

# GALA WILTON FC

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024



**v Avonmouth FC**

Gloucestershire County League

2023-2024 season





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## CLUB HISTORY

Gala Wilton was formed in 1952 when a group of friends from the Wilton Road area of Gloucester City created a side known as 'Wilton Rover'. Initially they played their football in the North Gloucestershire League gaining limited success winning the FJ Pope Cup in 1956/57 and Division 1 in 1959/60. In 1970 the club moved to their present home at The Gala Club and then, in 1971 at the third time of asking, they were elected to the Gloucestershire Northern Senior League.

They made an immediate impact in the League, winning Division 2 and beating local rivals Longlevens Star to the title. The following season they finished a creditable 5th in Division 1 and made an application to the County League. Initially they failed to gain membership losing out by one vote to Division 1 Champions Bishops Cleeve. However, it was consequently discovered that the Cheltenham side had misled the County League with regards to the distance from their changing rooms to the pitch and, on a second vote, Wilton Rovers gained membership. Although voted into the County League, the club still retained its membership of the GNSL courtesy of their reserves and, in 1978/79, they won Division 2 by a point from Walls United.

During their 12 seasons in the County League they achieved their best position of 3rd in 1980/81 behind Almondsbury Greenway & Shortwood United, but in 1984/85 they finished 18th and were relegated back to the GNSL. The following season they made an immediate return to the County League having achieved runners-up position to ICI Fibres in Division 1 of Gloucestershire Northern Senior League.

That same season they also won the Diamond Jubilee Cup, a League Cup played for every four years at the time.

Having gained a return to the County League they remained in the League for just three seasons before they were relegated again. In 1989/90 they finished runners-up to St. Marks CA and, in the same season, they again won the Diamond Jubilee Cup

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but had changed the club name to Gale Wilton. After this second successive Diamond Jubilee victory, the club went on a downward spiral and, for one season, only fielded a single side.

The club reached a new low when they were relegated to the second Division of the North Gloucestershire League. The club met with limited success back in the North Gloucester League with the Reserve team winning Divisions 2 & 3 while the 1st XI reached the JO Roberts final only to lose to Westbury United. In 2002 the club transferred allegiances to the Cheltenham League and its fortunes started to change for the better. Several GFA cups and promotions later, the club regained promotion to the GNSL and in 2007-8 they won Division 2 by a clear 10 points from Dursley Town to enable them to return to Division 1 of Gloucestershire Northern Senior League.

After securing their status in Division 1 of the Gloucestershire Northern Senior League, the first team won the "Reg Davis Memorial" Cup and finished 3rd in the 2011/12 season. The following season they won the Northern Senior League by 13 points, gaining promotion to the Gloucestershire County League, and completed the double by winning the Reg Davis Cup again.

Since then the club has managed to consolidate their place in the County League with various solid finishing positions; finishing runners up in the 2013/14 season, and several top 10 placings. We finished 7th last season, after being top of the table at Christmas before falling away at the latter end of the season.

The club as a whole has had quite a successful recent period to date; with the Reserve team winning the "Fred Gardiner Memorial Shield" in 2021/22, and consecutive promotions, now finding themselves in Division 2 of the Gloucestershire Northern Senior League – the highest ever league placing for our Reserve side.

The 3rd team won their Stroud League Cup in 2021/22, with the 4th team also enjoying Stroud League Cup success in 2022/23 winning the "Derek Freebury Shield", beating Tuffley Rovers in the final.

The new season of 23/24 sees Gareth Eakers take the management helm of the 1st team; looking to rebuild the squad and promote youth players, after successful spells at West Brom and Aston Villa Development Centres, along with Gloucester City U18s.

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# GALA FC PLAYER PROFILES



**Curtis Wilkins - GK**

Curtis is another young player who has been developing his game mainly in the seconds since playing for Gala. Great shot stopper and one of the nicest lads you'll meet. He has lots of potential and a willingness to listen and apply which should help him become a well established GK in years to come!!



