

The 1970's.....

1977-1978.....

After a false start the season before, Hythe finally moved up from the Kent Amateur League to the Kent League for season 1977-78. The club had moved from South Road to Reachfields, although it was a very modest ground in those days, just a pitch with dressing rooms and a small clubroom behind the goal. The official ground opening was a game with Southern League neighbours Folkestone and Shepway, as they were then called, on Saturday 30 July 1977. Folkestone went two goals up before a Les Hall own goal and a John Champion effort saw honours even at 2-2.

The league season began with a home game with Tunbridge Wells and a 2-1 defeat, Paul Prior scoring Hythe's first-ever Kent League goal. There were problems reported with the pitch, with shingle coming through to the surface, but remedial work allowed the next home game to go ahead as planned. A draw followed at Herne Bay and defeat at Crockenhill, in a 'monsoon', before Hythe's first victory, in that next home game. It was impressive as well, a 5-3 win against last season's Kent League champions, Medway (a renamed Chatham).

That game started an unbeaten run of seven games, five of them victories, which left Hythe in fourth place. After a couple of defeats another good run through November and December was ended by the worst result of the season, a 7-0 defeat at Whitstable on New Year's Day. A strong finish to the season, only two defeats in the last ten games saw Hythe climb the table and finish in a respectable fourth place. This was despite the loss of leading scorer Prior, who joined Folkestone for the last month of the season.

Included in the league were three Southern League reserve sides, from Dover, Folkestone and Maidstone and Hythe won all six of those games. The following season saw the reserve sides removed from the top division.

Cup runs were fairly brief: Hythe's debut in the FA Vase saw a victory over Deal before home defeat by Merstham; in the Kent League Cup a win at Crockenhill was followed by defeat at Sheppey United; and a first round loss in the Kent Senior Trophy at Deal that saw keeper Ken Boorman and Deal's Barry Brown both sent off. This defeat was all the more disappointing as Hythe had reached the semi-finals in each of the previous three seasons – the first three of this 'new' competition.

The newspapers of the day (The Folkestone Herald) usually had a match report but rarely gave the full team line-up so the club appearance records are barely more than half-complete. Goalkeeping duties were shared between Ken Boorman and Stan Purcell, defenders were Paul

Roberts, Norman Long, Ian Daffin, Terry Dowding, Dave Williams and Glenn Dempsey, who also played in midfield with John Champion, John Leslie and Doug Parker and the forwards were Paul Prior and Tony Hunter. On the goalscoring front, which is also incomplete by seven goals, Paul Prior led the way with 23, Doug Parker got 16, Tony Hunter 12 and John Leslie 10. Hythe played a total of 39 games, with 21 wins, 6 draws and 12 defeats, scoring 81 goals. It was their first season for seven years without any silverware, perhaps not surprising after the step up, under the continued leadership of Bob Davis.

Kent League Table 1977-1978...

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	P
Faversham Town	34	23	8	3	83	24	59	5
Sheppey United	34	24	5	5	87	32	55	5
Tunbridge Wells	34	21	10	3	84	38	46	5
Hythe Town	34	19	6	9	73	57	16	4
Maidstone United Reserves	34	18	6	10	58	39	19	4
Crockenhill	34	16	8	10	62	46	16	4
Dartford Glentworth	34	15	8	11	59	45	14	3
Medway	34	15	8	11	53	49	4	3
Ramsgate	34	12	13	9	54	51	3	3
Deal Town	34	13	7	14	47	53	-6	3
Whitstable Town	34	13	6	15	52	43	9	3
Herne Bay	34	9	9	16	39	76	-37	2
Sittingbourne	34	8	9	17	37	60	-23	2
Snowdown CW	34	8	6	20	44	76	-32	2
Slade Green	34	4	12	18	40	60	-20	2
Folkestone Town Reserves	34	6	7	21	37	61	-24	1
Kent Police	34	6	6	22	34	81	-47	1
Dover Reserves	34	9	0	25	35	87	-52	1

Results 1977-1978.....

