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WINGATE & FINCHLEY FC

Hello and welcome to the Maurice Rebak Stadium! We hope that all associated with the club, the match officials and the staff, players and officials of Hendon enjoy their stay in N12 this afternoon!

We welcome our local rivals Hendon FC back to N12 for the first time in several seasons after their recent stint in the Southern League Premier.

We last met in the league back in 2017/18, the last in the Isthmian Premier before The Greens transfer to the Southern Premier South which would last six seasons including those disrupted by Covid.

That season we beat Hendon 4-2 in an FA Cup first qualifying round replay before a 2-2 draw in the London Senior Cup. In the league we won 1-0 away then drew 2-2 at home.

Since then we have faced them:

1-1 (A) Friendly 13/07/2019

3-1 (A) Middlesex Senior Cup 24/11/2019

1-3 (A) London Senior Cup semi final 25/8/2020

1-3 (A) FA Cup 2Q 17/09/2022

0-1 (A) London Senior Cup 19/12/2023

Also welcome back this afternoon to the past Wingate & Finchley press team Andy, Nikhil, Jamie and Khalid.

Company Name and Number:

Wingate and Finchley Development

Ltd, 6014465

Ground: The Maurice Rebak Stadium, Summers Lane, Finchley, London N12

OPD. Tel: 020 8446 2217 Company Number: 6014465 Training Ground: Barnet Lane,

Barnet, EN5 2DN

League Match Ticket Prices:

£12 adults, £8 concession, £5 for ages 11-18, under 11 free

Chairman: Aron Sharpe

Vice Chairman: Nicky Rifat, Joe

Sharpe

President: Harvey Ackerman

Life Vice President: David Ackerman Life Vice President: David Wolff Life Vice President: Peter Rebak Life Vice President: Steven Astaire

Director: Paul Lerman

Secretary: Andrew Kouroushi

Finance: Liam Blanev

First Team Manager: Ahmet Rifat First Team Coaches: Ruben Gaspar, Jonny Georgiou, Ricky Machel First Team Goalkeeping Coach:

Gavin King

First Team Analyst: Michael Smith

Kit Manager: Peter Barker Head Groundsman: Andy Ward Welfare Officer: Jonny Georgiou Bar Manager: Lorraine Coleman Matchday Hospitality: Tony Ward Programme Editor: Joshua Palmer

CLUB NOTES

Congratulations David Wolff!

Our life vice-president David Wolff has recently received the London FA's Bobby Moore Award for 2024 Grassroots Heroes Award (sponsored by Panini!)

Congratulations David!

Mr Wolff is also chairman of the Maccabi (Southern) GB Football League (since 1970!), overseeing the organisation of the league.

His footballing career began back in the 1950s as a member of the Ivri Maccabi Youth League and is a supporter of West Ham United – once being asked to manage their under 16s team. He joined the MSFL Management Committee in December 1963 as assistant secretary, before rising to vice chairman in 1965 then chairman in 1970. During his directorship, the league has risen from 12 clubs to 66.

David has also chaired the London FA since 2022.

From all at the club, congratulations on your award David!

Cray Wanderers (H)

Our home match due to be vs Cray Wanderers on Saturday 4th January was called off due to bad cold weather in the days leading up to the game. This game will now take place on Tuesday 28th January, 7.45pm kick off.

New signing!

Please welcome our latest signing Bejamin Watt to the club!

Benjamin was previously in the Norwich City academy and spent last season at Braintree Town.

He can play as either a right back or in a midfield position!

Welcome Benjamin!

New signing!

Please welcome another new signing yesterday Matteo Salamon!

A highly rated young goalkeeper joins on a short-term loan agreement from Championship side QPR, having featured in their academy.

Welcome Matteo!

Top scorers 2024/25

Competitive first team games only. Total games: 24 league, 7 cup:

	Lge	Cup	Tot.
Obi	19	3	22
Lowe	5	1	6
Drakes-Thomas	2	3	5
Frempah	4	0	4
Georgiou	3	1	4
Oladipo	3	0	3
Tanimowo	3	0	3
Deslandes	2	0	2
Newton	2	0	2
Restrepo	2	0	2
Briscoe	1	0	1
Iontton	1	0	1
Ward-Cochrane	1	0	1

LEAGUE RESPECT STATEMENT



"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 toward 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."



