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VINES GROUP

THREE BRIDGES VS MERSTHAM

SATURDAY 31 JANUARY 2026
3:00PM KICK-OFF

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE
SOUTH EAST DIVISION

JUBILEE FIELD
JUBILEE WALK
CRAWLEY
RH10 1LQ



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Three Bridges Football Club

(Unincorporated association, owned by the Club's members and operated in line with the club's written constitution)

Jubilee Walk, Three Bridges

Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 1LQ

 01293 442000

 www.threebridgesfc.co.uk

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Members of:

Sussex County Football Association
Pitching In Isthmian Football League
London & SE Regional Women's League
Junior Premier League
Sussex Sunday Youth League
Sussex County Women's & Girls Football League
Mid Sussex Youth & Minor Football League
Horsham & District Youth Football League
Crawley & District Youth Football League

CLUB OFFICERS

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Vice Presidents:	Alf Blackler John O'Dwyer Alan Ladd

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Gatehouse Managers:	Simon Rollings Jim Chapman
Match Day Co-Ordinator:	Steve White
Head Groundsmen:	Steve White Keith Richardson
Car Parking & Safety Officer:	Paul Coleman

FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT

1st Team Manager:	Jamie Crellin
1st Team Assistant:	Joe Kay
1st Team Goalkeeping Coach:	Ross Ball
Club Physiotherapist:	Tracey Weller
Women's Team Manager:	Joe Clark
Kit Manager:	Richard Munn

YOUTH SECTION

Youth Chairman:	Graham McDonnell
Youth Secretary:	Simon Rollings
Girls Section Lead:	Nick Thomas

U18 Isthmian League Managers:	Matt Calver Ben Lovelock
U16 Managers:	Graham McDonnell Craig Burrows
U15 Managers:	Andrew Wraight Ashley Harding
U14 Managers:	Clinton Moore Karl Mitchell
U13 Managers:	Donovan Bontemps Joe Stillwell Simon Rollings
U12 Managers:	Chris Irving Steve Povey Wills Knight
U11 Managers:	Tom Bryson Lewis Corney Ryan Corney
Girls Managers:	Nick Thomas Mario Kempster

The Isthmian Football League strongly supports the Football Association's statement that there should be a zero-tolerance approach against all forms of discrimination. Any inappropriate conduct towards others, including but not limited to that based on an individual's sex, race, colour, weight, size, religion and belief, national origin, age, marital or domestic-partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, will not be tolerated and will be reported to the relevant authorities. The Isthmian League and our Member Clubs are committed to promoting equity and equality by treating all people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and providing access and opportunities for all members of our communities.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



CHAIRMAN'S PROGRAMME NOTES

Three Bridges vs Merstham

Welcome everyone to Jubilee Field for today's Isthmian League South East Division fixture as Three Bridges take on Merstham. As always, I extend a warm welcome to the players, officials, and supporters of Merstham, and I hope everyone enjoys the game and their visit to the club.

I would like to place on record a very special thank you to our Club President, Alan Ladd, who is today's Matchball Sponsor. Alan's long-serving and continued support of the football club is hugely appreciated by everyone connected with Three Bridges, and we are delighted that he will also have the honour of selecting today's Man of the Match following the final whistle.

Last weekend saw us suffer a narrow 3–2 defeat away at Deal Town. Deal is always a tough place to go, and while the result was disappointing, the effort and commitment from the players was never in doubt, especially during the second-half as we fought for a comeback. This squad has already shown on plenty of occasions this season that it knows how to respond positively, and the focus this week has very much been on bouncing back.

That said, today's challenge will be another demanding one. Merstham have proven to be something of a bogey team for us in recent years, and we know we will need to be at our very best if we are to take all three points. Games between our sides are always competitive and hard-fought, and I'm sure this afternoon will be no different.

Finally, I would like to continue to thank everyone connected with Three Bridges Football Club — our supporters, volunteers, sponsors, players, and staff — for your ongoing support and commitment. Your backing, both home and away, makes a huge difference and is vital to everything we are striving to achieve together.

Enjoy the match and Up The Bridges!

Paul Faili
Chairman

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A HISTORY OF THREE BRIDGES FOOTBALL CLUB

Founded in 1901, Three Bridges joined the Mid Sussex Football League in 1902 and were Champions of that League for the first time in the 1907/08 season. Their first major success came in 1933/34, when they won the Sussex Junior Cup, and sundry other minor honours came their way before they joined the Sussex County Football League in 1952/53, and two years later were crowned Second Division Champions.