**Lewis Fogg - (Foggy) CB/CDM**

Foggy has only recently signed for Gala this season and brings a huge amount of experience at a decent level. He has more recently been coaching youth football but also had a season coaching in the Hellinic Div 1 so can add much needed advice and assistance when required both on and off the pitch. Just a shame he's a gunner.....



**Shamar Thomas - (Sham) CB/RB/RW**

Another one of our youngest players heading into this season. Sham has been at Aston Villa Dev Centre last season whilst also playing for Hardwicke youth. One of the quickest players we possess with an engine to match. Certainly one to keep an eye out for and has the potential to really push on but remembering he has plenty of time. Quiet but lovely lad who is affectionately known as marmite to his mum who you'll often hear encouraging him from the sidelines.



**Jahvon Davis - (Jav) RB/RW**

Jav is another right sided player who last season spent some time playing in Hellinic Div 2. He has previously played for WBA Dev Centre as well as Gloucester City U28's winning numerous trophies. Quiet and unassuming but with pace to burn.





**Dylan Barrett - (Dyl) CB/LB**

Dylan has been playing at Cardiff University for the last 4 years, whilst also getting a few thoroughly enjoyable games in for the reserves last season. The main thing uni taught him was how to prioritise his time effectively, football, booze and degree in that order!!!! Just a shame I was pretty average at all 3.....that'll change.



**Jake Gurney - CB**

After spending the last two years in management, Jake is now ready to lace up his boots again and make a step up into the county league. With plenty of playing experience we're hoping he's gonna add some leadership and solidarity at the back...if he can last a whole game!!



**Lee Brinkworth - LB/LCB**

Established member of the second team at gala for a few years now. Played a big role in the cup win and league promotion in the season 21/22. He's mr reliable and consistent. Loves crunching numbers



**Archie Blacker - CM/RM/LM**

Currently studying at Hartpury Uni. Archie has played for Gala for a couple of years and is a real team player. Combative midfielder who likes to try and play the game properly and is hoping to really push on this season.



**Mike Hodgins - (Magic Mike) CM/RM**

Mike is another youngest we who again has been playing at Gloucester City U18's experiencing a trophy win in his first season. He will also be playing for Bishops Cleeve U18's alongside Gala. Midfield maestro who has the technical ability to match his work rate. Has a bright future ahead of him.



**Jacob Eakers - (Eaks) CM/CB/RB**



Eaks is one of the more experienced players in the squad, which seems strange at 18. He played for the Gloucestershire county squad in the 2019/2020 season, he also scored two goals in the reserves cup final two years ago at the age of 16 and played a vital part in their promotion. He also won the U18s county cup two years in a row for Gloucester City and scored in his final youth game, also getting sent off.....!!!

Eaks is technically gifted on both his left and right feet but not so good with his head.....

**Antonio Pirelli - (Anto) LW/RW/ST**



Anto has been playing football for 14 years during this time to include teams such as Evesham United, West Brom Development Centre, Forest Green Rovers Academy and Gloucester city u18s. During his career so far, he has won many trophies and tournaments, gathering great experiences throughout. His most effective positions are anywhere up front whether that's LW, RW or ST. Now he is part of Gala Wilton's 1st Team he is looking forward to getting started and helping the team achieve their ambitions whilst also focusing on his personal development.

**Jay Dare - CM/LW/RW**



Gifted player who is very athletic and very fit. He covers a lot of the pitch and is just returning from a broken leg. He's been at the club for a few years now so after his latest setback he's very keen to prove his ability and really push on this season.

**Wakib - (Waka) CM/RM**



Waka hasn't played a full season since he was 18 unfortunately.....due to injuries. He possesses lots of potential but loves a rehab and rub down so we'll see how this goes!!! He's hoping this season is his.





**Michael Barron - (Mikey) Everywhere....**

Mike is one of those players who will do a job anywhere on the pitch and, do it well. Relentless work rate and a keen eye for goal. Some would say it's the wrong shaped ball for him but either way he knows what he's doing with it. Strong, technically gifted and also another with blistering pace!!! Nicest lad you're ever likely to meet.



