

MONMOUTH TOWN AFC – THE KINGFISHERS – 2014/15

Playing Squad

Keiron Blackburn (Goalkeeper) Born 24-06-88 Now in his 3rd season with us, Keiron has established himself as a firm fans and dressing room favourite. Part of Newport County's title winning squad a couple of years ago with bags of Welsh League experience and a Wales U16 cap to boot. Always working hard and looking to improve.

Matthew Johns (Goalkeeper) Born 06-04-95 Stepping up from last season's U19 team, Matt should prove a capable understudy. Formerly with Newport YMCA he has a great future as he matures. Good shot stopper and building a reputation as a penalty saver. **Sponsored by SG PARTNERSHIP**

Jack Alderdice (Defender) Born 24-07-87 Influential team captain Jack play anywhere but in recent seasons has been dictating play from the centre of defence. Often referred to the heartbeat of the team, when Jack plays well, the Kingfishers play well. Youth product. **Sponsored by HM & D MCPHERSON**

Dan Barnard (Defender) Born 14-11-93 Dan returned to the club during the 2nd half of last season following a season at Llanelli and the former Cheltenham Town youngster will continue his education at Swansea University whilst vying for a first team spot. Composed and unruffled with a good attitude.

Sponsored by PHYSIOSIX

Dan Clare (Defender) Born 18-04-86 Signed in the summer of 2013 from Barry Town where he skippered the team to the Welsh Cup semi-finals. Played at Croesyceiliog, Llanelli and Cwmbran Town and is a solid centre half with great leadership qualities.

Luke Cleaves (Defender) Born 13-01-95 Luke is a quick, strong left back who gets forward well and delivers some great crosses. Can also play wide in midfield and has a great throw. Quiet but effective. Youth product. **Sponsored by PETER PEARCE DECORATOR**

Aaron Davies (Defender) Born 21-01-82 PE teacher Aaron is another defender capable of playing anywhere along the back line. After years of playing as an attacking midfielder, he has consistently produced high quality displays in defence and can get forward with great effect. Youth product.

Jacob Guy (Defender) Signed from Caldicot Town in 2011 the former Cardiff City and Swansea City centre half was an instant hit adding much needed nous to the Kingfishers' defence and went on to win Supporters' Player of the Season in 2012 - the first ever awarded! Strong in the air and good on the deck.

Ashley Ford (Midfield/Defender) Born 12-04-91 Talented younger brother of Elliott, Ash grew up as an integral part of our junior and youth set-up. Disappeared to Chepstow Town last season but back and competing for a starting position in central midfield or full back.

Sponsored by JD PLASTERING

Rob Laurie (Midfield) Born 15-01-86 Signed in 2011 after a number of years out. Now Club Captain, Rob is a mature leader, disciplined performer in front of the back four and scores his fair share of goals.

Sponsored by SHAMPOOCH DOG GROOMING SALON

Joe Loftus (Midfield) Born 30-11-91 Signed in the summer from Viney St Swthins, Joe has an excellent pedigree and is a former Hereford United Youth Team captain. Spells at Cinderford Town and Pegasus Juniors preceded a serious injury and is now getting back to his best.

Adam Newbury (Midfield) Born 14-11-91 Hereford based Adam is an ex Birmingham City Academy player who also had a spell at Westfields. Has a great eye for a pass and looks to get on the ball and run things as soft as possible.

Morgan Osborne (Midfield) Born 13-03-95 Morgan has stepped up to the squad following a successful final season at youth level. A lively and competitive midfield player with a few tricks up his sleeve.

Eliot Evans (Midfield/Striker) Born 26-11-91 Signed from Cardiff Met following his graduation on the recommendation of their Head Coach. Great awareness and movement and delivers some telling passes. Is a key asset and capable of the unexpected.

Chris Ham (Midfield/Striker) Born 06-09-92 Summer signing from Cwmbran Celtic, Chris had youth experience at both Southampton and Bristol Rovers. Very quick and a good striker of the ball, Chris is not afraid to put in some hard graft out wide. **Sponsored by SD MAINTENANCE**

Elliott Ford (Midfield/Striker) Born 19-04-89 Missed the majority of last season with a knee injury but now fit and raring to go. With electric pace and an attitude to match, Elliott will give any full back a torrid time whilst looking to be as direct as possible.

Dan MacDonald (Midfield/Striker) Born 24-01-88 Prolific goalscorer and playmaker, “Macca” missed the first 5 games of this season having linked up with ex-manager Steve Jenkins at Merthyr Town. Now back and keen to pick up where he left off last season.

Sam Palmer (Midfield/Striker) Born 23-04-87 The oldest of the Palmer football brothers, Sam is capable of playing on either flank, has a bag of tricks and is happiest when one on one with a full back. A creator of many goals and can chip in with some vital ones of his own. Youth product.

Josh Bull (Striker) Born 15-04-93 Another summer signing from Cwmbran Celtic, the Blaenavon based youngster impressed against us last season. Quick, skilful and with an eye for goal, Josh could become a real find as the season progresses.