30/07/1977	Folkestone & Shepway	F	Home	2-2	OG, John Champion
06/08/1977	Alma Swanley	F	Home	1-1	Tony Hunter
13/08/1977	Sevenoaks Town	F	Home	1-0	Paul Prior
20/08/1977	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Home	1-2	Prior
23/08/1977	Herne Bay	KL	Away	1-1	Prior

27/08/1977	Crockenhill	KL	Away	1-3		Ian Daffin
03/09/1977	Medway	KL	Home	5-3		Prior, Doug Parker 2, 1 pen, John 2
10/09/1977	Snowdown CW	KL	Away	2-1		Hunter, Paul Butler
17/09/1977	Folkestone & Shepway Reserves	KL	Home	3-0		Butler, Glenn Dempsey, Leslie
24/09/1977	Deal Town	FAVP	Home	2-1		Butler, Parker
01/10/1977	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Away	2-2		Hunter 2
08/10/1977	Sittingbourne	KL	Home	1-1		Parker pen
15/10/1977	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Home	4-1		Leslie, Prior 2, Parker
22/10/1977	Whitstable Town	KL	Home	3-2		Champion, Prior 2
29/10/1977	Merstham	FAV1	Home	1-2	300	Prior
01/11/1977	Sheppey United	KL	Away	0-4		
05/11/1977	Faversham Town	KL	Home	2-1		Leslie, Champion
12/11/1977	Deal Town	KST1	Away	2-4		Leslie, Hunter
19/11/1977	Kent Police	KL	Away	2-0		Prior 2
26/11/1977	Deal Town	KL	Home	1-2		Leslie
10/12/1977	Crockenhill	KLC2	Away	2-1		Prior, Bob Paul
17/12/1977	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Away	2-1		Parker pen, Prior
26/12/1977	Dover Reserves	KL	Home	3-1		Prior, Hunter 2
31/12/1977	Maidstone United Reserves	KL	Away	3-1		Prior, Hunter, Peter Worrell
02/01/1978	Whitstable Town	KL	Away	0-7		
07/01/1978	Snowdown CW	KL	Home	0-0		
14/01/1978	Sheppey United	KLCQF	Away	1-3		Leslie
21/01/1978	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Home	2-1		Hunter, Leslie
02/02/1978	Medway	KL	Away	2-0		Prior, Parker
11/02/1978	Herne Bay	KL	Home	5-1		Prior 3, Parker, Dave Williams
18/02/1978	Deal Town	KL	Away	0-2		
25/02/1978	Sheppey United	KL	Home	3-5		Prior, Parker, Leslie
04/03/1978	Sittingbourne	KL	Away	4-3		Parker 2, Prior 2
11/03/1978	Ramsgate	KL	Home	1-2		Hunter

18/03/1978	Maidstone United Reserves	KL	Home	4-2	Parker 2, Prior 2
25/03/1978	Kent Police	KL	Home	2-2	Parker 2, 1 pen
01/04/1978	Faversham Town	KL	Away	1-1	Parker
08/04/1978	Crockenhill	KL	Home	3-1	Hunter 2, Don Hanrahan
15/04/1978	Ramsgate	KL	Away	1-0	Dempsey
20/04/1978	Folkestone & Shepway Reserves	KL	Away	2-1	Paul Roberts, Hunter
27/04/1978	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Away	2-3	**
11/05/1978	Dover Reserves	KL	Away	5-0	*****

1978-1979.....

Hythe Town's second season in the Kent League saw the majority of the outfield players remain from the season before. New additions saw Tony Howes as the regular goalkeeper with Paul Fullick as his deputy. Gary Towse joined, as did Alan Hughes from Deal Town but the best news was the return of striker Paul Prior, who had joined Folkestone for the final month of the previous season.

The season got off to a slow start with three away draws and a home defeat to Sheppey United, an important result come the end of the season. The first win was at home to Faversham Town when goals from Prior and John Leslie were enough to beat last season's champions. This game started an eight-match unbeaten run in the league, seven of them victories, until consecutive defeats to Herne Bay and Ramsgate. Two wins followed just prior to Christmas before snow wiped out three weeks of football, restarting with a win at Tunbridge Wells on a still frozen, snow-covered pitch.

This was followed by Faversham's revenge for their earlier defeat, Hythe losing 5-2 at Salters Lane for the worst defeat of the season. But it was the prelude to a strong finish to the season, only losing at Medway and Ramsgate in the last 18 league games to finish as runners-up to Sheppey United. Hythe played at Sheppey on Easter Saturday and gained a creditable 1-1 draw against the Islanders who remained unbeaten at that point, Glenn Dempsey scoring the Hythe goal.