A VIEW FROM AFAR

The F A Amateur Cup is mentioned in this article, so here are three facts relating to it, only one of which is true; but which one? Answer at the end of the article.

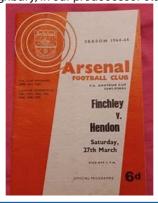
- Although the first competition was in 1894, the first Wembley Final wasn't until 1949
- Barnet never won the Amateur Cup
- Penalty shoot-outs were introduced to the final in 1973 the first tournament to use them

It's a while since we have played in the same league as local rivals Hendon, so it is great to have them back in our division this season. For people of a certain vintage (i.e. me), Hendon will always be synonymous with Claremont Road. This wasn't a particularly easy journey from Finchley, despite being just 4.4 miles distant. I was known to walk there on one occasion, but succumbed and caught a bus back – well, it was an evening game and I did have school the next day.

The biggest game that I attended there, outside matches against Finchley of course, was a 1st round FA Cup tie with Reading way back in November 1975. Research tells me that Hendon won 1-0, although my main memory is of talking briefly to someone standing next to me who I couldn't place, but turned out to be the brother of a girl in my class at school who I hadn't seen for a couple of years but lived in the next road to me!

I didn't go to the next round, where they lost 1-0 to Swindon; perhaps that was just as well as clearly the draw was engaging them with teams gradually further and further down the M4. Another victory might have seen Bristol Rovers or City and after that it would have had them all learning Welsh!

Most famously though, Hendon met the mighty Finchley FC in the semi-final of the FA Amateur Cup at Highbury, in our predecessor club's best ever run, in 1965.



A VIEW FROM AFAR

What a day that was (apart from having to go to Highbury). We had already gone further in the competition than, among others, Wycombe Wanderers, Maidstone, St Albans and also a team called Barnet. Hendon were in the Isthmian League, then thought slightly superior to Finchley's Athenian League status, and had a plethora of internationals. But Finchley had a young and skilful team, including two attacking stars in 19 year old Les Eason and Tony Turley on the wing.

I met Les a couple of years ago at the Maurice Rebak and recalled that game; he told me that Hendon were a team full of accomplished players, were all doing very nicely from the 'amateur' game and Finchley were rather overawed to find themselves in such surroundings, against such a team. Despite the best efforts of our heroes the team in green managed a narrow 4-1 victory, with the 1 being a late consolation from captain Jim Cooley. Fortunately, that was scored in the goal at the North Bank, behind which were two small boys with a home made 'Finchley For The Cup' slogan painted on to an old sheet. My mum did wonder what happened to that sheet when she came to change the bed that week.

Hendon went on to beat Whitby Town in the Final, Les went on to be Barnet's record goal scorer and I went on to do very little.

What I hadn't realised until doing a bit of research was that the other semi-final was between Whitby and Enfield – three north London sides in the semi's – and was played at Sunderland. What a trip that would have been, although the journey home might have taken slightly longer.

Which fact is correct?

The first Wembley final was in 1949, when Bromley beat Romford 1-0. The previous finals had been played at many grounds, with the first seeing Old Carthusians beat Casuals at Richmond. Penalty shoot outs were never used and Barnet won the Cup once, beating Bishop Auckland 3-2 at Stamford Bridge in 1946.

By Peter Brown

Wingate and Finchley Football club can trace its roots back to the formation of Finchley Football Club in 1874 making it one of the oldest clubs in the country. Founded by Pa Jackson, who also was instrumental in the creation of the Corinthians, The London Football Association as well as later serving as secretary of the FA, Finchley became founder members of the Athenian League in 1912 after spells in the London League and North London League. They finished fourth in the maiden season, higher than such luminaries as Grays Athletic, Chelmsford City and Enfield.

However their stay was cut short due to the onset of World War One and they would only return for a lone season in 1929 before returning to the London League and forging success. The club's first piece of silverware was won during the 1934-1935 season when the League Cup was captured, with the taste of achievement forming Finchley went on to win the London League in 1936-1937 before World War Two scuppered their winning streak.

