EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
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Epsom and Ewell FC’s blessed hat-trick advances team to next round

17 August 2026



Horsham YM 1–5 Epsom & Ewell FC. 15th August – Herbert Direct Stadium – The Isuzu FA Vase First Round Qualifying

Epsom & Ewell marched into the next round of the FA Vase with an emphatic 5–1 victory away to Horsham YM.

A commanding second-half display, a hat-trick from Blessing Hombessa and standout performances across the pitch sent the Salts through in style.

Epsom & Ewell set the tone early with some sharp attacking play. Courtney Swaby came closest during the opening exchanges, striking the upright at the end of a flowing move.

Moments later, skipper Brendan Murphy-McVey appeared to have put the Salts ahead directly from a corner, only for the referee to disallow the goal for a push inside the penalty area.

The pressure finally told in the 34th minute when Swaby finished confidently to give Epsom & Ewell a deserved lead, followed by his trademark celebration.

However, just as the Salts looked set to take their advantage into the interval, a slip from Callum Wilson allowed Jack Knight to equalise for Horsham YM on the stroke of half-time.

The Salts emerged with renewed purpose and regained the lead within two minutes of the restart. Jason Bloor produced a superb solo run, weaving his way through the Horsham defence before firing past the goalkeeper to make it 2–1.

Swaby almost added another in the 65th minute, but for the second time in the match he was denied by the woodwork.

Manager Max Johnson introduced fresh legs as the game entered its closing stages. On 77 minutes, Frankie Lynn came on for his debut alongside Luke Miller and Kionte Waul, replacing Daniel Conteh, Jason Bloor and Luis Oliveira.

The changes helped the Salts maintain their momentum and, in the 81st minute, Blessing Hombessa struck to extend the lead to 3–1.

A minute later, Toby Young and Ore Allen were introduced in place of Murphy-McVey and Swaby as Epsom & Ewell continued to press.

Miller then came close to adding a fourth, beating the goalkeeper only to see his effort crash against the crossbar.

Wilson received a yellow card in the second minute of stoppage time, but the closing stages belonged to Hombessa. He struck twice more in added time, completing his hat-trick with a composed finish in the 95th minute and sealing an emphatic 5–1 victory.

A ruthless second-half performance, clinical finishing and the impact of the substitutes ensured the Salts progressed comfortably to the next round.

Epsom & Ewell will now host Bearsted on Saturday 12th September after the Kent side secured its place in the next round with a 4–1 victory over Redhill.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Chips down and Epsom up

17 August 2026

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Epsom and Ewell FC 1 – 0 Chipstead. 8th August – Chalky Lane – The Emirates F.A. Cup Extra Preliminary Round

A much-changed Epsom & Ewell side showed grit, discipline and real defensive character to secure a hard-earned FA Cup victory, with Jason Bloor's first-half strike proving decisive against ten-man Chipstead.

The Salts made several changes, including the return of Dylan Marchant-Simmonds for his first game of the season and a debut for goalkeeper William Davis, who impressed throughout and kept a clean sheet. Prince Aderogba also came into the back line.

Both sides looked to attack from the outset, with former Salts player Carl Oblitey booked in the 33rd minute as the game's physical edge began to show. The Salts continued to press for the opener, playing positive, forward-thinking football, and the breakthrough arrived on 40 minutes. A superb free-kick delivery from skipper Brendan Murphy-McVey found Jason Bloor, who applied a composed finish to put the Salts 1–0 ahead.

Just before the interval, Chipstead were reduced to ten men. Oblitey, already on a yellow card, elbowed goalkeeper William Davis, earning a second booking and his marching orders.

The Salts went into half-time with a deserved lead.

The game tightened after the restart, with a flurry of cautions. Ayran Kugathas was booked in the 52nd minute, while Jason Vincent and Brendan Murphy-McVey both received yellow cards on 60 minutes.

Manager **Max Johnson** then used all five substitutions:

- **67 mins:** LJ Walker and Blessing Hombessa replaced Jason Bloor and **Luke Miller**.
- **73 mins:** Ryley Merrett and Callum O'Keeffe came on for Ayran Kugathas and Ore Allen.
- **78 mins:** Oba Akinniranye replaced Jason Vincent.