**Freddie Harris - (Fred's) ST/FOR**

At just 16 Fred's is the youngest player in the squad. A striker looking to make the transition into men's football and score some goals. With size on his side he needs to learn to use this to his advantage whilst focusing on improving the weaknesses in his game. Another one for the future so keep an eye out. Reports suggest he can already sink 10 pints in a sitting so he'll fit in well at the club!!!



**Tim Hill - AM/ST**

Tim Hill is another young player signing for Gala. Having previously played for Gloucester under 18s he is prolific in front of goal unless it is in the air as he doesn't like a header!! Technically very good with an ability to turn a game in an instance. Lots of potential...



**Jorell Sanniola - RW/FOR**

Jorell plays mainly on the right wing where he is able to exploit situations with his dazzling feet and ability to ghost in and around opposition players in tight spaces. He is progressing very well and really starting to build confidence which will only add to his array of talents. Needs to be a bit more physical at times but telling him his brother is better than him will sure fire him up for that challenge!!!

# UP THE GALA

# HISTORY OF AVONMOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

**A**vonmouth Football Club started as Avonmouth St Andrews back in 1919, when many clubs were formed straight after the horrors of the First World War with strong links to their local Church and many of the Avonmouth Rovers side who played in the early 1900s joined St Andrews.

Over the years on the playing side there have been several professional footballers who commenced their careers at Avonmouth, including brothers Ernie and Jack Brinton, Tommy Wright, Josser Watling, and probably the most famous, Roy Bentley who captained Chelsea to their first ever English Division 1 title and who also played for England as a centre forward.

Over the years the club has won many honours at both junior and senior level including the Bristol and Suburban League top division title eight times.

The club has experienced the ups and down of amateur sport and most significantly had to vacate its West Town Road ground in 1967 when the Ministry of Transport compulsory purchased the King George's Trust site for the run-up to the M5 River Avon Road Bridge. This meant playing fixtures at other grounds including Sea Mills Park, Portway Playing Fields and Canford Park, enabling two senior and two junior sides to continue.

The King George's Field Trust was given a site at the end of Barracks Lane as compensation but due to its poor construction was never going to be suitable for football. With the agreement of the rugby and bowls clubs, that make up the Trust, and after considerable and difficult negotiations with the City Council, Avonmouth FC returned to Avonmouth Road in 1986 utilising the

pitch vacated by Avonmouth Old Boys RFC and a clubhouse that had originated as a US Army building on the Kingsweston House estate.

This last year has seen the club have its most successful season in over 100 years going unbeaten in all competitions, winning the Premier Suburban League, winning every game plus one draw.

In addition, the first team won the Suburban Bosley Cup and the first combined north and south Gloucestershire Senior Amateur Cup, which included county league teams for the first time.

The First team has been promoted to the Gloucestershire County League after winning both of their play-off games.

The reserve team had a successful season gaining promotion to Div 1 of Bristol Suburban league

The under 16 had a good season finishing 3rd and will now play in the U18 Bristol Combination league

We have also added a A team for next season playing in Div 4

Off the field the club has carried out numerous improvements since 2018, including new dressing rooms, social club extension, new roof, the installation of latest technology floodlights, new patio, driveway and hard standing, these will provide better facilities for club members and for local community events. These developments have been supported by several local companies, and we would like to thank them and they are listed in the programme.



# AVONMOUTH FC SQUAD 2023/24



## **TOM BRADLEY**

"Tower" joined Avonmouth halfway through the 2021-2022 season from Olveston United. In his first full season with the Club, TBI managed to help the club achieve an incredible Treble (Suburban League, Alf Bosley Cup and Senior Amateur combined Cup). Not losing a single match in the process This included being in goal for vital Penalty shoot-outs in the League cup and the County league play-offs. Tom was part of the squad that helped secure the clubs promotion to the Gloucester County league for the first time in the club's history.



## **MARK REID**

First played for Avonmouth in 1998 as a 15 year old and was soon a regular part of the first team squad. He left in 2005 to go and play for AFC Hallen in the Western/Hellenic Leagues. Reid returned to Avonmouth in 2018 to play for the reserves as he started winding down his career, but he was soon thrust back into the first team as the Club tried to push for promotion to the County League. Mark was part of the squad that got the club promoted to the County League in 2023. Amazingly the Bristol Suburban League title in 2023 was the first league title of Marks career.