The cups saw limited success for Hythe, the best performance was reaching the semi-final of the League Cup. Home wins over Ramsgate and Crockenhill were followed by a draw at Darenth Heathside in the quarter-final, winning the home replay 3-1. The semi-final saw a 3-1 defeat at Herne Bay, Hythe had led for much of the match but a 'controversial' penalty after 75 minutes turned the game in Bay's favour. Hythe managed a lone draw in four matches against Bay that season. They had knocked Hythe out of the Vase in September. The Kent Senior Trophy was the surprise failure; having made the semi-finals in three of the previous four seasons Hythe

managed to lose their first round tie, after a replay, to bottom of the table Snowdown Colliery Welfare.

Again, the team appearances are incomplete from the local paper. Tony Howes was the regular goalkeeper, full-backs were Ian Daffin and Paul Roberts, defenders Dave Williams, Terry Dowding and Adrian Bray, who had joined from Margate in October but suffered a broken leg against Kent Police in April. Midfielders were Doug Parker, John Champion, Gary Towse, Glenn Dempsey and John Leslie with Paul Prior and Tony Hunter as the forwards. The Herald's summary of the season heaped praise upon keeper Howes for his consistency and Prior for his 37 goals, him being the league's leading scorer. Only Tony Hunter, with 12, also managed double figures. Hythe played a total of 42 games with 24 wins, 9 draws and 9 defeats, scoring 83 goals in Bob Davis' eighth season in charge.

1978-1979 Kent League Table.....

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sheppey United	34	22	11	1	73	28	55
Hythe Town	34	21	7	6	71	34	49
Faversham Town	34	22	5	7	71	37	49
Medway	34	18	10	6	64	27	46
Whitstable Town	34	18	7	9	52	33	43
Sittingbourne	34	16	7	11	57	42	39
Tunbridge Wells	34	15	6	13	51	52	36
Darenth Heathside	34	10	12	12	42	38	32
Deal Town	34	13	6	15	40	50	32
Ramsgate	34	14	4	16	42	59	32
Slade Green	34	8	13	13	46	47	29
Dartford Glentworth	34	9	10	15	40	52	28
Herne Bay	34	10	10	14	47	59	28
Cray Wanderers	34	9	9	16	50	65	27
Erith & Belvedere	34	8	9	17	49	48	25
Kent Police	34	10	4	20	46	67	24
Crockenhill	34	7	7	20	43	73	21
Snowdown CW	34	4	7	23	29	102	15

1978-79 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
05/08/1978	Merstham	F	Home	3-1		Tony Hunter, John Leslie, D
10/08/1978	Margate XI	F	H??	3-2		***
12/08/1978	Alma Swanley	F	Home	0-1		
19/08/1978	Erith & Belvedere	KL	Away	1-1		Paul Prior pen
26/08/1978	Sheppey United	KL	Home	1-2		Prior
29/08/1978	Sittingbourne	KL	Away	2-2		Leslie, Prior
02/09/1978	Deal Town	KL	Away	1-1		Gary Towse
09/09/1978	Faversham Town	KL	Home	2-0		Prior pen, Leslie
16/09/1978	Kent Police	KL	Away	2-0		Prior 2
23/09/1978	Herne Bay	FAVP	Away	0-3		
30/09/1978	Ramsgate	KLC1	Home	3-1		Prior, Ian Daffin, Leslie
07/10/1978	Herne Bay	KL	Home	1-1		Leslie
21/10/1978	Cray Wanderers	KL	Home	2-0		Prior, Towse
28/10/1978	Darenth Heathside	KL	Away	3-1		Glenn Dempsey, Prior, John
04/11/1978	Medway	KL	Home	2-1		Hunter, Dempsey
11/11/1978	Snowdown CW	KST1	Home	1-1		Parker
18/11/1978	Snowdown CW	KST1R	Away	1-3		Prior
25/11/1978	Crockenhill	KL	Away	5-2		Champion 2, Prior 3
02/12/1978	Herne Bay	KL	Away	1-2		Dempsey
09/12/1978	Ramsgate	KL	Home	0-2		
16/12/1978	Crockenhill	KLC2	Home	2-1		Prior, Adrian Bray
23/12/1978	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Away	2-0		Peter Worrell, Prior
13/01/1979	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Away	2-1		Prior, Bray
20/01/1979	Faversham Town	KL	Away	2-5		Prior 2
27/01/1979	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Home	2-1		Prior 2, 1 pen
03/02/1979	Dartford Glentworth	KLC3	Away	1-1		Prior
10/02/1979	Dartford Glentworth	KLC3R	Home	3-1		Prior 2, Parker
24/02/1979	Erith & Belvedere	KL	Home	1-1		Parker
03/03/1979	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Home	3-1		Prior, Hunter 2
10/03/1979	Herne Bay	KLCSF	Away	1-3		Parker