In 1962/63 they won the Division Two Invitation Cup and in 1968/69, 1973/74 and 1979/80 were Second Division Runners Up. 1970/71 produced an against-the-odds triumph when winning the League's Invitation Cup against Southwick (3-2). The 1980s heralded a run of successes, starting with reaching the last 16 of the FA Vase for the first time in 1981/82 before losing at Molesey (1-2). A season later they made it to the last 32 but also won the Sussex RUR Charity Cup for the first time, beating Hastings Town 3-2. Another year on saw them finish runners up in the Thorn EMI National six-a-side tournament, winning a set of floodlights. 1985/86 saw them finish as County League Division One runners up, a feat they repeated in both 1987/88 (when they also won the RUR Cup again) and 1988/89. A fire destroyed their clubhouse in 1993 which re-focused their priorities and ultimately resulted in relegation in 1996/97. They won the Division 2 League Cup a season later and then finished runners up in Division 2 to regain Division 1 status. They were RUR Cup runners up in 2003/04 and then winners of that same prestigious trophy in 2007/08. In season 2010/11 hopes were high when they started by winning their first nine League games, but eventually finished the season in 5th place. However, they did win the John O'Hara League Challenge Cup for the first time that season, beating Rye United 2-1, a tremendous feat that they achieved again in 2011/12, this time AFC Uckfield being defeated 2-1. It looked like being another tough League campaign when they lost four of the first nine matches, but then lost only one of the remaining 29 games, which was concluded by beating Championship rivals Rye United 1-0 at home on the final day of the season! This tremendous run meant the club had achieved its ambition and become Sussex County Football League Champions.

Their first season in the Ryman Isthmian Football League South Division saw them struggle for much of the time. However, having been 10 points adrift at the bottom of the table in mid-February, they went on a run of 11 matches that produced 7 victories, 2 draws and just 2 defeats, earning them Team of the Month Awards in both March and April as a result. It meant that they survived the drop, but their second season in the Ryman League saw them struggle at times again but some key signings midway through the season helped them to 19th place. The 2014/15 season saw an even greater improvement with a healthy mixture of youth and experience guiding them into 7th position and, whilst they were happy to score 94 League goals, they were less than happy about the 95 they conceded! They improved their defensive record in conceding 67 goals in season 2015/16 but only scored 59, hardly helped by long-term injuries to strike partners Allan Tait and Tony Garrod. With 66 points, they slumped to 14th position, although they only accumulated 6 points fewer than in the previous campaign!

Bridges maintained most of that season's squad for the 2016/17 campaign. However, with at least 11 first team players out injured by September, they had to use a lot of the U21s, Academy and U18s players and by November had lost 12 games in a row, drew three and won just one game. Towards the end of the season, they strengthened the squad but it was too late to avoid relegation. For the 2017/18 season, Bridges kept a few of the best of the players from the previous season and strengthened the team with more experienced players in the hope of promotion once again. Bridges also strengthened the management team with the additions of the experienced ex-Bridges player, Martin Dynan as Assistant Manager, and UEFA 'A' licensed Coach, Marc Wardley. That season turned out to be an extremely tough one with every team wanting to beat us. However, Bridges accomplished what they set out to do by gaining promotion back to the Isthmian League having finished second place in the Southern Combination League Premier Division, just one point behind the winners, Haywards Heath Town, and despite having only lost 3 games all season.

After serving 25 years with the Club as a manager, Paul Faili stood down as First Team Manager for the 2018/19 season in order to concentrate on his role as Club Chairman, and handed the management reins over to Martin Dynan, assisted by Liam Collins alongside Keith George. After losing 8 out of 12 League games by the end of November, as well as being knocked out of all four cup competitions, the future looked bleak for Martin Dynan. However, the team then went on an unbeaten run in December, earning Martin the League's Manager of the Month Award. Unfortunately, that didn't last, and Martin's demise was inevitable by the end of February, having lost 8 of the last nine games with relegation looming. Paul Faili stepped in for the remaining 9 games of the season attaining 4 wins, 2 draws and 3 losses – enough for a 14th place finish and 14 points clear of relegation.