It was immediately after the conflict that saw Major Harry Sadow, Frank Davis, George Hyams and Asher Rebak form a Jewish Football Club believing the field of play was a ground of battling the ignorance of anti-Semitism. So in 1946 Wingate Football Club began life in the Middlesex Senior League. The club was named after General Orde C. Wingate who despite not being Jewish himself oversaw the creation of the Israeli Army during the Second World War. The club enjoyed early success and by 1952 they were promoted to the London League.

Meanwhile Finchley, back in the Athenian League, were in the middle of their glory years with the 1952-1953 season proving to be the pinnacle. That year saw their progression to the Third Round Proper of the FA Cup. Defeated along the way were Chelmsford City, Kidderminster Harriers (1-0 at Aggborough) and Crystal Palace (3-1 at Summers Lane) before the Finches were finally beaten 2-0 at Gay Meadow against Shrewsbury Town.

Despite an Amateur Cup semi-final appearance, losing to bitter local rivals Hendon at Highbury in 1965, a sense of decline was starting to emerge. A switch to the Isthmian Premier League failed to stop the halt, and in 1980-81 Finchley were relegated to the second division.

Wingate by now had become a senior club and were competing in the Athenian League. Many players had become members of the Middlesex FA representative side and also partook on behalf of Great Britain in the Maccabiah Games. Disaster struck though in 1972 when their Hall Lane ground in Hendon was lost to the M1 extension and despite a short ground share with Finchley FC the club reverted to junior football.

Wingate finally returned to the senior game with a brief merger with Leyton FC. This partnership proved to be unsuccessful and despite a 1984-1985 League Cup victory, ironically defeating Finchley in the final, both clubs went their separate ways.

In 1991 with Finchley struggling in the Isthmian League Second Division and with mounting debts it was announced that a merger with Wingate would take place in the

summer. After extensive refurbishment and a name change of the Summers Lane ground in honour of long time Wingate supporter Harry Abrahams, Wingate and Finchley took to the field for the start of the 1991-1992 season.

Success was immediate and despite starting life in the South Midlands League the club were quickly competing in the Isthmian League and by season 2003-2004 were members of the newly formed Division One North.

In recent seasons the club has continued its growth. A brief flirtation with the Southern League was shortly followed by the arrivals of Manager Michael Stone and Chairman Aron Sharpe. Now back in the Isthmian League a youthful squad achieved seventh position in the First Division North in the 2008-2009.

Stone sadly left the club in 2009 after being offered the post of Assistant Manager at Conference giants Rushden and Diamonds. The club's first team manager in time for the start of the 2009/10 season was former Oswestry Town manager and Total Network Solutions Llansantffraid midfielder David Norman. At the end this season the Club finished in a record high position of 3rd in the Ryman Division One North, mainly thanks to a record run of 17 matches without defeat from the turn of the year, a run which included 13 wins. The Club reached the playoffs but lost out to Enfield Town in the semi-final 3-2 in an incredible match. This paved the way for what was to be a monumental and unforgettable 2010/11 season.

The Club was quickly becoming the most progressive non-league club in the area, thanks to Sharpe's focus on youth development. Bobby Aisien and Medi Alabimba had progressed from Hadley Wood and Wingate to earn professional contracts, and in 2011 over 20 of the U16-18 age group represented their County. Six boys at U16's were given scholarships with pro sides and the club developed into a community club with a Mencap disability initiative, work with schools, and it entered its fourth year of the Flex educational scheme.

A consistent league season for the First Team saw the side match their previous 3rd place league finish and earn a second crack at the playoffs. In the semi-final Harlow Town were beaten 4-2 after extra time, and promotion to the Ryman premier Division was won with a 118th minute winner over Brentwood Town in extra time of the final - The Blues winning 3-2 on their home turf.

This victory was the middle leg of a remarkable and unique Treble. Earlier that season the club had lifted the Ryman League Cup having beaten Dulwich Hamlet 2-0 at Imber Court, and London Senior Cup success was to follow shortly afterwards when Hendon were convincingly beaten 3-1 in the final.

