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ALBION SPORTS





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Good afternoon and welcome to The EasyBuy Stadium for today's match which sees us host Albion Sports in the opening weekend of the 2024-25 NCEFL season. It's been just 12 weeks since the end of last season and a lot has happened in that short period.

The most obvious change, and one that you will all be aware of, has been the departure of Danny North and Peter Winn and our search for a replacement management team for the new season.

We had a lot of interest in the role of manager but we were impressed by one applicant in particular and are pleased that Anthony Bowsley accepted the position."Bowes" has had a previous playing spell for the club and boasts an impressive CV, having been assistant to Brett

Agnew at Bridlington Town when they achieved promotion from the NCEL and more recently was assistant to Dave Ricardo at Beverley Town last season.

He immediately got to work assessing the 2023-24 squad

and identifying where changes were required and bringing in new players. "Bowes" has also recruited an experienced management team to assist him.

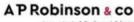
That means you'll see a lot of new names and faces playing for The Swans today. Getting a new squad to gel and play together as a team isn't an overnight job and that has shown in some of the preseason match results. However, preseason is the time to experiment; the "real" season starts today.

We've also had a change of playing strip; this year the home kit has a certain Argentina "vibe" about it! You can get your own shirt from the online club shop.

Finally a pitch update; there's nothing new to report on the drainage improvement plans. If you were here for the Appleby Frodingham game then you will be aware that the pitch flooded due to the very, VERY heavy rainfall we had before and into the half-time break. I don't think that any drainage would solve that problem; in fact within 15 minutes of the rain stopping the pitch was OK again. Anyway, when we have more news we'll let you know.

For now... enjoy the match!





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Good afternoon and welcome to our first game of the 2024-25 NCEFL Premier Division campaign which has us hosting Albion Sports. We hope all their players, officials and supporters have had a safe journey to be with us this today - I'm sure we are all looking forward to getting the new season underway.

Albion Sports are sure to give a tough match this afternoon; last season they only lost out on promotion in a penalty "shoot-out" to Garforth Town.

We've had a "mixed bag" in our preseason games. Although the results should have been better the performances haven't been too bad - especially the Worksop match which was quite a even game considering the difference in levels between the clubs; it was a positive start.

At home to Scunthorpe it showed the difference between a full-time outfit and a non-league side. They turned in on from the

off but we got a good workout from it.

Brigg was a little different and I think they treated the game slightly differently from us with some ex-Barton players in their squad. As with most preseason matches we made some major team changes at half-time as we need to give players minutes on the pitch.

Our preseason matches ended on a positive note against Hessle Sporting Club with an overall good performance; in particular the second half. Of course we've made major changes since last



season with not just a new management and coaching team but I've brought in a host of new players with just a handful remaining from last season. That's going to take a while for settle down and gel. They have had a few matches and training sessions now but generally there is a bit of a transition period when major changes are made. We have also been experimenting with things during preseason; making formation changes and tweaks which IS what preseason is for.

I'm looking to hit the ground running today in our first proper competitive match; this is when it counts of course.

Today I think will be a good test against a team we expect to be a promotion contender at the end of the season. I'm really looking forward to it and the players are too. The first game of a season has the feel of a cup final about it with everyone a bit nervous and there's been a bit of a build-up to it with everyone just wanting to get playing again. We'll be giving them the respect they deserve but we'll be taking the match to them and give it our best shot.

Next Saturday sees us take part in the FA Cup Extra Preliminary Round and we have been drawn at home to Newark Town... so come down and support us and we take our first step on the Road To Wembley!



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The club was founded in 1974 by Harjit Singh Panesar and Baljit Singh, and joined Division Four of the Bradford Amateur Sunday

League, which they won in their first season. After a brief spell in the lower divisions, gaining promotions on a regular basis and winning the Amateur District and Senior cups along the way, Albion Sports in 1995/96 won the Premier league title for the first time, this was to prove the catalyst for what was to come.

