Harlington Station, the journey takes between 1 hour 20 minutes and just over 2 hours depending on route taken. Most of the train journeys require two changes; Reading and Newbury but be mindful that the odd journey does also go direct from Reading to Hungerford with you only needing to change at Reading.

The walk from the station to the ground is approximately fifteen minutes.

#### **Where to eat & drink:**

There are many places to stop on the way to the ground. A nine minute walk in the opposite direction you will find the Bear and en-route you also have the John O'Gaunt Inn. There's an Italian restaurant "Amore" two minutes from the Bear. You also have Hungerford Gourmet Oriental and the Funghi Club.

Heading back towards the ground and you will find the Plume pub and the Borough Arms, and opposite there is Hungerford Fish & Chips.

#### **Last 5 results:**

Gosport Borough 4-0 Hungerford Town  
Hungerford Town 4-0 Petersfield Town – FA Cup  
Hungerford Town 2-2 Didcot Town  
Salisbury 2-1 Hungerford Town  
Hungerford Town 3-1 Beaconsfield Town

#### **Last time out:**

Gosport Borough 4-0 Hungerford Town  
Dan Wooden 8, 23, Harvey Rew 57 & Corey Jordan 64

Line up: Ryan Clarke, Curtis Angell, Matthew Partridge, Luke Carnell, Rhys Tyler ©, Jack Alexander (Slavi Spasov 68), Joseph Shepherd (Bradley Hooper 68), Michael Fernandes, Elis Watts, David Tarpey (Nathan Davis 68). Unused subs: Louie Paget, Jack Stanley

#### **Player to Watch:**

**David Tarpey:** Goals win games, and wherever Tarpey has been, he has always found the back of the net. Working his way up from Henley Town to Basingstoke Town. In 2009-10 he scored 27 goals in 109 appearances joining as a 21 year old, now 34. During the 2016-17 season, Tarpey scored a mammoth 44 goals in 41 league games which saw Maidenhead United win the National League South. He has since played for Woking, Bracknell & Leatherhead where he is currently on loan from at Hungerford. Scoring 33 in 57 in the previous two seasons.

#### **Previous meeting:**

We've only met on one previous occasion, in 2010 a pre-season friendly at Bulpit Lane which the Crusaders won by one goal to nil courtesy of a strike from Adam Wallace after 65 minutes.

#### **Played for both:**

**Luke Williams:** There have been a fair few who've played for both Hayes & Yeading & Hungerford Town but the stand out is popular United fans favourite Luke Williams. Luke joined us in 2011-12 under the reign of Nas Bashir and accumulated 164 starting appearances, and was subbed on nine times, finding the net on 21 occasions. Williams

started off fantastically in his first season and was soon being watched and handed a trial by at the time Premier League Swansea City. The standout performer in many of our poorer seasons, stayed loyal through relegation from the National League, left for Margate in the summer of 2014 before re-joining originally on loan and then permanently in the summer of 2015 but when relegated from the National South, joined Hungerford Town who were newly promoted.