17/03/1979	Sittingbourne	KL	Home	4-0		Hunter 2, Prior 2
24/03/1979	Cray Wanderers	KL	Away	1-0		Prior
31/03/1979	Whitstable Town	KL	Home	2-0		Prior, Towse
07/04/1979	Medway	KL	Away	1-2		Bray
14/04/1979	Sheppey United	KL	Away	1-1		Dempsey
16/04/1979	Deal Town	KL	Home	5-0	150	Hunter 2, OG, Prior, Bob Pa
19/04/1979	Kent Police	KL	Home	1-0		*
21/04/1979	Darenth Heathside	KL	Home	2-1		Prior, Hunter
24/04/1979	Snowdown CW	KL	Home	5-0		Hunter 2, Prior, Champion,
28/04/1979	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Home	3-0		Towse, Prior 2
01/05/1979	Ramsgate	KL	Away	1-2		Hunter
05/05/1979	Crockenhill	KL	Home	1-1		Prior
10/05/1979	Whitstable Town	KL	Away	1-0		Hunter
17/05/1979	Snowdown CW	KL	Away	5-1		*****
19/05/1979	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Away	3-2		Dave Williams, Dempsey, D

1979-1980.....

The first news of the new season saw a presentation of a flintlock musket to mark the opening of the bar extension in the old clubhouse (behind the goal). This was a gift from the Small Arms Corps who used the Reachfields site before a move to Wiltshire in 1969. Team news saw just one name added to the squad that had finished as runners-up, the well-known Graham Best joined from Chatham Town.

Best made an immediate impact in Hythe's first game, scoring the only goal from 25 yards at Reachfields to defeat the previous season's champions Sheppey United. The crowd was given as 250. Hythe got off to a decent start and after a Gary Towse goal was enough to defeat Dartford Glentworth in September, Hythe moved top of the table. A heavy defeat at Chatham still saw them lead the table but a run of only one win in six games dropped them down to seventh. Changes were made but even they made little difference until the new year. Dick Maxted had signed as a utility player, previously with Hounslow and Margate and Hythe needed a 16-year-old goalkeeper, David Andrews, when regular Tony Howes was unavailable.

Once again, Hythe went on a good run after Christmas after a narrow 3-2 defeat at home to eventual champions Chatham. Local player Jim McMorrان was promoted to the first team and Gary Towse went in goal, at first as a stand-in but he kept the role for the rest of the season. A run of away games saw nearly all wins, including a 1-0 win at Erith & Belvedere in atrocious

conditions at Park View over a side who were currently second. Hythe climbed the table into second spot but they were ten points behind the strong Chatham side and the title race was all but over. Easter saw a 5-2 defeat by an unbeaten Cray Wanderers side at Oxford Road, despite Hythe being 2-0 up. Revenge was gained in the last home game of the season by inflicting Cray's first defeat of the season in a 3-1 win. Paul Prior scored Hythe's second goal as he reached 30 goals for the season. This meant a third place finish, with Cray ending in the runners-up position.

Cup runs were brief, there was a win over Bexhill Town in the Vase, before defeat to Whyteleafe, both games at home. The Kent Senior Trophy saw a victory against Midland Bank, after a replay, before losing at Canterbury City, who played in the Southern League at the time. The Kent League Cup saw defeat at Whitstable in a replay by the only goal, where home keeper Brian Gambrill excelled and a strong penalty claim was denied by referee Bradshaw.

Bob Davis continued to be the manager and regular players were Tony Howes in goal, until replaced by Gary Towse, Ian Daffin and Paul Roberts as full-backs, Glenn Dempsey, Adrian Bray and Dave Williams also in defence, midfielders John Champion, Towse for the first half of the season and Graham Best, with Paul Prior and Tony Hunter the forwards. Prior was leading scorer by some distance, with Hunter and McMorran scoring 8 and 7 respectively. In total Hythe played 39 games, winning 21, drawing six, with twelve losses, scoring 69 goals.

1979-1980 Kent League Table.....