Paul remained as Manager, ably assisted by Keith George and coached by Jamie Crellin who played for the Club for five seasons, but sadly had to hang up his boots after sustaining an ankle injury early in the 2018/19 season, after making 164 appearances for the Club. First Team player, Brannon O'Neill, was appointed as U18s Manager. 2021/22 saw Jamie Crellin take over as First Team Manager, with Danny Lee (former Academy manager) returning to the club to join Jamie in the dugout as Assistant Manager. The 2022/23 season saw Brannon O'Neill appointed as Assistant Manager following Danny Lee's departure to Whitehawk and Joe Kay joined as First Team Coach. The team finished in their highest ever League position (fourth) but were beaten in the final of the Play Offs at home to Chichester City.

Brannon moved to Burgess Hill Town in the summer of 2024, so Joe Kay is now Jamie's Assistant Manager with Ross Ball in the role of Goalkeeping Coach.

The 2024/25 season was a monumental year for the football club, as the long planned 3G pitch facility development took place. This meant starting the season playing home games out of Chatham Town FC, but by Boxing Day the First Team were back home and by January 2025 the 3G pitch was in full use by men's, women's and youth teams of Three Bridges FC, as well as users from the local community, schools, colleges and charities. On the pitch, after being in the relegation zone in November, the team finished in a respectable 8th place after making a late but unsuccessful push for the play-offs.

The majority of the 2024/25 team have remained at the club, with Dan Perry returning during pre-season and further additions made in Sam Roberts, Charlie Bennett and Ade Adeyinka.



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FIXTURES & RESULTS

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE SOUTH EAST DIVISION

Saturday 31 January 2026

Isthmian League – South East Division

Ashford United		12:45		Jersey Bulls
Sittingbourne		13:00		Crowborough Athletic
AFC Croydon Athletic		15:00		Margate
AFC Whyteleafe		15:00		VCD Athletic
East Grinstead Town		15:00		Beckenham Town
Eastbourne Town		15:00		Erith Town
Faversham Town		15:00		Hastings United
Herne Bay		15:00		Broadbridge Heath
Sevenoaks Town		15:00		Deal Town
Sheppey United		15:00		Hassocks FC
Three Bridges		15:00		Merstham



FIXTURES & RESULTS

Date	Comp	H/A	Opposition	Res.	Scorers
02/08	FA CUP	H	SHOREHAM	5-2	R Hallard, OG, Bennet x2, Rivera
09/08	LEAGUE	H	EASTBOURNE TOWN	5-0	Adeyinka, Irving, R Hallard x3
12/08	LEAGUE	A	EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN	4-1	Velvick, Woollard, R Hallard, Fisher
16/08	FA CUP	H	HORSHAM YM	4-1	R Hallard x2, Adeyinka, Rivera
23/08	FA TROPHY	A	MARLOW	3-0	Ojo, Adeyinka, Bennett
25/08	LEAGUE	A	BROADBRIDGE HEATH	1-2	R Hallard
30/08	FA CUP	H	WALTON & HERSHAM	0-2	
05/09	FA TROPHY	A	ASCOT UNITED	0-2	
09/09	LEAGUE	H	SHEPPEY UNITED	7-1	Leighton x3, R Hallard x2, Velvick, Holden
13/09	LEAGUE	H	AFC WHYTELEAFE	3-2	Bennett x2, R Hallard
23/09	LEAGUE	A	ASHFORD UNITED	2-1	Bennett, Leighton
27/09	LEAGUE	H	HASTINGS UNITED	4-2	Villavicencio, Bennett, Leighton, Velvick
30/09	VELOCITY CUP	A	SOUTH PARK REIGATE	4-2	R Hallard, Holden x2, Ojo
04/10	LEAGUE	A	MERSTHAM	1-1	Leighton
07/10	COUNTY CUP	A	LITTLE COMMON	2-0	Rivera, Ojo
11/10	LEAGUE	H	DEAL TOWN	3-1	Velvick (2), Bennett
14/10	LEAGUE	H	JERSEY BULLS	2-2	Leighton, R Hallard
18/10	LEAGUE	A	HERNE BAY	4-1	R Hallard x3, Adeyinka
21/10	LEAGUE	A	VCD ATHLETIC	2-0	Adeyinka, R Hallard
25/10	LEAGUE	H	CROWBOROUGH ATHLETIC	1-0	Leighton
28/10	LEAGUE	A	JERSEY BULLS	1-1	Leighton
01/11	LEAGUE	A	ERITH TOWN	0-1	
05/11	VELOCITY CUP	A	KINGSTONIAN	1-4	Falzon
08/11	LEAGUE	H	SITTINGBOURNE	2-1	Villavicencio x2
11/11	LEAGUE	H	EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN	5-0	Leighton x2, Villavicencio, Adeyinka x2
15/11	LEAGUE	A	AFC CROYDON ATHLETIC	2-0	Leighton x 2
18/11	COUNTY CUP	H	WICK	10-0	R Hallard x2, Villavicencio, Ghannam, Rivera x2, Holden (pen), Velvick, Bennett x2
22/11	LEAGUE	H	FAVERSHAM TOWN	2-4	Bennett x2
29/11	LEAGUE	A	EASTBOURNE TOWN	5-0	Bennett (pen), R Hallard, Leighton x3
06/12	LEAGUE	H	MARGATE	3-0	Adeyinka x2, R Hallard
13/12	LEAGUE	A	SEVENOAKS TOWN	5-0	R Hallard, Neathey, Leighton, Velvick, Adeyinka
20/12	LEAGUE	H	ASHFORD UNITED	5-4	Leighton x2, R Hallard x2, Bennett (pen)
27/12	LEAGUE	A	HASSOCKS	5-1	R Hallard x2, Rivera, Bennett (pen), Adeyinka
03/01	LEAGUE	H	BROADBRIDGE HEATH	4-0	Bennett x2 (pen), Adeyinka, R.Hallard
13/01	COUNTY CUP	H	HORSHAM	1-1	Velvick (Bridges won 4-1 on penalties)
17/01	LEAGUE	H	VCD ATHLETIC	4-0	Bennett (pen), Hallard x2, Leighton
24/01	LEAGUE	A	DEAL TOWN	2-3	Leighton, Velvick
31/01	LEAGUE	H	MERSTHAM		
07/02	LEAGUE	A	HASTINGS UNITED		
10/02	LEAGUE	A	BECKENHAM TOWN		
14/02	LEAGUE	H	HERNE BAY		
21/02	LEAGUE	A	CROWBOROUGH ATHLETIC		
28/02	LEAGUE	H	ERITH TOWN		
07/03	LEAGUE	A	SITTINGBOURNE		
14/03	LEAGUE	H	SEVENOAKS TOWN		
21/03	LEAGUE	A	MARGATE		
28/03	LEAGUE	H	BECKENHAM TOWN		
04/04	LEAGUE	A	SHEPPEY UNITED		
06/04	LEAGUE	H	HASSOCKS		
11/04	LEAGUE	A	AFC WHYTELEAFE		
18/04	LEAGUE	H	AFC CROYDON ATHLETIC		
25/04	LEAGUE	A	FAVERSHAM TOWN		