Success flowed throughout the Club this year, with the youth teams also building on their previous season's work as they progressed superbly. The U18's won the Middlesex County Cup, and at U15 level the League Title and three Cup trophies followed (two County cups and the League cup). Even the Under 10's were getting in on the action as they lifted the Spring Cup!

The first season in the Ryman Premier Division in 2011/12 saw the side secure safety in this new level with a comfortable mid-table finish, ending up closer to the playoffs than from relegation. The final third of the season saw breakthroughs for youth players Liron Mannie and David Smouha who both played big roles in the first team squad. Meanwhile there was huge cup success at youth level yet again; The Under 18's won the AFA Cup, beating Valley Park after extra time, as well as the London County Cup. The Under 17's won a double as they beat Thurrock in the EJA League Cup final to add to their earlier AFA Cup success having beaten Bethwin 8-1! The Under 16's also got in on the action securing their AFA Cup title beating Woodford FC, which they added later on securing their EJA (Herts) League title.

Success of the youth sides prompted three players - Ross Weinreb, Nathan Sollosi and Joe Sharpe - to earn selection to the Great Britain Maccabi Team for the world games in Israel during July 2013. Meanwhile the Barnet Mencap disability sides grew in strength as they entered the fourth season with the club, with three sides now competing in the Camden Step Leagues. The year ended on a high as McDonalds joined in lucrative sponsorship deal.

The following season, 2012-13, was a difficult one for the first team. Early season poor form led to the departure of Norman in November as ex-Northwood boss Gary Meakin came in. The Club flirted with relegation all season until a momentous 3-2 victory over Lowestoft two days before the final day secured survival. However Norman rejoined the Club in the summer as Director of Football, as veteran defender Daniel Nielsen was put in place as Head Coach. Meanwhile a new Under 21 Development squad was set up to compete in the inaugural Ryman U21 League.

There was continual success for the youth sides. The U17's added the London County Cup to an earlier EJA league title, the EJA cup and the AFA cup. These were also followed up with the League Regional Playoff title. The U16's won two cups in this season, the EJA and AFA trophies.

In 2014 the side faced another relegation fight in the league, which was lost on goal difference on the final day of the season despite a 5-0 victory over Billericay Town. However, when Worksop Town pulled out of the Southern League due to financial problems, Wingate & Finchley were the first in line to earn the reprieve back to the Ryman Premier Division.

The 2014-15 season resulted in a record finish of 12th place in the Ryman Premier League, and at the end of the season Norman departed, to be replaced by Simon Lane as Director of Football. However for the start of 2016 he was replaced by former Northern Ireland International Keith Rowland and the side finished in a stable 13th position. In August 2016 the stadium at Summers Lane was re-named after Wingate FC co-founder Maurice Rebak who had passed away in February of that year aged 95.

The 2016-17 season saw the club set a new record, finishing in 5th place in the Ryman Premier League and qualifying for the end of season playoffs. A last-minute defeat at Bognor Regis Town in the semi-final ended the season, but this was a magnificent achievement and saw the Blues win the League's Team Performance of the Year Award.

A ninth-place finish followed in 2017-18 as the Blues narrowly missed out on a second successive play-off berth. There was success for the Under 23 side who won the Isthmian Development League North Division at a canter. Over the summer the Club embarked on an extensive state-of-the-art refurbishment of the stadium, for the first time since 1991's merger, giving the clubhouse a much-welcomed overhaul and making the stadium one of the most impressive in non-league football.

The subsequent three seasons saw a period of uncertainty both on and off the pitch, with short management stints for ex England International Nicky Shorey, ex Premier League stalwart Glen Little and ex West Ham Academy and Wingate & Finchley favourite Steve Clarke, followed by two null and void seasons under the stewardship of Spencer Knight due to the COVID pandemic. However, during this period there were still many successes, including U18s winning County Cup in consecutive seasons and the London Champion of Champions trophy, U23 Development Squad being victorious in Herts League Cup fielding a squad largely made up of Under 18s, while both U13s and U12s secured League Titles.