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Chatham Town	32	23	7	2	69	22	47	53
Cray Wanderers	32	20	9	3	80	25	55	49
Hythe Town	32	19	4	9	57	48	9	42
Darenth Heathside	32	17	7	8	52	34	18	41
Sittingbourne	32	15	9	8	49	43	6	39
Sheppey United	32	14	7	11	51	42	9	35
Whitstable Town	32	14	7	11	43	37	6	35
Tunbridge Wells	32	15	5	12	50	53	-3	35
Erith & Belvedere	32	11	12	9	34	29	5	34
Slade Green	32	11	5	16	48	57	-9	27
Dartford Glentworth	32	8	10	14	33	48	-15	26
Deal Town	32	7	10	15	33	45	-12	24
Herne Bay	32	8	8	16	34	51	-17	24

Faversham Town	32	7	8	17	40	51	-11	22
Crockenhill	32	7	7	18	51	69	-18	21
Ramsgate	32	6	8	18	30	57	-27	20
Kent Police	32	5	7	20	38	81	-43	17

1979-1980 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
04/08/1979	Merstham	F	Home	3-1		Tony Hunter 2, Gary Towse
11/08/1979	Swanley Town	F	Home	1-2		Dave Williams
14/08/1979	Ashford Town	F	Away	1-0		Hunter
18/08/1979	Sheppey United	KL	Home	1-0	250	Graham Best
21/08/1979	Herne Bay	KL	Home	4-2	150	Hunter 2, Gary Towse, Paul Prior
25/08/1979	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Away	2-3		Terry Byrne, Micky Heynes
29/08/1979	Deal Town	KL	Home	0-0	220	
01/09/1979	Darenth Heathside	KL	Away	2-0		Hunter, Glenn Dempsey
05/09/1979	Faversham Town	KL	Away	2-1		Prior, Hunter
08/09/1979	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Home	1-0		Towse
15/09/1979	Crockenhill	KL	Home	2-1	250	Prior, Best
22/09/1979	Chatham Town	KL	Away	0-4		
29/09/1979	Bexhill Town	FAVP	Home	2-1	120	Hunter, Towse
06/10/1979	Whitstable Town	KL	Home	2-2		Prior, Williams
20/10/1979	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Away	1-2		Best
27/10/1979	Whyteleafe	FAV1	Home	1-3	103	Prior
03/11/1979	Midland Bank	KST1	Away	2-2		Hunter 2
10/11/1979	Midland Bank	KST1R	Home	3-0		Prior, Williams, Dick Maxted
13/11/1979	Sheppey United	KL	Away	2-4		Prior 2
17/11/1979	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Home	0-3	150	
24/11/1979	Herne Bay	KL	Away	2-1		Prior 2
08/12/1979	Whitstable Town	KLC1	Home	2-2		Towse, Prior
15/12/1979	Whitstable Town	KLC1R	Away	0-1		
22/11/1979	Faversham Town	KL	Home	3-2		Prior 2, 1 pen, John Champion

29/12/1979	Chatham Town	KL	Home	2-3		Prior 2, 1 pen
05/01/1980	Darenth Heathside	KL	Home	2-1		Prior 2
08/01/1980	Canterbury City	KST2	Away	2-4		Prior, Heynes
12/01/1980	Deal Town	KL	Away	1-1		Prior
19/01/1980	Ramsgate	KL	Away	2-1		Jimmy McMorran, Prior
26/01/1980	Kent Police	KL	Away	4-2		Prior 2, Doug Parker, McMorran
02/02/1980	Erith & Belvedere	KL	Away	1-0		Prior
09/02/1980	Ramsgate	KL	Home	2-1		McMorran, Adrian Bray
16/02/1980	Crockenhill	KL	Away	3-0		Champion, McMorran, OG
23/02/1980	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Away	0-1		
08/03/1980	Sittingbourne	KL	Home	2-1		McMorran 2
15/03/1980	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Home	1-0		Prior
25/03/1980	Sittingbourne	KL	Away	1-2		Best
29/03/1980	Kent Police	KL	Home	2-0		Parker, Paul Roberts
05/04/1980	Cray Wanderers	KL	Away	2-5		Best, Prior
07/04/1980	Erith & Belvedere	KL	Home	3-2		Prior 2, 1 pen, Williams
19/04/1980	Cray Wanderers	KL	Home	3-1	250	McMorran, Prior, OG
26/04/1980	Whitstable Town	KL	Away	2-2		Bray, Hunter