LEAGUE TABLE

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE SOUTH EAST DIVISION

Correct as of 29 January 2026

		Home				Away				Total				F	A	+/-	Pts
		P	W	D	L	P	W	D	L	P	W	D	L				
	1 Three Bridges	14	12	1	1	13	8	2	3	27	20	3	4	84	29	+55	63
	2 AFC Croydon Athletic	13	9	1	3	14	9	3	2	27	18	4	5	64	34	+30	58
	3 AFC Whyteleafe	14	10	1	3	13	6	3	4	27	16	4	7	70	32	+38	52
	4 Faversham Town	14	8	3	3	12	7	4	1	26	15	7	4	57	36	+21	52
	5 Sittingbourne	13	9	3	1	13	6	3	4	26	15	6	5	48	28	+20	51
	6 Jersey Bulls	14	7	5	2	14	6	4	4	28	13	9	6	47	30	+17	48
	7 Merstham	14	5	3	6	14	8	2	4	28	13	5	10	48	41	+7	44
	8 Margate	14	7	2	5	14	4	7	3	28	11	9	8	61	51	+10	42
	9 Herne Bay	14	5	4	5	13	7	2	4	27	12	6	9	44	41	+3	42
	10 Deal Town	13	7	2	4	13	5	1	7	26	12	3	11	50	46	+4	39
	11 Sevenoaks Town	14	7	1	6	14	5	1	8	28	12	2	14	43	57	-14	38
	12 Eastbourne Town	14	7	3	4	14	4	2	8	28	11	5	12	41	59	-18	38
	13 Ashford United	14	5	4	5	14	6	0	8	28	11	4	13	58	54	+4	37
	14 Broadbridge Heath	13	8	1	4	14	3	2	9	27	11	3	13	56	49	+7	36
	15 Sheppey United	14	7	4	3	13	3	2	8	27	10	6	11	47	54	-7	36
	16 Crowborough Athletic	13	5	3	5	14	5	2	7	27	10	5	12	40	51	-11	35
	17 Hastings United	14	4	3	7	14	5	2	7	28	9	5	14	40	45	-5	32
	18 Erith Town (-1)	13	3	3	7	13	3	5	5	26	6	8	12	34	51	-17	25
	19 Hassocks	14	3	3	8	14	2	5	7	28	5	8	15	32	52	-20	23
	20 VCD Athletic	14	4	3	7	14	2	2	10	28	6	5	17	35	64	-29	23
	21 Beckenham Town	12	3	3	6	13	1	3	9	25	4	6	15	33	58	-25	18
	22 East Grinstead Town	12	0	1	11	14	1	0	13	26	1	1	24	19	89	-70	4