In the summer of 2021, Club legends Ahmet Rifat (Director of Football) and Marc Weatherstone (Manager) were appointed as a new Management Team after nearly 1000 first team appearances between them. Later in the 2022/23 season Ahmet Rifat was to take sole charge.

Season 2024/24 will go down on record as one of our finest if not the finest. Finishing in $4^{\rm th}$ position with a record hall of 76 points and scoring 78 goals. Ahmet Rifat's charges made it to the play offs on the last day of the season with a 3-0 win over Carshalton.

We faced local rivals Enfield Town in the play off Semi finals at the QE II Stadium. We narrowly lost a very tight match 1-0 in front of a crowd of 2,225 that night. A fine season was ended, but what memories it brought.

What does 2024/25 hold, a new revamped side, and a manager and coaching squad with that extra years experience. Looking forward to the journey.

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HENDON FC CLUB HISTORY

Hendon are now into their fifteenth season under the ownership of its supporters, following their takeover of the club in the summer of 2010. The 2024/5 season sees the club transferred back to the Isthmian League following six campaigns in the Southern League, having transferred over in 2018 after 55 years continuous membership of the Isthmian League

The new season sees Lee Allinson begin his fifth full season in charge having been appointed in November 2019 with the club rooted in the bottom 3 of the Southern League Premier South Division. In September 2020 he gained his first piece of silverware lifting the 2019/20 London Senior Cup courtesy of a 1-0 win over Brentford 'B'. Allinson replaced Jimmy Gray who had worked marvels keeping the club at Step 3 in 2018/9 after replacing the long-serving Gary McCann, who left after 13 and a half years, and having to build a squad from scratch.

The 2017-18 season saw the club finish third in the league, and ultimately lose on penalties to Dulwich Hamlet in the play-off final - the second time the club have lost a play-off final having been beaten by Margate three years earlier. However, 2018 did see some silverware as Staines Town were beaten in the Middlesex Senior Cup Final - a game that also ended in a shoot-out.

The club has an illustrious and proud history, and the club was formed in 1908, beginning its existence as Christchurch Hampstead. In the very first season, the club finished as Champions of the Finchley & District League Third Division. There was regular success in the early years, but not before the first of four name changes!

Ahead of the 1909-10 season, the club renamed itself as Hampstead Town, and immediately won the Second Division title, and the First Division title followed a year later. Further successes followed as the club entered sides in both the London and Middlesex Leagues, and on the back of this, the club was elected into the Athenian League in 1914, reaching the top end of the amateur game just 6 years into the club's existence.

Just 2 games were played in the 1914-15 season due to the outbreak of war, but in their eventual debut season in 1919-20, the club finished a highly creditable fourth. The club finished runners-up in 1929, 1933, 1948, 1949 and 1952, before eventually winning the title in 1953. Further titles followed in 1956 and 1961.

The second renaming of the club came in 1926, when the suffix Town was dropped and the club was simply called Hampstead, followed by a change of name to Golders Green in 1933. The final name change came in 1946 when the club became known as Hendon.

There was a previous club called Hendon that reached the quarter finals of the FA Cup in 1883, and also a club variously known as Hendon Town or Hendon which played in the London League in the 1920s and early 1930s (it is not known if these were the same club). In 1932 the Hendon Town club (then known as Hendon) met Hampstead in two friendlies, the second of which was to raise funds for the Hendon Town club, which sadly ceased to exist a few years later owing to the loss of their ground.

In 1963, the club were accepted into the Isthmian League and this is where the club stayed until 2018, always playing in the top division. Success continued as they finished runners-up in their first season, followed by the first of two Championships a year later. A further title followed in 1973, with 1966, 1974 and 2015 seeing the club finish second. Indeed, in their first 11 seasons in the Isthmian League, Hendon never finished lower than 6th. Since then the club has had both good and bad seasons in the league, and in 2006 the club was reprieved from relegation due to Canvey Island taking a voluntary relegation of three levels from Conference National.

HENDON FC CLUB HISTORY

During the amateur era, the club reached the final of the FA Amateur Cup no less than 5 times, winning the final in 1960, 1965 and 1972.