## **TOMMY TAYLOR**

Our Captain. Tommy joined Avonmouth in 2018 18 year old where he spent his first season in the reserves. In his second season he stepped up to the first team with ease. Tommy was named as Captain for the 2022/23 and led the team to an unprecedented treble.



## **ALFIE TAYLOR**

Alfie joined the Club in 2018 and spent his first season slumming it in the reserves before stepping up to the first team the following season and become an integral part of the team. Alfie was part of the treble winning team that finally saw the Club gain promotion to the Gloucester County League in 2023 scoring some high-pressed penalties along the way. Alfie wears his heart on his sleeve and is Avonmouth through and through.



## **CHARLIE ALDOM**

Charlie Aldom joined Avonmouth for the 2021-2022 after recovering from a knee injury. During his first season the Club narrowly missed out on the league title. 2022-2023 Charlie helped claim the league title and promotion for the Club. As well as winning the Gloucester Senior Amateur Cup and the Alf Bosley Cup, where vital goals from Charlie claimed an incredible comeback in the semi-final. Charlie's former clubs include Portishead, Winterbourne and Cibbs FC



## **KYLE O'DONOVAN**

Kyle O'Donovan joined Avonmouth in 2013 having previously played for AFC Hallen, Shireampton and Clevedon Town. Apart from a hiatus where he managed the 'A' team for a season. Kyle has been a massive part of the first team since joining and after a few Runners-up trophies over the years, Kyle finally picked up 3 winners medals during the 2022-2023 season. Kyle refers to himself as the Vinnie Jones of the Club



## **MARK WILLIAMS**

Mark rejoined Avonmouth FC for the start of the 2022-2023 season to help strengthen the defence and soon became a regular starter. Mark had a short spell at the Club previously before leaving for his local Club Olveston United. Mark was part of the treble winning 2022-2023 team that gained the club promotion to the Gloucester County League.



## **MATT GROVES**

Groves's former teams include Weymouth FC, Mangotsfield FC, Yate Town FC, Gloucester City FC and AFC Bitton. Matt joined Avonmouth in 2023 where he helped push the team onto Promotion to the Gloucester County league and part of the treble winning team.



## **JACK WILLIAMS**

Jack joined Avonmouth FC First team at the start of the 2022/23 season after spending 3 years at Hallen FC and 8 years at Bristol Manor Farm prior. Jack has become a key player for the Club in a short space of time.



## **BEN ALLISON**

Ben first started out playing football for Oakengates Colts after moving to England. Telford and joined A.F.C Telford Academy. Ben joined Avonmouth FC First team last season after playing for Lawrence Weston FC and Port of Bristol. Ben was part of the 2022/2023 squad that secured the treble and promotion to the Gloucester County League.



## **BEN HARVEY**

Ben originally joined Avonmouth FC in 2016 and where he played for the 3<sup>rd</sup> team alongside his father Darren Harvey. He left in 2018 to join Roman Glass before rejoining Avonmouth FC First team in 2021. Ben had suffered a few injuries since rejoining, but managed to put that behind him for the 2022/2023 season where he hardly missed a match in the Treble winning season.



## **JOSH PEARCE**

Josh played for Lawrence Westor FC before joining Avonmouth First team during the 2021/22 season. Josh ended the 2022/23 season as the Club and Leagues top goal scorer helping the Club gain promotion to the Gloucester County League and securing two Cup winners medals along the way.

**JORDAN WHITTAKER**

Jordan is another new signing for the 23/24 season. A midfielder who has a great range of passing and can get box to box. Jordan also has higher league experience after playing for Nailsea & Tickenham, Bitton and Shirehampton. A welcome addition to the squad that will see us improve in this area in particular.

**DILLAN KERR**

Dillan joins us for the 23/24 season having had spells at Cribbs, Portishead and Tytherington rocks. A young striker who holds up the ball extremely well and has an eye for goal. A great signing for the team and I'm sure he will go onto score plenty of goals.