Despite sustained pressure from Chipstead, the Salts defended with courage, organisation and determination. Davis remained assured in goal, while the back line held firm to protect their slender advantage.

A disciplined and resilient performance saw the Salts safely through to the next round, where they will host Crowborough Athletic in two weeks' time.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Epsom and Ewell drive home in virgin waters

17 August 2026



Virginia Water 1–2 Epsom & Ewell Saturday 4th August. Chertsey Town (Groundshare). Combined Counties Premier League

The Salts began the new season in perfect fashion, overturning a first-half deficit to claim a deserved 2–1 away victory over Virginia Water. On Chertsey Town's immaculate surface, Epsom & Ewell produced a performance full of intensity, resilience and attacking intent.

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From the opening whistle, the Salts looked sharp. Early pressure produced several blocked efforts as the Virginia Water defence scrambled to keep them at bay. Despite controlling the tempo, the visitors found themselves behind after 29 minutes when Stuart Mortimer broke through and finished clinically, punishing a momentary lapse at the back.

The response was immediate. Courtney Swaby struck the upright after excellent footwork inside the box, reminding everyone that the Salts were far from finished. More pressure followed, but the equaliser remained elusive as the sides went into the break with Virginia Water leading 1–0.

The second half saw the Salts emerge with renewed purpose. Jason Vincent had a golden one-on-one opportunity but dragged his effort wide. Managerial changes soon followed, with Oba, Luke Miller and Prince Aderogba introduced to inject fresh energy.

The breakthrough arrived through an unlikely source. Defender Stefan Aiwone surged forward and delivered a teasing ball – or was it a shot? Whatever the intention, it sailed beyond the goalkeeper and into the net to level the scores at 1–1.

Further substitutions saw Ryley Merrett and Ore Allen enter the fray, and barely two minutes later the turnaround was complete. Super-sub Luke Miller controlled the ball brilliantly inside the box before firing home a superb finish, sending the travelling supporters into celebration and putting the Salts 2–1 ahead.

The Salts then saw out the remaining minutes professionally to secure all three points. It was the perfect way to begin the season and an excellent away victory to start the campaign.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Epsom & Ewell Through to Cup Quarter-Finals After Shoot-Out Drama

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell FC Sunday progressed to the quarter-finals of the Combined Counties Premier Challenge Cup after a tense 0–0 draw with Sutton Common Rovers was settled by a composed 5–3 penalty shoot-out victory at Chalky Lane. The win sets up a Saturday away tie at Abbey Rangers.

There were several changes from the final league fixture of the season. Kit Fletcher returned in goal following injury, while Stefan Aiwone slotted into the back line in place of the injured Tom Collins. In midfield, captain Brendan Murphy-McVey continued his partnership with Callum O'Keeffe, and Craig Dundas came in for the cup-tied Courtney Swaby.

The opening half was evenly contested, with both sides creating chances but neither able to take control. The Salts appeared the more organised of the two, moving the ball with greater fluency and showing more attacking intent, yet the breakthrough proved elusive and the match remained goalless at the interval.

A similar pattern followed after the break, although Epsom & Ewell began to assert greater pressure. Several promising opportunities came and went as the home side spent long spells on the front foot, but the final touch was missing. With neither side able to find a winner, the tie was ultimately decided from the penalty spot.

Epsom & Ewell were clinical in the shoot-out. Brendan Murphy-McVey, Ryley Merrett and Toby Young all converted confidently, while Sutton Common Rovers missed one of their attempts. Substitute Karl Bailey then scored to maintain the perfect record before Ali Fofahan stepped up to convert the decisive penalty.

With five successful strikes and just a single miss from their opponents, the Salts secured a deserved 5–3 shoot-out victory and a place in the next round.

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Epsom and Ewell FC’s winning streak continues

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Epsom & Ewell signed off their league campaign in positive fashion with a narrow but well-earned 1–0 victory over Tadley Calleva at Chalky Lane on 14th April.

