



Midland Football League

Newsletter

31st July 2019

League News

The 2019/20 season commences with many new teams in the MFL and we extend a warm welcome and hope they enjoy their time in our competition. It has been a summer of major changes across our divisions with the managerial merry go round in full swing. It promises to be an exciting season with many clubs hopeful of success.

There will be significant changes in the non-league structure at the end of the coming season with new leagues at Step 5 and Step 6 reducing to 17 leagues. The Midland Football League submitted a credible application to be allocated an additional Step 5 and Step 6 division. Unfortunately, that application was unsuccessful, and we will continue to run one Step 5 and one Step 6 division next season. Two of our traditional feeder leagues, West Midlands Regional League and East Midlands Counties League have lost their Step 6 status, and this implies that the make-up of our top two divisions next season will be very different.

Promotion and relegation this season will again be clouded by points per game. Promotion from Step 5 favours Northern clubs with three promoted from each of the Northern league, North East Counties league and North West Counties League. The winners of the MFL Premier Division will be promoted to Step 4. This is where it gets messy. The four best placed runners up from Combined Counties League, Eastern Counties League, Essex Senior League, Hellenic League, Midland league, Southern Counties East, Spartan South Midlands, Southern Combination, United Counties League, Wessex League and Western League, on a points per game basis will be promoted to Step 4. The remaining 7 runners up will play one of the bottom Step 4 sides in a play-off to be hosted by the higher placed side.

Relegation will also depend on Points Per Game. The Clubs in the bottom place in each of the fourteen divisions at Step 5 at the end of the Regular Season will be ranked on a points per match basis (then goal difference, then goals scored if required) - the twelve lowest will be relegated and placed in the most geographically appropriate division of Step 6.

Promotion from Step 6 is much simpler. The top four clubs from all Step 6 leagues (apart from the two South West divisions which are promoting two only) will be promoted to Step 5. The bottom two clubs will be relegated to Step 7. All Step 7 Clubs seeking promotion to Step 6 must make an application using the prescribed form direct to The Association, copied to their existing League, by 31st December in the relevant year. In order to be considered for promotion Clubs must finish in 1st position in their Step 7 league.

If the Club finishing in 1st position does not wish to be promoted or fails to meet the entry criteria, then the club finishing in 2nd position will be eligible for the promotion. If the club in 2nd position does not seek promotion or fails to meet the entry criteria, then clubs down to 5th position may be considered for promotion provided that they meet the appropriate entry criteria. Clubs finishing below 5th position may not be considered for promotion and, for this season only, more than one club may be considered from each League.

As a result, league tables produced in the weekly MFL newsletter, will not highlight promotion and relegation places. These are subject to too many external influences to be of any benefit!

Coventry IPTV are delighted to announce the formation of a brand-new broadcast venture in association with the Midland Football League.

Following successful discussions with MFL officials, Coventry IPTV will be the new and official home of the Midlands' largest football league, incorporating four divisions, as well as reserve and youth leagues. This new venture will include the production of a brand-new dedicated highlights and discussion programme, The MFL Show, as well as interviews, selected full match coverage and so much more. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the MFL officials and personnel, as well as Gary Hazlehurst for his assistance and we look forward to working closely with the MFL clubs in the near future.

Coventry IPTV is a new internet Television station based in Ball Hill, Coventry. Our aim is to showcase the best and brightest of local people and organizations. Our new dedicated free-to-air sports channel, led by local broadcaster, Liam Cook, will feature a wide range of sporting coverage and activities, while our Pay Per View service will allow fans to get closer than ever to the action. Look out for further information on The MFL Show and our Midland Football League coverage on social media.

“Here at Coventry IPTV we are committed to promoting grassroots sports. We are thrilled to have the privilege in supporting the beautiful game at non-league level and the honour of working with the Midland Football League and its associated clubs over the coming months and years”

- Russell Sutton, Managing Director, Coventry IPTV

“The Midland Football League are delighted that CIPTV will be including an MFL Show in its schedule. The opportunity for clubs across all our divisions to gain much needed exposure, is one that we are happy to support and develop. We look forward to a long and fruitful partnership”

- Gary Hazlehurst, Press Officer for the MFL

“Having worked with the MFL for the past three years, I am thrilled to expand my involvement with such an incredible group of people. The dedication of the officials, volunteers and players is a joy to see and showcases the human side of football. I am particularly excited to be hosting the new highlights programme and showcase the incredible work of media personnel in non-league. I can't wait to get this show on the road!”