Nick Harrhy (Striker) Born 14-09-82 Abergavenny born forward joined Newport County in March 2005, having played for most of the season with Gravesend & Northfleet after a spell with North Coburg United in Australia. A former Bristol City youth player who has also appeared for Hereford United, he joined Llanelli in September 2005 and scored twice on his debut in the League Cup. Left the Reds in March 2007 to return to Australia, but returned to the league in the summer of 2010 with Carmarthen Town before linking up with Monmouth Town in 2011.

Craig Lewis (Striker) Born 06-11-87 Recently re-signed following spells at Pontypridd Town and Chepstow Town. Craig provides an alternative striking option with his whole hearted running and all-round ability. Excellent goals per game ratio.

Management Team

Andrew Smith (Manager) Now in his 2nd spell as Manager having taken over from Steve Jenkins in the summer, Former Welsh Under 18 international who returned to his home club after spells with Newport County, Weston-Super-Mare and Clevedon Town. Andy previously managed the side from the Gwent Third Division into the Welsh League.

Gareth Blackburn (Coach) Has played a pivotal role in our first two seasons in Division One. Lively and knowledgeable, his infectious enthusiasm and steely resolve coupled with his experience at Cardiff City and Newport County Academies has been key to our recent success.

John Fitzgerald (Physio) Former Newport County and Llanelli physio, “Fitz” was a key signing last season. Combines a successful private practice with his football commitments and it was no coincidence that in our title winning season we had very few injuries.

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Club History

For history buffs Monmouth is the birthplace of Henry V, was home to the Charles Rolls (of Rolls Royce fame) and witnessed the trial of the Chartists in 1840. Indeed, whereas the rest of the South Wales valleys seemed to be strong supporters of the Chartist movement it is rumoured Monmouth's upper classes even volunteered to carry out the execution of the now revered John Frost and his co-collaborators.

The Monmouthshire Beacon reports in 7th October 1876 that Monmouth Town FC 'will commence its season on 12th October...' to keep the young men of the town from dying through drink'. The first real honour appears to have been joint champions of the Monmouth and District League in 1925/26 with Clearwell FC.

The next honour recorded by the Town was victory on the Monmouthshire Senior Cup on the eve of war in 1940, defeating Lovell's Athletic, (aka the Toffeemen) then about to lift the Southern League West title, 3-2 at Monmouth Sports Ground which is still home today.

Nearly 20 years later, in 1958, the Town lifted the Monmouthshire Amateur Cup beating Cefn Fforest 3 – 0 at Pontllanfraith. The following season saw victories in both the Monmouthshire Senior and Monmouth Amateur Cups.

Town's only appearance in the FA Cup was a 2nd preliminary round 7 - 0 defeat away at Llanelli on 6th October 1965.

Silverware has been scarce since with wins in the Gwent Amateur Cup in 1984 and 1996 being highlights of many years gracing the fields of the Newport and Gwent Leagues with an occasional foray into the English Forest of Dean and Herefordshire Leagues.

More recently the Town were relegated to the bottom tier of the Gwent County League just 8 seasons ago. The returning Andrew Smith took up the reins and gained promotion in his first season in charge finishing runners up to Rogerstone. At the beginning of 2005/06 season the club adopted 'the Kingfishers' nickname and logo in homage to a peculiar legend outlined later.

The season ended with a fourteen match winning run as Town clinched the Gwent County Division Two title. 2006/07 almost saw a repeat but Town were pipped by Newport Civil Service for the title. However, The Kingfishers were offered the chance to take the step into the Welsh League for the first time in their history.

After a few seasons consolidating The Kingfishers won the Division Three title in 2010/11 and followed it with The Division Two title in 2011/12, scoring over 200 goals in the process and Dan MacDonald scoring a remarkable 44 goals.

On 8 August 2011, Monmouth Town AFC entered into shareholder agreement with internet venture fivepoundfootballclub.com and in September 2011 the Club established itself as a Community Interest Company, the first of its kind in Wales. The club's rally cry is "Kingfishers All The Way!"

Last season, with Steve Jenkins at the helm, a remarkable run of success culminated in the Kingfishers becoming Welsh League champions after only 2 seasons in Division One and 7 seasons in the League in total.

Being awarded the title of "Gwent Community Club of the Year 2014" was just reward for the army of volunteers overseeing a huge football offering at junior, academy and senior levels.

The Kingfisher Legend

Some local folklore has it that in 1936 there were extremely bad spring floods on the Monnow and Wye which effectively wiped out all of the Kingfisher nests along the rivers. Until then Monmouth had been a magnet for ornithologists from all over the country to see Britain's most beautiful bird in all its glory. Official government sources from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Timber recorded their

alarm at the plight of the Kingfisher population and a detailed study was carried out to assess the damage. Amazingly the only surviving pair of breeding Kingfishers were found nesting in a deflated football that had floated down the Monnow into the Wye and lodged itself with its laces in some branches overlooking the river. It was in the days before the Magic Marker so it could not be proven that the ball had been lost in a game at the Town's sports ground but it was deemed the obvious cause. And soone loose shot saved the entire Kingfisher population of the Wye and Monnow rivers.