With several changes to the starting line-up, the Salts were forced to adapt. Goalkeeper Kit Fletcher was absent through injury, handing Faebian Witter a start, while Tom Collins dropped into central defence alongside stand-in captain Toby Young and Prince Aderogba. In midfield, Ore Allen partnered Ryley Merrett, and up front Ali Fofahan and Karl Bailey led the attack, with Brendan Murphy-McVey rested.

Epsom began on the front foot and looked the more purposeful side early on, but their rhythm was disrupted midway through the first half when Collins was forced off with a groin injury. Leo Cunningham replaced him, prompting a reshuffle in both personnel and shape. Despite the disruption, the hosts maintained the greater attacking intent, though the sides went in level at the break.

The second half followed a similar pattern, with Epsom pressing for a breakthrough. Their best chance fell to Courtney Swaby, whose powerful effort crashed back off the crossbar. The introduction of debutant Joshua Arthur in the 70th minute injected fresh energy into the attack and would prove decisive.

With the match seemingly heading for a stalemate, a late error from the Tadley goalkeeper in the 89th minute handed Arthur his moment. Reacting quickest, he calmly slotted into an empty net to seal victory and mark his debut in memorable fashion.

The win secured a third consecutive home clean sheet and ensured Epsom & Ewell finished the season in 13th place. Back-to-back victories against play-off-bound sides provided a strong finish and underlined clear progress compared to last season.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Fleet of foot Epsom and Ewell FC speed to victory

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell made it back-to-back 3–0 home victories with an impressive and controlled performance against play-off chasing Fleet Town at Chalky Lane on Saturday 11th April.

Facing a side now managed by a former Epsom boss, this result carried added satisfaction for the hosts. The Salts named an unchanged squad but were forced into a late reshuffle when Kionte Gillfillian-Waul was delayed in arriving. Jason Vincent stepped into the starting XI, while Callum O’Keeffe again showed his versatility by filling in at left-back, allowing Tom Collins to move into midfield.

Epsom & Ewell started on the front foot, immediately putting Fleet under pressure and setting the tone for the match. Their bright opening was rewarded in the 12th minute when Callum Wilson rose highest to meet a Brendan Murphy-

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McVey corner, powering a header into the net at the back post to give the hosts a deserved lead. The Salts continued to dictate the play for the remainder of the first half, restricting Fleet's chances while posing the greater attacking threat.

The second half followed a similar pattern, with Epsom & Ewell remaining organised and patient in possession. Their control was eventually rewarded in the 74th minute when Jason Vincent doubled the advantage, producing a superb volley from another Murphy-McVey delivery to give the hosts breathing space.

There was still time to add further gloss to the scoreline. In the 88th minute, substitute Ore Allen applied the finishing touch, lifting a delicate low chip over the goalkeeper after a trademark mazy run from Courtney Swaby.

Three goals, three points and another clean sheet marked a superb home display and a statement victory against strong opposition.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Alton altercation gives Epsom and Ewell FC 3 -0 win

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell FC secured their Step 5 status with a composed and disciplined 3–0 victory over Alton FC at Chalky Lane on 7 April in the Combined Counties Premier Division South.

There were two changes from the side that faced Sutton Common Rovers. Tom Collins returned in place of Jason Vincent, who dropped to the bench, while Ali Fofahan came into the starting line-up after missing the previous fixture due to travel issues.

The first half produced few clear-cut chances, although the Salts controlled much of the play and looked the more assured side in possession. Their best moments came through sustained pressure rather than individual openings. Alton's only real threat came just before the interval, forcing a scrambling clearance off the line and a save from Kit Fletcher. The sides went in level at the break.

The second half belonged to the hosts. Their intent was clear from the restart, and the breakthrough came on 54 minutes. Stefan Aiwone made a powerful run through midfield before being brought down just outside the area. Tom Collins' free-kick was blocked by the wall but fell kindly to Callum Wilson, who guided the ball home to give Epsom the lead.

From there, the Salts managed the game with maturity, restricting Alton to half-chances while steadily increasing the pressure. The reward came late on. Courtney Swaby struck on 89 minutes to double the advantage before adding a second moments later, finishing confidently from a Kionte Gillfillian-Waul through ball to seal the result.