Albion Sports won a further five league titles, two County Cups, three District Cups and seven Senior Cups. Other highlights included reaching the final of the National F.A Umbro Sunday Cup on two occasions.

The first in 2000 at the City Ground (Nottingham Forest) Albion Sports were beaten 1 -0 by Prestige Brighams (Hull). The second in 2005 at Anfield (Liverpool F.C), this time beaten 3 -2 by Gossoms End (London).

Albion Sports have been honoured by receiving three civic receptions from the City of Bradford as well as winning an award of 'Ambassadors of West Yorkshire' beating the likes of Patrick Stewart (Star Trek actor) and the late Richard Whiteley (Countdown presenter) into 2nd and 3rd place respectively.





In Town Today

Albion Sports resigned from Sunday football in 2007 in order to progress up through the Football Association pyramid.

In 2007/08 Albion Sports joined the Telegraph and Argus league and won promotion in the first season as well as winning the League Cup.

Albion Sports F.C were elected to the WRCAFC in 2008, gained promotion in the first season and also won the District Cup.

In 2009/10 Albion Sports finished runners-up in the Premiership and won the Divisional Cup. In 2010/11 they again finished runners-up and were then successfully elected to join the NCEL 2011/12 season.

Albion Sports missed out on promotion by a solitary point in their debut season but quickly rectified this the following season (2012/13) by gaining promotion to the Premier division as Champions.

Sports currently ply their trade in the Premier Division of the Northern Counties East Football League (NCEL).







Albion Sports is the only club playing in the Premier Division of the Northern Counties East League that does not have its own playing field.

Plans for a site off Lower Lane have been submitted and, if approved, the Bradford club could be playing there by the start of the 2024/25 season.

Albion Sports said it would be "brilliant to finally find a home".

Founded in 1974, Albion Sports Association Football Club began as a Sunday league club.

Currently the team play at Horsfall Stadium as part of a ground share with Bradford (Park Avenue).

The club says the move would be a "milestone" in its history, creating a new home for the first team as well as a "vital training and development facility for the youth and junior teams," according to the Local Democracy Reporting Service.

The planning application submitted to Bradford Council is for a new changing pavilion, turnstile entrance, first aid room, new portable toilet block and two new shelters for managers and substitutes.





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In Town Today

There would also be LED floodlights, a five-metre high fence to catch balls and a new 58-space car park.

Plans for the changing pavilion include a lounge, kitchen, storerooms, changing rooms with showers and toilets, and a baby change area.

A spokesman for the club said: "Everyone associated with the club are all looking forward to the next milestone in the club's history. It will make it that more special to have this in the club's 50th year anniversary."

"We have been working closely with the council for some time to identify a suitable home for the first team and junior set up."

A Bradford Council spokesman added: "2024 is the 50th anniversary of Albion Sports AFC and they're hoping that moving into the new ground will coincide with the celebrations of this significant milestone."

A decision on the planning application is expected to be made soon.





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31 Aug 24	NCELP	Silsden AFC	
3 Sep 24	NCELP	Frickley Athletic	Mick Jordan
7 Sep 24	NCELP	Goole AFC	
28 Sep 24	NCELP	Winterton Rangers	Michael Smith
5 Oct 24	NCELP	Parkgate	
19 Oct 24	NCELP	Pickering Town	Howarth Timber
26 Oct 24	NCELP	Campion	
23 Nov 24	NCELP	Thackley	
7 Dec 24	NCELP	Handsworth	Martyn Arnold
14 Dec 24	NCELP	Bottesford Town	3 Behind The Goal
28 Dec 24	NCELP	Eccleshill United	Stipendia
18 Jan 25	NCELP	Golcar United	
25 Jan 25	NCELP	Knaresborough Town	
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Here we are at the start By Darren Stockdale of yet another new

season. There have been some big changes, not just at the club but in the country in general. We have seen a new government take control, promising change, yet they couldn't change the weather. After it rained almost constantly from last August through to the end of last season I was hoping for a bit of a change through summer. However, with the exception of the odd week, it has been more of the same – rain. Even one of our pre-season friendlies was abandoned at half time due to the rain. Speaking of pre-season, ours hasn't seen favourable results for Barton, except the final one. We have let in a lot of goals so far, but with more new players joining the club hopefully we will see that stop before too long.