FA Cup success has been enjoyed by the club throughout its history. There have been 21 appearances in the first round (the most recent at Aldershot Town in 2012), 6 appearances in the second round (most recently in 1999-2000 at Blackpool) and one appearance in the third round in January 1974 which saw the Greens draw 1-1 at Newcastle United before losing the replay 4-0 at Vicarage Road (the home ground of Watford FC).

The club has also seen plenty of success in county cups, winning the Middlesex Senior Cup no less than 16 times out of 28 final appearances, as well as winning the Middlesex Charity Cup 14 times (13 times outright and shared with Barnet in 1926/27). The London Senior Cup has been won on six occasions, with a further 11 appearances as losing finalists.

The club moved into its famous Claremont Road ground in 1926, with the first game being an FA Cup tie against Berkhamsted Town that took place on 18th September with Hendon winning 4-3. The final game was played 82 years later, almost to the day, on 20th September 2008 when local rivals Wealdstone were the visitors, and the Stones ran out 4-1 winners. Since then the club has groundshared with Wembley FC and Harrow Borough FC, before settling into the new home at Silver Jubilee Park in Kingsbury in 2016.

Did you know?

- 100,000 watched Hendon against Northern giants Bishop Auckland in the 1955 Amateur Cup Final at Wembley.
- Following an invitation from the FA to test the system, Hendon were the first club to play under floodlights at Wembley Stadium.
- In October 1951, Hendon became the first team in Britain to win a floodlit cup tie when they won a London Challenge Cup match against Arsenal at Highbury.
- Following this success at Highbury, Hendon lost their next two appearances there, both London Senior Cup Finals, to Walthamstow Avenue in 1955 and to Tooting and Mitcham United in 1959.
- Hendon have won both of their last two visits to Highbury. These matches came in the 1964/65 season, when Arsenal were beaten 4-3 in a London Challenge Cup tie and Finchley were downed 4-1 in a FA Amateur Cup semi-final.
- The club's original colours were broad blue and white hoops. In 1997/98 Hendon ditched their now
 familiar green shirts in favour of the original blue, albeit in a different style. Following complaints
 by the supporters the green was duly restored when the kit was next changed two seasons later.
- England's three highest capped Amateur Internationals since the war were all Hendon players.
 Rod Haider (65 caps), John Swannell (61) and Mike Pinner (52) lead the way with Peter Deadman (40) and Laurie Topp (32) making 5 Hendon players in the top ten of England Amateur cap winners.



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Manager: Ahmet Rifat

Coaches: Ruben Gaspar, Jonny Georgiou, Ricky Machel

Goalkeeping Coach: Gavin King Analyst: Michael Smith Kit Manager: Pete Barker

Tyrece Briscoe Toby Byron Billy Cracknell Jaiden Drakes-Thomes Ben Frempah Rhamar Garrett-Douglas Andronicos Georgiou Fergal Hale-Brown **Loic Hernandez Arthur Iontton** Cain Keller Alex Kpakpe **Ryan Lowe Zack Newton Tommy Roberts** Ogo Obi Camilo Restrepo Matteo Salamon **Ayo Tanimowo Benjamin Watt**

Bobby Webb



Manager: Ben Bukowski
Assistant manager: Keagan Cole
Coach: Dave Diedhiou
Physios: Chad Smith

Luca Allinson Kofi Anokye-Boadi Jayden Ashbourne Alkeo Bani **Ibrahim Benabbas Roraigh Browne** Lene Burden **Billie Busair Eoin Casev Henry Curtis Aderi Dede** Youel Emmanuel **Tarik Gidaree** Stefan Ilic **Kombe Kawimbe** Lilango Schadraic Kweme **Ethan Light Shaun Lucien Ronny Mfinda** Samuel Morris **Excellence Muhemba** Niko Muir **Fraser Hall Hugo Odogwu-Atkinson Lewis Smith Lonit Talla Billy Walsh**

NEXT UP IN N12:

Cray Wanderers (ILP) – 28/01/2025 Dover Athletic (ILP) – 08/02/2025 Referee: Joseph Dann-Pve

MATCH OFFICIALS

Assistants: Jacob Miller, Alexander Baker