A clean sheet, three goals and — most importantly — the points that mathematically guarantee survival. The victory lifts Epsom & Ewell several places up the table, adding extra gloss to a night that felt like a turning point for the club.

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Penalty Drama Caps Epsom Salts' Triumph

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell FC 2 v Guildford City 1 – Combined Counties Premier Division South- 28th March -Spectrum Football Ground

Epsom & Ewell went into the match knowing that victory would secure a finish above Guildford City and complete a league double over their opponents — adding further importance to an already significant fixture. Kit Fletcher returned in goal, while Jason Vincent came into the starting line-up in place of Craig Dundas, who moved to the bench, in what was otherwise a settled side.

The Salts began brightly, moving the ball well and creating several promising attacking moments in the opening stages. However, the rhythm of the game was disrupted by extreme weather conditions, with snow, hail and heavy rain all making an appearance and turning it into a typically challenging afternoon.

A major moment came on 30 minutes when Antonios Nazareth suffered a serious fall that forced him to leave the field and be taken to hospital. The incident understandably affected the tempo of the match, and neither side was able to establish control before the interval, with the teams going in level at 0–0.

Epsom & Ewell emerged for the second half with renewed intent and made the breakthrough just two minutes after the restart. Courtney Swaby finished well to give the Salts the lead, celebrating with his trademark flips and lifting the home support.

The Salts continued to press and looked the more likely to add a second. Substitute Craig Dundas had a golden opportunity late on to seal the game but was unable to convert, leaving the contest finely balanced heading into the closing stages. Football, as ever, had a twist. Former Salts player Kallum Peart struck in the 88th minute to bring Guildford City level and set up a tense finale.

Deep into stoppage time, in the seventh minute of added time, the referee pointed to the spot. Up stepped substitute Ali Fofahan, who confidently converted the penalty to secure all three points for Epsom & Ewell. It was a match that had everything — difficult conditions, a serious injury, late drama and a display of real character from the Salts. A deserved and memorable victory.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Epsom Stung by Late Blow as Salts Denied by Handball Drama

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell FC 2 – Fleet Town FC 3. Combined Counties Premier League. Saturday 21st March. Easy as HGV Stadium.

The Salts were back in action for the fourth time in eight days, with another game looming on Tuesday, as they travelled to Calthorpe Park. Kit Lawrence-Fletcher returned in goal after being rested for the midweek cup tie. Callum Wilson and Antonios Nazareth came into central defence, replacing the ill Toby Young and Prince Aderogba, who dropped to the

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bench. Callum O'Keeffe returned to central midfield with Ore Allen unavailable, while Tom Collins and Craig Dundas completed a raft of changes to the starting line-up. Obasanjo Akinniranye was named among the substitutes, with Luke Miller not in the squad.

Epsom & Ewell made an energetic start, creating early chances and forcing Fleet's goalkeeper into action. Tom Collins should have opened the scoring in the opening minutes when clean through, but delayed his shot and was closed down by the keeper, who made a good save. The bright start was rewarded on 12 minutes when Courtney Swaby scored from a cross-come-shot that travelled across the box to give the Salts a deserved lead.

Fleet responded quickly. Charlie Postance equalised on 19 minutes, and just three minutes later Savio Shan completed the turnaround, leaving the Salts trailing despite their positive opening.

The second half began in disappointing fashion, with Fleet adding a third goal within a minute of the restart. However, Epsom & Ewell showed strong character and responded almost immediately. From a corner on 48 minutes, a goalmouth scramble saw substitute Zak Shabir head the ball back into the six-yard box, where Stefan Aiwone forced it home to reduce the deficit.

The Salts continued to press for an equaliser and maintained good attacking pressure throughout the half. Their efforts were nearly rewarded at the death, but a clear handball appeal in the Fleet penalty area from the final action of the game went unpunished by the referee, denying them a potential route back into the match.

Despite a committed performance, the Salts were left to rue a couple of soft goals and a key decision that went against them. With teams around them picking up points, Tuesday's trip to Chipstead and Saturday's visit to Guildford City now take on added importance in the push for the points needed to secure safety.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Epsom and Ewell FC's first home game of 2026 drawn

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell FC 0 v Camberley Town FC 0 14th March, Chalky Lane, Chessington Combined Counties Premier League

We finally saw our first home game of 2026 at Chalky lane after a stop start preparation.