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A HISTORY OF MERSTHAM FC

The 2007/08 season, Mick Sullivan's seventh year in charge, brought the club into a new era with a treble winning side, a fantastic run in the FA Vase and promotion to the Isthmian League South Division as they finally finished top after two seasons as runners up. After losing on the opening day of the season at Cove, Merstham went undefeated in the league for the rest of the season winning 35 times, gaining 111 points and scoring 114 goals with Kevin Lock and Kwabena Agyei scoring 53 between them. The dream of a Wembley final in the FA Vase vanished in the Quarter Final when they lost at home to Needham Market 2-3 in extra time in front of 841. Merstham successfully defended the Premier Challenge Cup beating Bedfont Green 4-2 in the final. In the Surrey Senior Cup final against Whyteleafe, the Moatsiders won 3-2 in extra time after twice trailing.

At the 2008/09 was Merstham's first season in the Isthmian South and they had a good season finishing eighth, narrowly missing out the play-offs. Their defence of their Surrey Senior Cup title was ended by Woking in the semi-final. However, in May manager Mick Sullivan announced that, after eight seasons at the helm, he was leaving to manage Leatherhead. After a couple of indifferent seasons, in January 2012, the Board announced that former Bromley manager Hayden Bird would take charge. Bird rang the changes, bringing in several new players and Merstham finished a creditable ninth.

The 2012/13 was Bird's first full season in charge and it didn't quite live up to expectations with Merstham finishing 12th and without a noticeable run in any cup completion. Bird again rang the changes for the 2013/14 season bringing in more experienced players and Merstham attained their highest place in the club's history, finishing seventh with their highest tally of points and goals since gaining promotion to the Isthmian League.

The 2014/15 season was to be the best in the club's history to date, gaining promotion to the Isthmian Premier Division by winning the play-offs in style and finishing runners up in the Surrey Senior Cup. Merstham's fourth place finish with 93 points and 107 goals put them into the play-offs. The play off semi-final went to penalties, which Merstham won 5-4 thanks to keeper Brannon Daly's save. In front of 1465 at Folkestone, Merstham gained promotion by beating the home side 3-0. Just four days later, a tired-looking Merstham lost 2-0 in the final of the Surrey Senior Cup to Met Police. The 2015/16 season saw the team attaining their highest-ever position in senior football finishing tenth in their first season in The Isthmian Premier League. This was in part due to 20 goals from Charlie Penny and 14 from Fabio Saraiva who were then both signed by Woking after dumping the National League side out in the semis of the Surrey Senior Cup. The final was very one-sided, as Godalming Town were thumped 4-1.

In Merstham's second season in the Isthmian Premier, the Moatsiders reached the First Round Proper of the FA Cup for the first time in their history. They beat East Preston (4-1), Colliers Wood Utd (2-1 in a replay), Thamesmead Town (5-1) and Ebbsfleet Utd (2-1) on the way to a meeting with League One side Oxford United. A record-breaking crowd of 1,920 packed into the Moatside, but Merstham seemed a little over-awed and lost 5-0. After the euphoria of the cup run, the season spiralled downward, and the club narrowly avoided relegation on the last day of the season.

During the close season Bird made wholesale changes to his squad. The 2017/18 season saw the club celebrate its 125th anniversary, finish 12th in the league and for the second time in four years, win the Surrey Senior Cup, beating Leatherhead 3-1. The 2018/19 was Merstham's best-ever season in the topflight. At Christmas, the side were flirting with relegation, but a superb run saw the Moatsiders put themselves into the hunt for the play offs. They finished the season needing to win away to Worthing to get into the play offs. Amazingly the visitors went 3-0 up inside the first ten minutes and held on for a 4-2 win. In the play-off semi-final, away to Carshalton, the Moatsiders shocked the Robins with a 2-1 win, which set up a play-off final away to Tonbridge Angels in front of a crowd of 2,400. It turned out to be a physical and dour encounter marred by a double sending off just before the interval with Merstham's Ollie Cook given his marching orders. Tonbridge scored on 34' and the Moatsiders rarely looked like getting back on terms. A penalty in added time was largely irrelevant as the Angels clinched the play-off spot with a 2-0 win. Shortly after the play-off final, Bird left to join Kingstonian, taking the entire first-team squad with him. Former Tooting and Mitcham boss Frank Wilson was appointed in June 2019 and had to build a brand-new squad from scratch.