**ASH BENNETT**

A formidable player for Avonmouth and AFC Hellen, took over the reins as the first team manager for the 2021/2022 season. His ambitions were made clear to the Club at the time that promotions were expected. In 2022/2023 he managed the team to a League Championship title, GFA Cup win and Alf Bosley Cup win in. Not losing a single match during the season. He then led the Club to the Gloucester County League after winning promotion via a three team play-off. Ash has led by example, not only on the field but with his expectations off the field.

**TOM COX**

Loyal servant to the Club. Has been with the first team for over ten years. Tom Cox is a fierce cm whose not afraid to leave it all in all tackle. Put some monumental labour into the renovations of the Clubhouse over the past decade. Finally rewarded during the 2022/2023 winning the treble and promotion to the Glos County League.

**ROB SAGE**

Sagey' first joined Avonmouth as assistant manager during the 2021-2022 season. He helped the team to push towards challenging for promotion before accepting the opportunity to return to Bitton as first team manager. He then returned in December of the 2022-2023 season and pushed us onto another lever helping us secure the unprecedented treble

**AARON HARVEY**

Son of former first team Manager Darren Harvey. Aaron played in goal for the first team for many years before stepping back due to injury. He helped assist Ash Bennett and the first team to league and cup success in 2023.

**SAM FORD**

Sam joined Avonmouth during the 2021/2022 season which was his first experience of Saturday football as he use to be a City season ticket holder. Sam was a brilliant squad player for 2022/2023 treble winning season including 4 goals from the bench in the League Cup Final.

**ROB ALLEN**

Started playing for Avonmouth aged 15 before moving onto AFC Hellen and Axa (Cribbs) before taking a break from football for a few years. Came back to Avonmouth to win the treble during the 2022/2023 and get the team promoted to the Gloucester County League.

**GEORGE BROWN**

George is a new signing for the 23/24 season. Having played for Bristol City Youth for ten years, he took a season out at 16. He then returned last season playing County League football for Henbury. A welcome addition to our squad with his versatility giving us many options.

**CODY WINKLER**

Cody joins us for the 23/24 season having previously played for Shirehampton first team and reserves. A very promising player who has bags of ability and an eye for goal. He is also currently plying his trade for Portishead U18's in the Floodlit League.

**JAMES ELLIS**

James started playing for Avonmouth during the 22-23 season in the reserves. During pre season with the 1st team he has shown great attitude and quality. He's very new to grass roots football having been at City and Rovers Academy for most of his footballing career. A great lad who will no doubt go on to play a higher level of football.

**SAM JACKSON**

Sam joins us for the 23-24 season having previously played for Hengrove and Mendip. Sam is a fiery forward who gives us different options going forward and improves the quality we have in the squad. His work rate and goals will hopefully push us onto the next level.



# GALA 2023/24 SPONSORS



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Marc is a Gala Legend and is still an active player, having given many years' service to the First Team and now providing his experience to the Seconds. Gala Wilton FC are very thankful for his support.



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# TODAY'S TEAMS



**GALA WILTON**

**AVONMOUTH**

**REFEREE: STEVE OAKEY**

Curtis Wilkins	1	Tom Bradley
Lewis Fogg	2	Mark Reid
Shamar Thomas	3	Tommy Taylor
Jahvon Davis	4	Alfie Taylor
Dylan Barrett	5	Charlie Aldom
Jake Gurney	6	Kyle O'Donovan
Lee Brinkworth	7	Mark Williams
Archie Blacker	8	Matt Groves
Mike Hodgins	9	Jack Williams
Sam Webb	10	Ben Allison
Jacob Eakers	11	Ben Harvey
Antonio Pirelli	12	Josh Pearce
Jay Dare	14	Sam Ford
Wakib	15	Rob Allen
Michael Barron	16	George Brown
Freddie Harris	17	Cody Winkler
Tim Hill	18	James Ellis
Jorell Sanniola	19	Sam Jackson
	20	Jordan Whittaker
	21	Dillan Kerr
	22	Ash Bennett
	23	Tom Cox
	24	Rob Sage
	25	Aaron Harvey

**SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2024**

**3PM KICK OFF**