After several hours of work in the morning, the referee passed the pitch fit for play in the morning but then on arrival required four further inspections. The club carried out additional work to make the surface playable, forcing kick off to be delayed until 3:10pm.

Courtney Swaby came in for his debut in the number 10 position, with Callum O'Keeffe moving to right back and Ore Allen back into centre midfield. Jason Vincent also returned to the club up top.

Both sides started brightly, with the Salts striking the crossbar early on through a long-range effort from Brendan Murphy-McVey and could have had 3 or 4 goals in the first half an hour as Camberley arrived to park the bus.

The match then took a dramatic turn when a dangerous high boot saw Camberley's Mo Black sent off, while the Salts Stefan Aiwone suffered a serious head injury and had to be withdrawn. Luke Miller came on to make his 150th appearance for the Salts. The score remained goalless at half-time.

In the second half, Epsom & Ewell made a series of changes to dry to find a way through Camberley's obdurate defence and keeper who was having a blinder.

Tom Smith was replaced by Ali Fofahan on 63 minutes then Anthony Nazareth made way for Karl Bailey on 74 minutes. New signing Courtney Swaby was replaced by Ryley Merrett and captain Brendon Murphy McVey was substituted for Leo Cunningham late on.

The Salts created several chances and had a strong penalty appeal, but despite their pressure—and the man advantage—the match finished 0–0.

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On the plus side another clean sheet in short order which will please the management, but the inability to turn chances into goals remains a frustration. Teams around us in the league continue to slip up and provide some breathing space, but The Salts will be looking to Tuesdays' home match against Redhill as a chance to finally hit the back of the net.

We would also like to thank our mascots from BMM Sports Coaching and Epsom & Ewell Colts for your support; we hope you enjoyed the afternoon!

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

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Epsom and Ewell FC rise to challenge on penalties

17 August 2026

26th February Horley Town FC The New Defence, Horley – Southern Combination Challenge Cup 2nd Round

Epsom & Ewell progress to the next round of the Southern Combination Challenge Cup after a hard-fought 0–0 draw at Horley Town, eventually winning 4–3 on penalties. Was The Salts' third away game in six days, and with players arriving late by train and several changes to the starting XI, it had all the signs of a difficult evening. New goalkeeper Kit Lawrence-Fletcher made his debut between the posts with first starts for Shabir, Allen and Leo Cunningham.

Despite the disruption, Epsom & Ewell started brightly. They struck the crossbar early on, and skipper Brendan Murphy-McVey thought he had opened the scoring with a superb finish—only for the referee to disallow it and book him, ruling he had re-entered the pitch too soon after treatment. Leo Cunningham was a constant threat, repeatedly troubling the Horley defence and veteran centre-back Aaron Bogle. But despite the pressure, the sides went in level at the break.

The Second Half the tempo dipped after half-time, with both teams pushing but unable to find a breakthrough. Chances were limited, and the match drifted towards the inevitability of a penalty shootout.

Horley took the first kick and blazed over, while Epsom converted to take the lead. The shootout unfolded as follows:

Horley miss, Ali Fofahan scores — 0–1

Horley score, Ore Allen misses after the ball moved just at the end of the run up — 1–1

Kit Lawrence-Fletcher saves Horley's third with a strong hand and the ball just looping over the bar.

Craig Dundas's penalty was saved but retaken due to keeper movement; he buries the second attempt — 1–2

Horley score, KJ scores — 2–3

Horley score — 3–3

Stefan Aiwone steps up and converts the decisive kick — 3–4

A composed and committed team performance saw The Salts through. The Salts now host Step 4 side Bedfont Sports in the next round as they continue their defence of the trophy.

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Sheerwater 2–2 Epsom & Ewell Home game away from home ends honours even.

17 August 2026

17th February – Combined Counties Premier League: Epsom & Ewell were held to a 2–2 draw at the Eastwood Centre against Sheerwater in what was technically a “home game away”, with Chalky Lane unplayable.