No one could have predicted the impact of Covid-19 as the pandemic swept the world just as the 2019/20 season neared its conclusion. Wilson had endured a real baptism of fire as his new team struggled to maintain their Premier League status. As the pandemic surged throughout the UK, football was no longer a priority and when the season was finally curtailed, with all records being expunged, Merstham were fighting relegation and sat in 21st place, although with home games against relegation rivals to play, most were confident that the drop could be avoided. The 20/21 season lasted just 11 games before the surge in Covid cases brought the new season to an inevitable halt.

When football finally returned at the start of the 2021/22 season, the Moatsiders made a decent start in the league and progressed through two rounds of the FA Cup before losing at home to Hereford United. In November, the team had a purple patch of form with the front two of Korrey Henry and John Ufuah forming a lethal combination and the team playing some superb football. In the home game against Haringey, Merstham were 5-0 up at the interval! However, other clubs had taken note and Ufuah departed for the Welsh Premiership and Henry to Carshalton. Without their front two, the Moatsiders struggled to score goals and combined with a horrendous run of injuries that reduced the squad to the bare bones, Merstham began to slide down the table. The team lost their final 13 league games and relegation was confirmed on the final day of the season. Wilson departed and he was replaced for the 2022/23 season by former Carshalton boss and ex- Merstham midfielder, Peter Adeniyi.

Merstham were one of the favourites for promotion from the Isthmian South Central in 2022/3. However, Adeniyi's young, new team failed to fire and after ten games, the team were bottom of the table and remained there for much of the season. A bad habit of drawing games that they should have won didn't help as the team eventually ended up with 17 draws from 38 games. A prime example was away to Southall when the Moatsiders were 3-1 up in added time but ended up drawing 3-3! The team seemed to have turned a corner around the New Year with an unbeaten run of 6 games, but only one of those was a win. As the season drew to a close, Merstham had their fate in their own hands with games against others around them in the relegation zone. But a damaging defeat at Sutton Common Rovers and a disappointing home draw with Bedfont Sports followed by a 6-0 thumping at Walton & Hersham put them back in trouble. A fighting performance and a 90th minute winner at Chertsey meant it was all to play for in the final league game of the season at home to Westfield. After 45 minutes the Moatsiders were 2-0 down and staring relegation in the face. However, a stirring second half display earned them a point with a 2-2 draw. It condemned Merstham to a relegation play off against an in-form Egham Town. In front of over 650 spectators, Merstham conceded first but on the stroke of half time, Aaron Goode powered home a header to make it 1-1. After the break it was all Merstham and two goals by Adam Adam guaranteed survival.

At the end of the season, Adeniyi announced he was returning to manage Carshalton and former Moatsider Tony Reid was appointed manager. The FA also decided (without any consultation) to move the team into the Isthmian South-East Division, thought by many to be a far tougher league. Reid got off to a poor start and when his side was dumped out of the Velocity Trophy with a 6-1 defeat, the Board decided a change was needed and appointed K's assistant manager, Jamie Decruz. Decruz's first match in charge saw the team go in at half time 3-0 down at home to Beckenham, but a stirring second half comeback saw the Moatsiders grab a dramatic 4-3 win. That game was a microcosm of the season, with the side consistently inconsistent. There were with some notable wins, for example 2-0 at league leaders Ramsgate, but losing to most of sides at the bottom of the table kept the team flirting with the relegation zone. The most bizarre game was a 6-6 draw at Broadbridge Heath, when the Moatsiders led 2-0, 4-2, 5-4 and then fell behind 6-5 before an equaliser in the 94th minute! It wasn't until a thumping 5-0 home win against Sevenoaks at the start of April that the club could finally breathe a sigh of relief and look forward to another season in the Isthmian SE.