The England men's football team put the country through the ringer again, by getting to the final of the Euro 2024 competition and losing. There has been much written, and discussed about this already so I won't fill this article with more of the same.

Usually at this point in the season there is the usual question asked about players, which is "where did they go"? So, I have had a look through the player registrations for the start of the season to pick out a few familiar faces.



Playing for Brigg Town now we have Harrison Coley, Owen Davey and Danny North.

Playing for Appleby Frodingham now we have Kadey Phillips and Nathan Jarman.

Playing for Winterton Rangers now we have Ryan Musselwhite.

There will be more I have missed, but my eyes were going weird looking at a constant list of names.

Trivia

For my first trivia section this season I thought I would try to clear up the age-old argument:

Soccer or Football? - Do you ever wonder why, in America, football is called soccer? For sports fans this is probably one of the biggest oddities in the sport. Where did Americans get the word soccer from? The answer to that may surprise you.

The word soccer is as British as it can be. Football-type games have been around for centuries but the version we are watching today started around 1863, when the Football Association came up with a set of rules for the game. At that time, it was the most popular type of game of this kind in the country, but not the

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only one as there was also Rugby Football around too. So, having two football-style games one was called Association Football and the other Rugby football.

We Brits then did what we do best and shortened the names. The students at the University of Oxford, in the 1880s, decided these names were far too long so shortened them to "rugger" (rugby football) and "assoccer" (association football). Eventually they became rugby and soccer. However, in Britain the term "soccer" was never more than a nickname. Rugger was also dropped, but rugby became just rugby, dropping the football at the end leading the way for association football to become football.

However, in the United States around this time a sport emerged that used elements from both rugby and association football. This was called gridiron football. But, as in Britain, the Americans decided that was too long and just called it football. So, to distinguish between the two games American association football players used the nickname from Britain of "soccer", to call their sport Soccer Football Association. Eventually they dropped the latter words, and it became just soccer.

This history of the name evolution of football is like other countries that use the term "soccer" for



football. Australia has Australian Rules Football and soccer, Ireland has Gaelic Football and soccer, and so on.

So, there we have it. The annoying name that Americans and others give to football is actually the nickname we gave to football at the very start of the game in our country. They have just borrowed the word to distinguish it from their own version of football.

History

Our home game against Albion Sports last season saw Barton fall behind to two goals within the hour. A reply from Tom Waudby around the hour mark was not enough to stop the defeat, with us losing 2-1 at the final whistle. Our away game saw another defeat for the Swans, by a solitary goal, during a bad run of results which was not helped by playing four games in eight days.

The season before last Albion Sports were again our opening-day opponent at home. The two teams fought out a goalless draw in front of 220 supporters.

Let's hope for a good game today and up the Swans.







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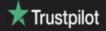
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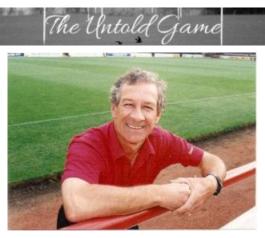
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Danny Bergara: Pioneer

'I believe, and I honestly believe, that I am one of the best coaches in this country, and parts of the world anywhere. I've been around the world, I've got more experience than anybody else.' If you're unfamiliar with Danny Bergara, this introduction to the man might come as a shock. It is downright ludicrous, when you realise that this was his belief as he led Doncaster Rovers to the worst season in the history of the Football League, in 1998. But Danny Bergara was a character. A Uruguayan youth international who made England his home, and while the level of confidence was perhaps misplaced, he doesn't deserve to be remembered as the worst Football League manager either.