Before kick-off, thanks were extended to Trevor and Chris for helping to arrange the fixture at short notice, and to Wendy for her efforts behind the bar, on the gate and helping with catering on the night.

On the pitch, it was a competitive contest in which the Salts were forced to grow into the game after several weeks without regular match action. Return of key players There was a welcome boost with the return of Toby, Ali and Luke to the squad after an extended spell out.

Speaking after the match, the managers said: “We’ve trained for seven weeks, and we look and feel like ourselves again. Just a little bit more fitness and sharpness and it might have been a different result for us. We’re buzzing that they’re back — they’re very important to what we do.”

First-half talking points The opening half included two penalty shouts for Epsom, one involving Oba. The manager felt the defender “just got enough of it to make it not a penalty,” adding that in a tight league season you do not always get those decisions — and the side cannot rely on them.

Sheerwater also had a controversial moment from a corner, with appeals that the ball had crossed the line. However, there was no goal given. As the manager put it: “They all celebrated like it was in. I don’t think it was. Sami didn’t seem too concerned. A bit of a phantom non-goal.”

The sides went into the latter stages level in a game that was finely balanced. Playing against ten For the fourth successive match, Epsom found themselves facing ten men. On this occasion, the management team felt there was visible progress. “That’s the best we’ve looked against ten. We were cleverer, found the right passes and the right space. We got our two goals and actually looked like scoring.” However, he admitted the team may have become “too excited” at 2–1, continuing to push forward when perhaps game management was required. “We were still trying to score when we probably should have set up.” Sheerwater eventually levelled, meaning the spoils were shared. Looking ahead With four games scheduled next week — Saturday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday — squad depth will be tested.

The manager remains confident: “We’ve got a big enough squad to deal with it. The boys prefer playing games to training, so it gives us something to work on.” In the end, it was a point away from home against a strong side — and with key players returning, there are positives to build on as a busy period approaches.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Council didn’t stand up Dorking Wanderers

17 August 2026



A new spectator stand that will “support the continued success” of Dorking Wanderers Football Club can stay after the club secured planning permission.

The Mole Valley club had already erected the four-row seating section in the northern corner of its Meadowbank Ground in Dorking, and it has been used since April 2025, giving spectators a better view of games. The planning application was submitted retrospectively and was granted at the February Development Management Committee meeting of Mole Valley District Council.

The tiered 100-seater stand will not increase the club’s overall capacity of 4,121, but will instead upgrade facilities for supporters who had previously been required to stand pitch-side. Objectors raised concerns about the potential for increased noise and disturbance, but planning officers said an October 2025 site visit found that existing sound-damping fencing and newly planted trees would mitigate such issues, and that the stand would not affect maximum attendances.

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Mole Valley's environmental health team said the stand would result in a negligible increase and no material change in terms of noise impacts on match days. Officers told the meeting that the new stand, which can be folded away as required, "would not increase spectator numbers, though the arrangements for spectators would differ to the current arrangement, with the three-tier seating area instead of ground-level standing."

She added that the stand would enhance facilities at the established community ground and support the continued success of Dorking Wanderers. The application was approved without opposition after councillors were told the stand was already in place and that all objections raised had been addressed.

The approval follows a number of upgrades to the ground in recent years, including a new part-covered terrace at the western end approved in 2022, alongside LED floodlighting, additional turnstiles, TV facilities and an expanded fan zone. The western terrace was constructed after the club's promotion to the National League in order to meet entry requirements.

Chris Caulfield LDRS

Epsom and Ewell Times puts local clubs in the context of the hierarchy of English football:

Level	League	Club example
1	Premier League	Arsenal, Man City
2	EFL Championship	Norwich City, Watford
3	EFL League One	Portsmouth, Ipswich Town
4	EFL League Two	Sutton United (recently until 2024)
5	**National League**	**Sutton United (now)**
6	National League South	Dorking Wanderers
7-8	Isthmian League etc.	Kingstonian, Leatherhead
9-10	Combined Counties	**Epsom and Ewell**

Photo: Meadowbank Stadium, the home ground of Dorking Wanderers Football Club, with the spire of St Martin's Church in the background (May 2021, looking south). Credit: Mertbiol. Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication.

