

# OUR VISITORS

## BECKENHAM TOWN FC

### HISTORY

**CHAIRMAN PERRY SKINNER, VICE CHAIRMAN EDDY DAVIES, PRESIDENT PAUL FAIRES  
VICE PRESIDENT IAN BULL, SECRETARY PETER PALMER, ASST SECRETARY SAM PERCIVAL**

**B**eckenham Town Football Club is one of the older non-league clubs still in existence having first been affiliated to the Kent County FA as early as 1887. The modern side was formed in 1971 from top local amateur club Stanhope Rovers FC.

#### EARLY BEGINNINGS 1887-1914

The original club's first season was 1888/89. Home games were played at the Rectory Field just south of Beckenham Junction. Their first competitive game was on October 6th 1888 against West Kent. The highlight of that first season was a run to the Kent County Cup semi-final. The club went into abeyance just before World War One.

#### BETWEEN THE WARS 1923-38

In 1923 Clock House disbanded and re-formed to become Beckenham Town FC. They joined the London League Division One for 1923/24. In 1927/28 they were Division One champions. However, after finishing second-from-bottom of the Premier Division in 1928/29, they were relegated in 1929/30. The following season they finished second to earn an immediate return to the Premier Division. Despite finishing bottom in 1931/32 they remained, but were relegated after ending 1932/33 in last place. Third wasn't enough to go back up in 1933/34 and after finishing bottom in 1934/35 they left the league. They continued playing in the Kent County Amateur League's Western Section Premier Division between 1935/36 and 1937/38, but ceased playing again in 1938.

#### POST-WAR YEARS 1946-69

After the Second World War, Eric Huggins helped reform the club. A schoolteacher at Balgowan, the Old Balgowans Football Club had begun playing informal games in 1946. That club was wound up at a meeting in the spring of 1947 and reformed as Beckenham FC. They competed in the Kent Amateur League's Western Section for four seasons before re-joining the London League's Premier Division from 1951/52. Throughout the 1950's the team was a feeder club for Crystal Palace. The club spent 10 seasons in the London League, achieving a highest finish of 4th in 1953/54. They also reached the 1955 London League Challenge Cup Final but lost



3-1 to Cray Wanderers. In 1961 Beckenham joined the Aetolian League. In 1964 that league merged with the London League to become the Greater London League. Beckenham were placed in Section B and finished fifth in the league's inaugural season to earn a spot in the Premier Division for 1965/66. However, they were quickly relegated back to Division One. 4th, 6th and 4th places followed between 1966-69 followed. Towards the end of the decade, former player, Harry Bealey found himself running things almost single-handedly. The rest of the committee had either stood down, moved or passed. Unable to continue, he reluctantly approached Bromley FC to suggest a merger and signed the club's name and possessions over to the neighbours in BR2 whilst joining their committee. Beckenham Town FC had folded.

#### THE MODERN ERA...

On June 24th 1971 local amateur side Stanhope Rovers - the 1959 brainchild of teenage footballers and friends Howard Smith and Geoff Ward - became the new Beckenham Town. Playing in the South East London Amateur League's Premier Division they gained Intermediate status with election to the London-Metropolitan League in 1973. They finished runners-up in the Reserve / Intermediate Division in 1974/75 to regain Senior status. In 1975 they were placed in Division Two of the new London Spartan League and were promoted to the Premier Division as runners-up behind Fisher Athletic in 1977/78. A talented Becks side were also London Spartan League Cup finalists in both 1978 and 1979.