- Liam Cook, Senior Sport correspondent, Coventry IPTV

Coventrians received the Grassroots Club of The Year at the recent Football awards evening at Molineux



League Cup Draws

MOLDWEL PRODUCTS LTD, LEAGUE CUP ROUND 1

| | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------|-------------|
| Gresley | v | Selston | Tues 24 Sep |
| Brocton | v | Rocester | Tues 24 Sep |
| Uttoxeter Town | v | Stafford Town | Tues 24 Sep |
| FC Stratford | v | G N P Sports | Tues 24 Sep |
| Paget Rangers | v | Lye Town | Tues 24 Sep |
| Chelmsley Town | v | Studley | Mon 23 Sep |
| Lichfield City | v | Hinckley AFC | Tues 24 Sep |
| Kirby Muxloe | v | N K F Burbage | Tues 24 Sep |
| Heather St Johns | v | Ashby Ivanhoe | Tues 24 Sep |
| Sporting Khalsa | v | Haughmond | Tues 24 Sep |
| AFC Wulfrunians | v | Tividale | Tues 24 Sep |

LES JAMES CHALLENGE CUP ROUND 1

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------------|--------|
| Shipston Excelsior | v | Lane Head | 21 Sep |
| FC Stratford | v | Continental Star | 28 Sep |
| Sutton United | v | Welland | 7 Sep |
| Knowle | v | Boldmere Sports | 7 Sep |
| Feckenham | v | Enville Athletic | 21 Sep |
| Upton Town | v | W L V Football | 7 Sep |
| Coventry Alvis | v | Coton Green | 28 Sep |
| Moor Green AFC | v | Bolehall Swifts | 21 Sep |
| Central Ajax | v | Coventry Plumbing | 7 Sep |
| Hampton | v | FC Shush | 7 Sep |
| Barnt Green Spartak | v | Redditch Borough | 7 Sep |
| Inkberrow | v | Alcester Town | 31 Aug |
| Birmingham Tigers | v | Fairfield Villa | 31 Aug |
| Castle Vale Town | v | Coventrians | 31 Aug |
| AFC Solihull | v | Earlswood Town | 7 Sep |
| Northfield Town | v | Leamington Hibernian | 21 Sep |

PRESIDENTS CUP ROUND 1

| | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------|--------|
| Moor Green AFC | v | Coventry Alvis | 14 Sep |
| Boldmere Sports | v | Northfield Town | 14 Sep |
| FC Stratford | v | Knowle | 14 Sep |
| Bolehall Swifts | v | Alcester Town | 7 Sep |
| Earlswood Town | v | Barnt Green Spartak | 24 Aug |
| Lane Head | v | Hampton | 14 Sep |
| Redditch Borough | v | Feckenham | |
| Fairfield Villa | v | Coton Green | 7 Sep |

CHALLENGE VASE ROUND 1

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|--------|
| Leamington Hibernian | v | Central Ajax | 24 Aug |
| AFC Solihull | v | Welland | 31 Aug |
| Upton Town | v | W L V Football | 31 Aug |
| Castle Vale Town | v | Continental Star | 21 Sep |
| FC Shush | v | Inkberrow | 21 Sep |
| Coventrians | v | Enville Athletic | 7 Sep |
| Birmingham Tigers | v | Coventry Plumbing | 21 Sep |
| Sutton United | v | Shipston Excelsior | 31 Aug |

CHALLENGE BOWL ROUND 1

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------|----------|
| Allexton & New Parks | v | Nuneaton Borough | 7 Sep |
| F E S Moulton | v | Quorn | 14 Sep |
| Beaumont Park | v | Leicester Nirvana | 31 Aug |
| Highgate United | v | Milton Keynes College | 7 Sep |
| Silhill | v | Bedworth United | 31 Aug |
| AFC Rushden & Diamonds Elite | v | Heather St Johns | 24 Aug |
| Leicester Road | v | L C E Academy | 7 Sep |
| F C V Stamford | v | N K F Burbage | 14 Sep |
| Sutton Coldfield Town | v | Rushall Olympic | 31 Aug |
| Continental Star | v | Lichfield City | 31 Aug |
| Boldmere St Michaels | v | Castle Vale Town | 24 Aug |
| Alvechurch | v | Halesowen Town | Away w/o |
| Chasetown | v | AFC Birmingham | 24 Aug |
| Stourport Swifts | v | Kidderminster Harriers | 14 Sep |
| Worcester City | v | Droitwich Spa G & B | 31 Aug |