A Nice Xmas Double for Epsom & Ewell FC

17 August 2026



Epsom & Ewell FC v Balham FC 20th December – Combined Counties Premier League. Away At Imperial Fields, Bishopsfield Road. Morden.

We played Balham FC at their adopted home, Imperial Fields, and recorded our first double of the season after beating them 3–1 way back in early August at our then temporary home, the Reg Madgwick Stadium in Cobham. This was a far more attritional game, which we emerged from as winners thanks to a second-half strike to secure a 1–0 victory.

We welcomed Che Bell back into our defensive formation and he made a great comeback. Teddy Ralph played at left wing-back in a very unfamiliar position for him and acquitted himself very well. We also welcomed Prince Aderogba to the football club, who impressed on his debut. Antonios Nazareth took a place on the bench after recovering from flu earlier in the week.

One of our players, Connor McShane, was injured in the warm-up, so Ryley Merrett was called up and arrived by taxi to take his place on the substitutes' bench. Last but not least, our 44-year-old assistant manager, Craig Dundas, played up front alongside Tyler Robinson. This demonstrated just how many players we are missing. Craig, by the way, played very well during the 58 minutes he was on the pitch and was a constant threat to the Balham defence.

First Half

The game was mostly played in the Balham half, although they did come back into it during the five minutes before half-

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time. The referee “set his stall out” early by booking Luis Oliveira in the 8th minute. A further three yellow cards were brandished, making it 2–2 in the book at half-time.

We did have a good shot from Tyler Robinson saved, but this was about the only real goalmouth action of the first half.

Half-time: 0–0

In the 50th minute, Karl Bailey replaced the injured Jason Bloor, and in the 58th minute Obasanjo Akinniranye replaced Craig Dundas. We were still very much on top at this stage.

In the 63rd minute, we got the goal we richly deserved as Tyler Robinson broke down the right flank and crossed for substitute Akinniranye, who calmly slotted the ball between two defenders to give us the lead.

Balham immediately began making substitutions, and we followed suit when Callum O’Keeffe replaced Teddy Ralph in the 74th minute.

Unfortunately, we lost Tyler Robinson in the 87th minute to an alleged elbow on a Balham defender. He was shown a straight red card after the referee consulted with his assistant. Was the red card harsh? Yes, it was. Tyler was convinced after the match that this was the case, and this view was supported by the Balham player involved, who expressed his surprise at the decision.

Could we hold out, with what appeared to be plenty of injury time still to play? The answer was **YES**. A very good three points were secured, moving us on to 28 points, although with no change in our league position.

What’s Next?

We have a big match against Corinthian Casuals at Chalky Lane, Chessington, next Saturday, 27th December, with a 3pm kick-off. As a large crowd is expected, it would be advisable to arrive in good time if travelling by car to secure a parking space.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

Cobham Cruise Past Epsom & Ewell in 4–0 Chalky Lane Defeat

17 August 2026



Epsom and Ewell FC 0 – 4 Cobham Combined Counties League Premier South. Venue Chalky Lane Chessington.

The Salts succumbed to their worst home defeat of the season, losing 0-4 to Cobham. The fact that Cobham are running away with the league (13 points clear with 2 games in hand on 2nd place) meant it would be a difficult game, but unfortunately a poor performance made it easy for them, and they didn’t have to get out of second gear in order to claim the 3 points in front of 101 fans.

Injuries and suspensions meant we had to move players around again, although, after the fact, the suspensions were probably best today rather than Tuesday evening, with a more winnable game v Badshot Lea.
Sami Nabbad returned in goal, Shane Dunne came into midfield as Adam Green went to centre-back in place of the suspended Antonios Nazareth, Callum O’Keefe returned in place of Jason Bloor, Filip Ksaidz replaced Andrew Herring, and finally Karl Bailey came in for Ali Fofahan.

There was a little bit of hope in the early stages as Luis Oliveira managed to get to the goal line in the 2nd minute, but he was forced out by three defenders and unable to get the cross in, and the ball ricocheted off him, not even getting the corner. Cobham had the first chance of the afternoon when No. 9 Marklew had a shot across the goal after a good move down their left. Fortunately, there was no one coming in on the far post — something that was to change shortly. Nabbad was forced to make a couple of diving stops to prevent the ball going across the goal. He then had a poor kick-out and his ball went straight to a Cobham player who tried to play in No. 10 Hayford, but fortunately there was a bit too much on the pass and it ran out for a goal kick.

