



## A Brief History of Godalming Town

The club has its origins as Godalming United FC, formed in 1950 by ex-pupils of Godalming Grammar School. Between 1950-71 the club played at the Recreation Ground. However, in 1970 Surrey Senior League side Farncombe collapsed, leaving their ground in Meadrow vacant. Godalming took over the debts and tenancy, changing their name to Godalming and Farncombe FC, and the ground to Wey Court in the process.

The original pitch was where the nearby Wey Court Sheltered Housing stood and considerable amount of work was undertaken on the new playing area, which was built on the site of an old waste tip. The club was helped by Waverley Council when drainage problems and subsidence meant they had to find a temporary home at Broadwater Park.

The club was accepted into the Combined Counties League for the start of the 1978 season, and a year later the name was changed again, to Godalming Town FC.

In 1985, another local club, Addlestone & Weybridge, was disbanded and, before their ground at Liberty Lane was demolished, Godalming purchased the stand and perimeter fence for £225 and £50 respectively. The stand was re-erected at Wey Court, with seating and fascia added.

The next development came in 1992 when the Guildford Football Appeal (formed in an attempt to return the towns name to senior football, following the collapse of Guildford City in 1977) donated a sum of money towards floodlights, and in return the name of the club was changed again to Godalming & Guildford FC.

Further recycling followed in 1995, when a new turnstile building was erected incorporating a turnstile from Millwall's old ground and in 1996 the clubhouse was refurbished.

During 2005 close season, the club changed its name for a fifth time, albeit back to one of its previous incarnations, that of Godalming Town. A fantastic 2005/06 season saw the side take the Combined Counties League Championship and League Cup by storm. Godalming Town were then accepted by Isthmian League officials following extensive ground improvements.

At the end of a tough season, Godalming found themselves at the bottom of a very competitive division. However, events elsewhere meant that Godalming were reprieved from relegation and were transferred into the Southern League's South & West Division for the 2007/08 season. Chuck Martini replaced Roger Steer as Manager in October 2007. Town were moved back to the Ryman League for the 2008/09 season and eventually finished in another record high position, 9<sup>th</sup>. Godalming also progressed further than ever before in the FA Cup by reaching the 3<sup>rd</sup> Qualifying Round before losing 2-1 at Conference South side Havant & Waterlooville.

**2009/10** the season was arguably the best season in the history of the club. Town finished a record high position 4<sup>th</sup> in the Ryman South but were eventually beaten 2-1 in the Playoff Final at Folkestone Invicta. The club progressed further than ever before in the FA Trophy and won the Surrey Senior Cup by beating Sutton United 2-1. The season also saw local boy Shaun Elliott become the club's record appearance holder after reaching 360 games in a Godalming shirt. Chuck Martini was replaced by joint-managers Jon Underwood & Neil Baker in October 2010 and the club finished an unpredictable season in mid-table.

**2011/12** the season saw a lot of new faces join, but the team quickly gelled, reaching the 4<sup>th</sup> Qualifying Round of the FA Cup, beating Wimborne, Moneyfields, Worcester City & Bodmin before bowing out to Maidenhead United in front of 700 at Wey Court. The G's finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the league, and travelled to Bognor Regis Town in the playoff semi-final, drawing 4-4 after extra time but Godalming lost 5-3 on penalties.



**2012/13** saw Jon Underwood and Neil Baker guide Godalming to their highest ever finish in the pyramid, finishing in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The G's lost in the playoff semi-final for the second year running, this time losing 2-1 to Biggleswade at Wey Court. The season finished on a high however, as Godalming lifted the Surrey Senior Cup for the second time in four years, beating Sutton United 1-0 at Gander Green Lane, thanks to a last minute goal from Scott Harris. The close season saw Godalming moved to a third different league in as many years, this time to the South & West Division. With divisional change came a managerial change; Jon Underwood and Neil Baker left Godalming to join Slough Town, taking the majority of the squad with them. Andy Hunt was appointed manager in June 2013, assisted by Neil Selby.

**2013/14** was probably one of the hardest seasons the club has dealt with. Andy Hunt was given the task of putting together a squad that will compete in the league and secure step four football. At Christmas 2013 the clubhouse, kitchen and changing rooms were ruined by flood water. Godalming finished the season in 18<sup>th</sup> position. Godalming were then moved into another division again and will play in Southern League Central Division for the 2014/15 season.

**2015/16** Godalming finished in 10<sup>th</sup> position in the league and reached the Surrey Senior Cup Final for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time but lost 4-0 to Merstham.

**2016/17** saw the G's transfer back to the Ryman League Division One South. It also saw the inaugural Axtell Cup a match with local rivals Guildford City. Godalming came out winners (7-6) on penalties however the remainder of the season proved more difficult. Andy parting company with the club after a heavy defeat at Carshalton Athletic with Darren Wheeler stepping in as caretaker manager. A further two managers followed and the club ended bottom of the league and relegated from step 4 football.

There was greater success for our Development and Youth teams and in particular our Ladies Team who achieved promotion.

**2017/18** started under a new management team and hope of success in the Combined Counties Premier League. The season started well and an early highlight came in the FA Cup with an away trip to Hereford FC where the G's played in front of a record crowd of over 1,700.

Unfortunately after that results did not go well and the team slipped slowly down the league. The club and Simon parted company in October and old G's players Gavin Smith and Jon Palmer took over. Despite changes to the team and all their best efforts results did not pick up and the team finished third from bottom. Following a period of uncertainty it was confirmed that Godalming would be relegated for the second season in a row.

The Ladies teams and Youth teams fared much better. The ladies building on their success of the season before created a second team. Both teams performed well in their respective leagues with the Ladies Development finishing third and the Ladies finishing runners up and gained promotion for the second season in a row. They also reached the final of the J. Greenacre memorial Cup finishing runners up to Ashford (Middx) Town.

The youth team had a disrupted fixture list particularly badly affected by the late winter weather which meant a backlog of games at the end of an extended season. Despite this the team finished runners up in the Surrey Primary League.

On a sad note the season saw the passing of Bill Kyte the Godalming Town president. Bill had worked tirelessly for the club for many years and will be sadly missed by all that knew him.

**2017/18** Godalming will play this season in the Combined Counties Division One.

#COYGS