The 2024-25 season was one to remember for Merstham, bringing moments of excitement both in the cups and the league. The Moatsiders began in style with a 7-0 Emirates FA Cup win over Wick, before bowing out bravely against National League South side Tonbridge Angels. In the Isthmian South East Division, Jamie Decruz's side showed real progress, finishing fifth and booking a place in the play-offs. Their run ended with a 4-2 semi-final defeat to Sittingbourne, but the achievement of reaching that stage marked a significant step forward for the club. Supporters were treated to some fine performances along the way, including home victories over Ramsgate and Sittingbourne, and an unforgettable 9-0 thrashing of East Grinstead Town under the lights at The Hybrid Fitness Stadium. Though the season ended short of promotion, fans were left proud of their team - and optimistic about what lies ahead.



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MATCH REPORT

DEAL TOWN 3-2 THREE BRIDGES

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE SOUTH EAST

SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2026

Three Bridges' longest away trip of the season ended in frustration as they slipped to a 3–2 defeat against Deal Town, with a chaotic first-half spell proving too much to overcome despite sustained pressure after the break.

Bridges were handed a stern examination from the outset. A heavy, mud-laden pitch and a strong wind made conditions extremely difficult, and Deal adapted far quicker. The hosts dominated the opening exchanges, creating several clear chances as Wes Hennessey and Callum Davies both went close, while a series of early corners left Bridges fortunate to still be level after 15 minutes.

Against the run of play, Bridges took the lead in the 20th minute. A Josh Hallard free kick caused problems in the Deal penalty area and, following a scramble, Noel Leighton reacted quickest to volley home and give the visitors an unexpected advantage.

Deal continued to apply pressure in a match where the ball rarely touched the ground. Bridges gradually grew in confidence and began to cope better with the aerial battle, but the hosts' persistence paid off in the 35th minute when Jacob Strouts rose above everyone from a corner to head in the equaliser.

From that point on, Bridges' first half unravelled. Defensive organisation deserted them and Deal sensed the opportunity to capitalise. In the 42nd minute, a spilled ball in the Bridges goal was punished by Hennessey, who poked home to make it 2–1. Matters worsened before the interval as further sloppy defending allowed Hennessey to get on the end of a low cross and score his second, sending Deal into the break with a commanding 3–1 lead.

Bridges faced a stiff task at half-time, and little from the opening 45 minutes suggested a route back into the match. However, the response after the restart was immediate. Noel Leighton struck the post early in the second half, and Hayden Velvick was quickest to react in the 50th minute, finishing the rebound to reduce the deficit to 3–2.

The second half was a complete contrast. Bridges dominated possession and territory, forcing Deal into deep and increasingly desperate defending. A goalmouth scramble in the 64th minute should have produced an equaliser, but Rivera, Leighton and Velvick were all unable to apply the finishing touch from close range.

Velvick went close again in the 70th minute after a driving run saw him clean through on goal, only for Deal goalkeeper Tonkin to produce an outstanding one-on-one save to keep his side ahead.

Despite piling forward in the closing stages, Bridges were unable to find the composure required in the final 10 minutes. Attacks became rushed, delivery into the box lacked quality, and promising situations were wasted. Two penalty appeals involving Velvick and Bennett were waved away, but Bridges allowed frustration to creep in rather than maintaining the clarity needed to force a late comeback.

Despite the defeat, Three Bridges remain clear leaders of the Isthmian South East League, sitting on 63 points from 27 matches, five ahead of nearest challengers AFC Croydon, with a significant goal difference still firmly in their favour.

Bridges Team: Roberts, Ferreira (Holden), J Hallard, Bull, Neathey, Villavicencio (Rivera), Leighton (C), R Hallard, Adeyinka, Velvick (Difika), Bennett

Booked: J Hallard, Bull, Neathey

Unused Subs: Irving, Woollard

Man of the Match – Noel Leighton

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		<u>1st - £100</u>	<u>2nd - £50</u>
JANUARY 2025	12	Steve Green	21 Keith Richardson
FEBRUARY 2025	45	Tony Danser	9 Alan Bell
MARCH 2025	72	Gordon Bennett	2 Peggy Yearwood
APRIL 2025	28	Alan Ladd	50 Mick Yearwood
MAY 2025	62	Lyn Walls	72 Gordon Bennett
JUNE 2025	23	Bernie Jobson	01 Hazel Bell
JULY 2025	28	Alan Ladd	54 Richard Munn
AUGUST 2025	23	Bernie Jobson	42 Keith Cook
SEPTEMBER 2025	54	Richard Munn	21 Keith Richardson
OCTOBER 2025	1	Hazel Bell	4 Mike Denman
NOVEMBER 2025	96	Karl Mitchell	18 Chris Irving
DECEMBER 2025	7	Simon Rollings	75 Graham Weekes