We then lost Shane Dunne to a knee injury after 15 minutes which would cause us problems as he holds the midfield

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together, and with Adam Green in defence, we were in for a difficult time. After 17 minutes Cobham got their reward for their control of the game. Again it came down their left with No. 11 Rule playing a nice ball across the goal, with Marklew running in unopposed and passing the ball into the net.
Epsom & Ewell 0-1 Cobham.

Cobham were now in control and on 31 minutes a nice ball was played into Marklew, and he found himself 1-on-1 with Nabbad, who had moved quickly off his line. Marklew attempted to lift the ball over the onrushing keeper and fortunately put a bit too much on it and it went over the bar too. Shortly after, we managed to put a nice move together and the ball was played to Oliveira who burst towards the box only to be brought down just outside. McVey, who normally takes the kick, stepped aside for No. 9 Robinson to have a go, but his shot hit the bottom of the wall and rebounded easily back to the keeper. On 36 minutes we gave away a free kick outside the box, which earned Nelson-Roberts a yellow card, in a similar position to our previous kick. Cobham No. 7 decided to go under the wall as well. He also managed to hit the bottom and it rolled easily back to Nabbad. Unfortunately, Sami managed to let the ball go through his hands and legs and it rolled into the goal. I don't even think it managed to hit the back of the net.

Cobham continued to create more and keep us pinned in our half and they had a couple more chances that didn't really trouble Nabbad, but a header in the box from Marklew appeared to strike an Epsom & Ewell arm. There was a big shout from Cobham players but the referee waved it away. Difficult to see from where we were standing but we went in 0-2 down.
HT Epsom & Ewell 0-2 Cobham.

There needed to be a big talk from the management to get the players focused for the second half. 2-0 down still means we are in the game, but our performance in the first half was poor and lacked any real energy. Hopefully, we would give it a go in the second. Alas, it was not to be and despite the fact we were playing down the hill in the second half, Cobham continued to exert pressure. Again they had a couple of chances and a third goal looked on the cards rather than us getting back into the game, and on 62 minutes we gave them a third goal. Trying to play out from the back, Nabbad played the ball to Green who attempted to play the ball across goal to Aiwone. He tried to let the ball run across his body whilst facing the goal, but No. 11 Rule anticipated the move and took the ball off Aiwone and slotted the ball into an empty net.

In the meantime, Oba Akinniranye had replaced Karl Bailey and, as always, he started to cause trouble on our right; however, he managed to get himself booked after a little bit of trouble with Cobham No. 4, and both ended up in the book. Oba did manage to provide an assist for our first real shot on goal and good movement found Ryley Merritt (who had replaced Dunne in the 1st half). He had a good shot, but it went across the goal. As the keeper scrambled across it must have been close. Cobham seemed to think *we have to stop this* and on the 85th minute another move down the Cobham right had the ball played across goal and No. 14 Simpson had another easy finish at the far post.

We managed to create a couple of chances towards the end and finally their keeper had to make a save, after Oba again created problems and his shot was stopped just short of the goal. Jack Torbett, returning after another lay-off, hit the bar from a cross/shot. There was nothing really after that, and Cobham continued their march to the title.

After a great mid-week performance v Step 4 Bedfont Sports in a friendly, today's performance was disappointing and with only one shot on goal for the whole game it is probably the worst since we lost to Sutton Common Rovers. Losing to Cobham is also not the worst result either, but we need to gather ourselves for Tuesday night v Badshot Lea at Chalky Lane. KO 7.45, as some of the teams below us are putting in good results and we don't wish to be drawn into another relegation battle.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Team:
Nabbad, Oliveira, Nelson-Roberts, C. Green, Dunne, Aiwone, O'Keeffe, Murphy-McVey, Robinson, Ksaidz, Bailey — Subs: Gilfillian-Waul, Dundas, Akinniranye, Merrett, Torbett.

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