The events surrounding Bergara's time at Doncaster are well documented. A few years after owner Ken Richardson was charged with arson, or attempting to burn down Doncaster's stadium, and still awaiting his trial, the team was in disarray. Training had become voluntary, because players wages couldn't be guaranteed.



Youth players were filling in for seniors who left for a more secure paycheque. Heavy defeats were commonplace. And, behind the scenes, was Bergara. Doing everything from first team manager to youth team scout. Doncaster were relegated from the Football League, with the worst record in its history.

But, long before Bergara turned up at Belle Vue, he was a star in Spain. He had started his career at 16 with local Montevideo side Racing Club, and earned himself a few youth call ups before Real Mallorca took notice. They took the then 20 year old to Spain, where he looked good. He scored nearly a hundred goals in the Iberian peninsula, across spells at Mallorca, Sevilla and Tenerife. Barcelona even came sniffing around, more than once, but nothing ever came of the interest.





In 1972, with his goalscoring, and his legs, slowing, he retired. He moved with his English wife to St. Albans, but he couldn't keep himself out of the game for long.

Bergara was an amiable personality in the local area, and made friends with,

among others, Paddy Sowden, who happened to be chief scout at Luton Town. After being shown some newspaper clippings of Bergara's time in Spain, he approached the Uruguayan first as a player, and when he was turned down, as a coach. Bergara took charge of the youth side.

He was ahead of his time, in many ways, in the 1970s. Sessions focused heavily on technical quality, and the different style saw first team players coming to watch, to see what they could learn from the Uruguayan. It was no surprise that his services became so in demand. First, he moved to Sheffield United to help with their youngsters, in 1978, before he earned another international call-up in 1980. This time it was from Ron Greenwood, and Bergara was brought into the England youth setup.



He was described as a 'revelation' by similarly pioneering Technical Director Charles Hughes, and oversaw the development of the likes of Danny Wallance and Neil Webb. With so many accolades, one would have thought a managerial role was in the near future, but instead Bergara found himself unemployed by 1983, a victim of Sheffield United's relegation to the fourth tier. His nationality was widely regarded as significant.

In fact, it took until 1988 for Bergara to finally get a top job, via stints in Brunei and at Middlesbrough. Taking up the reins at Rochdale, he became the first foreign-speaking coach in the Football League, a real pioneer given the prevalence of foreign coaches today. He didn't hang around long though, moving to close rivals Stockport a few months later. Finally, Danny Bergara was somewhere he could show off his talents.

In his first season at Edgeley Park, with the season coming to a close, he was able to stave off relegation out of the Football League. But that summer, with a full pre-season of his ideas behind them things started to change. Bergara's side played exciting, continental football, and reached the playoffs where they lost to Chesterfield. Confidence was never a problem for Bergara though, and it rubbed off on his team. The following season, they finished second, losing the title by a single point.



They made the playoffs in the third tier, at the first time of asking. He also became the first overseas manager to lead an English side at Wembley, losing in both the playoffs and the Football League trophy. Wembley would prove to be an unhappy place for Bergara, losing finals over the next couple of years and unable to put the seal on a remarkable rise at Stockport.

In 1995, he parted company with the club after falling out with the chairman (there were reports of him throwing a punch), and took charge at Rotherham, before finding another home at the ailing Doncaster Rovers. In later years, he scouted for Sunderland.

When he passed away in 2007, Stockport arranged a 'Danny Day' friendly against Cardiff City. In 2012, they announced the naming of one stand after him, and still fly the Uruguayan flag at every home match.

Enjoy the game.

Martyn Green The Untold Game

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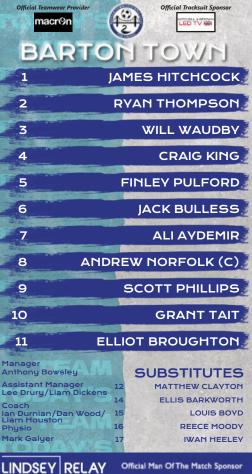
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