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APPEARANCES

APPEARANCES	2025/26						Bridges First Team Career					
	League		Cup		Total		League		Cup		Total	
	Start	Sub	Start	Sub	Start	Sub	Start	Sub	Start	Sub	Start	Sub
Ade Adeyinka	25		7	1	32	1	25		7	1	32	1
Charlie Bennett	20	3	6	4	26	7	20	3	6	4	26	7
Naythan Bryson			2		2		7		2		9	
Sam Bull	25		7	1	32	1	45		7	1	52	1
George Falzon		5		2		7		13		3		16
Dan Ferreira	23		8	1	31	1	124	15	25	3	149	18
Noel Fisher	3	4	3	4	6	8	15	5	3	4	18	9
Josh Hallard	23	1	6	1	29	2	49	2	6	1	55	3
Reece Hallard	21	2	8		29	2	69	4	13		82	4
Connor Hayden-Pickering		6		3		9	2	18	1	4	3	22
Ben Holden	4	17	4	2	8	19	34	17	4	2	38	19
Billy Irving	5	9	7	1	12	10	78	27	26	4	104	31
Noel Leighton	20	1	2	2	22	3	123	4	21	3	144	7
Shay Matthews		1		1		2	1	6		1	1	7
Hayden Neathey	24	1	7	1	31	2	46	1	7	1	53	2
Destiny Ojo		3	2	3	2	6		3	2	6	2	6
Dan Perry		1				1	29	4	5	1	34	5
Kevin Rivera	16	7	10		26	7	117	17	26	1	143	18
Sam Roberts	25		7		32		25		7		32	
Hayden Velvick	25		7	3	32	3	59	7	10	3	69	10
Bryan Villavicencio	15	8	4	3	19	11	101	20	22	4	123	24
Harvey Woollard	9	10	6	1	15	11	89	16	18	5	107	21



GOALSCORERS

GOAL SCORERS	2025/26			Bridges First Team Career		
	League	Cup	Total	League	Cup	Total
Ade Adeyinka	10	2	12	10	2	12
Charlie Bennett	12	5	17	12	5	17
Sam Bull				1		1
George Falzon		1	1	1	1	2
Dan Ferreira				3		3
Noel Fisher	1		1	3		3
Reece Hallard	23	6	29	50	8	58
Ben Holden	1	3	4	11	3	14
Billy Irving	1		1	7	4	11
Noel Leighton	21		21	78	11	89
Hayden Neathey	1		1	2		2
Destiny Ojo		3	3		3	3
Kevin Rivera	1	5	6	27	8	35
Hayden Velvick	7	2	9	12	2	14
Bryan Villavicencio	4	1	5	9	1	10
Harvey Woollard	1		1	6		6

THREE BRIDGES SQUAD FROM:		MERSTHAM SQUAD FROM:	
1	Sam ROBERTS (GK)		Rob TOLFREY (GK)
2	Dan FERREIRA		Sam ALLEN (GK)
3	Josh HALLARD		Ollie KHINDA
4	Harvey WOOLLARD (Capt.)		Matt DRAGE
5	Sam BULL		Harry POINTING
6	Hayden NEATHEY (Vice Capt.)		Ange DJADJA
8	Bryan VILLAVICENCIO		Luke ASHBURN
9	Noel LEIGHTON (Vice Capt.)		Jude MALLOY
10	Kevin RIVERA		Paris HAMILTON-DOWNES
11	Reece HALLARD		Charlie GREENWOOD
13	Naythan BRYSON (GK)		Olly ALLEN
14	Ade ADEYINKA		Lee LEWIS
15	Tresor DIFIKA		Ryan HEALY
16	Ben HOLDEN		Billy ORAM
17	Hayden VELVICK		Olu LAWAL
18	Billy IRVING		Emmanuel ROBE
19	George FALZON		Korrey HENRY
20	Charlie BENNETT		Finlay JOHNSON
			Louie THEOPHANOUS
			Abdulahi ABDULAZEEZ
Manager:	Jamie CRELLIN	Manager:	Jamie DECRUZ
Assistant:	Joe KAY	Assistant's:	Lee MATTHEWS & Jamie DEACONS
GK Coach:	Ross BALL	Coaches:	Ollie ELLWAY & Daniel ANTHONIO
Physio:	Tracey WELLER	Physio:	Ryan VALENTINE
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