Preview

Premier Division

AFC Wulfrunians welcome last season's Division 1 Champions **Heather St Johns** to the CKW Stadium. Both sides have new management teams in place with Darren Goodall at Wulfs and Jason Lanns at the Saints. With plenty of new faces in both squads, should be an exciting opener. Two of last season's top 5 meet at The Trevor Brown Memorial Ground with **Boldmere St Michaels** entertaining **Sporting Khalsa**. Pre-season has been a mixed bag for both with goals going in at either end. **Tividale** return to the MFL as WMRL champions and they make their bow at **Coventry Sphinx** who pushed for promotion for most of last season. Additions to both squads promise much and optimism will be high in both camps. **Haughmond** return to the MFL following a short spell in the WMRL and they take their place as runners up to Tividale. They welcome **Coventry United** to the Sports Village with United hoping for an improved season with a new playing surface at The Butts Park Arena. The Mond have a familiar looking squad and MFL defences won't need reminding of the goals scored by Steve Hole last time round. Two sides being talked about as strong promotion candidates as **Highgate United** and **Romulus** meet at The Coppice. The Gate will again have the services of the prolific Lei Brown which will undoubtedly cause concern for defences across the division. It has been all change at Romulus in the summer with the successful management team from Heather St Johns, led by Simon Lyons, moving into Castle Vale Stadium. Simon has built a fine squad with many of his Saints players following him from St John's Park. **Racing Club Warwick** finished runners up in Division 1 and they open their account with a trip to Grange Park to face **Long Eaton United**. The home side have a side with a mixture of youth and experience and that blend could see them challenging this season. The Racers have lost their two leading goal scorers from last season however they still have plenty of goals throughout the squad. A warm welcome to the MFL to **Newark Flowserve** who were promoted after finishing runners up in the East Midlands Counties League. They welcome **Worcester City** to Lowfields and if pre-season is anything to go by, Newark will be amongst the favourites for promotion. City have seen some changes in the squad throughout the summer, but hot shot Jordan Harrison remains to drive their promotion push. **South Normanton Athletic** were one of the successes of last season, maintaining their Step 5 status after a torrid start to the season. They will be hoping to challenge at the other end of the table as they welcome **Lye Town** on opening day. The Flyers have a new management team and squad, and pre-season results indicate that they will be exciting to watch. **Selston** join the MFL as champions of the EMCL and they begin their campaign at **Stourport Swifts**. Selston scored 120 league goals last season and will be hoping that they can impact MFL defences in the same way. Swifts finished 13th last season but will be expected to improve this. Game of the day takes place at Oak Park with last season's runners up, **Walsall Wood**, entertaining relegated **Gresley**. It's been all change at The Wood with manager Darren Byfield moving on to Alvechurch. New manager, Mark Swann, returns and has built a strong squad. Gresley, managed by former Wood assistant Gavin Hurren, have attracted several Wood players including the prolific Paul Sullivan. Expect both sides to challenge

MONDAY 5th AUGUST 2019

Romulus v Gresley

TUESDAY 6th AUGUST 2019

Haughmond v Lye Town
Heather St. John's v Walsall Wood
Highgate United v Selston
Long Eaton United v Coventry Sphinx
Newark Flowserve v Coventry United
Racing Club Warwick v Boldmere St Michaels
Sporting Khalsa v Stourport Swifts

WEDNESDAY 7th AUGUST 2019

Tividale v A F C Wulfrunians
Worcester City v South Normanton Athletic

Division 1

With four promotion places up for grabs, this promises to be an exciting Division 1 campaign. **Atherstone Town** missed out on promotion by two points last season and are most people's favourites to go one better this time. They begin the campaign at home to **Rocester** whose young side improved throughout last season. **Cadbury Athletic** started last season at a canter only to fade while the opposite was true of **Brocton** who had a good second half to the campaign. The two sides meet at The TSA with goals likely. **Stafford Town** return to the MFL, a year after being undeservedly relegated by the FA. They start their season with a trip to Pack Meadow to face a **Chelmsley Town** side who have had some excellent results in pre-season. It has been all change at **Hinckley AFC** and **Heath Hayes** with new managers in charge and a plethora of new faces. Both had campaigns they would wish to forget last season, and the signs are there that this season will see major improvement. The opening game at The Welfare Ground should be entertaining. **Kirby Muxloe** were relegated from the United Counties League last season and they start their season at home against **Stapenhill**. Kirby will be looking to bounce back to Step 5 at the first attempt while Stapenhill will want to build on their opening MFL campaign. Two of the promotion heavyweights meet in Hinckley with **Leicester Road** entertaining **Studley**. The Knitters challenged for promotion for most of last season while Studley look to have the squad to challenge. Game of the day sees **Lichfield City** welcome promoted **GNP Sports** to the City Ground. Lichfield just missed out last season and their strong squad should see them in contention again. GNP are a club very much on the up and they have the squad to make a serious challenge for the top four. **Nuneaton Griff** struggled last season and maintained their Step 6 status by the skin of their teeth. Things are looking brighter as they welcome **NKF Burbage** to the Pingles Stadium for their opener. Burbage had a very successful first season at Step 6 culminating in a league cup final appearance. Expect them to build on last season and be challenging. **Ashby Ivanhoe** join the MFL after finishing 14th in the EMCL last season. They travel to Coles Lane to face **Paget Rangers**, now under the management of Matt Seeley. The return of Danny Carter has been well received by Bears supporters while Ashby will relish some tasty local derbies. **Uttoxeter Town** impressed many people last season with the quality of football from their young side. They welcome **Coventry Copsewood** to Oldfields with the visitors seeing leading scorer Sean Kavanagh move up the pyramid. Uttoxeter finished 7th last season and must be in with a shout of promotion.

MONDAY 5th AUGUST 2019

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| Chelmsley Town | v | Ashby Ivanhoe |
|----------------|---|---------------|

TUESDAY 6th AUGUST 2019

| | | |
|---------------|---|--------------------|
| Hinckley AFC | v | Coventry Copsewood |
| Kirby Muxloe | v | Rocester |
| NKF Burbage | v | Uttoxeter Town |
| Paget Rangers | v | G N P Sports |
| Stapenhill | v | Cadbury Athletic |
| Studley | v | Lichfield City |

WEDNESDAY 7th AUGUST 2019

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------|
| Nuneaton Griff | v | Atherstone Town |
|----------------|---|-----------------|

7.30