

The 1980s (Part 1).....

1980-1981.....

Once again, the previous season's squad re-signed for the new season. There were two summer arrivals, Dalton Perkins, an experienced centre-back joined from Margate, and Mick Filmer joined as first team goalkeeper. The club announced that Mick Leach was standing down as reserve team manager but it seems that he continued in that role until the new year.

The club got off to a solid start, August saw three wins, a draw and a lone defeat, at Crockenhill. September saw them top the league and seven points from eight in October only strengthened their position. By now Hythe had signed centre-back Steve Harris from Folkestone. November saw a bit of a wobble with defeats at Dartford Glentworth and Slade Green Athletic, sides in the bottom half of the table, before the month ended with a home defeat to Cray Wanderers, who would go on to be champions.

December was an exciting month. Hythe unveiled their new kit, sponsored by Burlington Insurance, and were the first club in the Kent League to wear a sponsor's name on their shirts. Then Paul Prior, after a six-game wait, scored his 100th Kent League goal for Hythe in the win over Sittingbourne as his side returned to the top of the table. The next game saw Hythe's best win of their Kent League career to date, 8-3 away at Kent Police. Converted defender Alan Hughes scored four of them, all in the second half.

In January 'Curly' Russell joined the club as reserve team manager after leaving Folkestone. Three Folkestone players also joined, Mark Hatcher, Steve Long and Terry Collins. January and February saw seven league wins in a row which moved Hythe five points clear, although Cray, who were to reach the quarter-finals of the FA Vase, had five games in hand.

March saw three tough games against the top sides and three defeats, the last against Cray by 3-1. The start of April saw the momentous news that Bob Davis was to stand down as manager at the end of the season, after ten years in charge. "It is time for a change", he said. Whether that news had an effect on the team or not, the season rather petered out with just one win in the final five games, for a sixth place finish some twelve points behind the champions Cray. The final game was a 3-3 draw at home to Crockenhill, where Tony Cascarino scored for the visitors. The club announced that reserve boss Russell was to be the new manager.

Cup runs were brief; there was defeat to Banstead Athletic in the Vase, wins over Faversham and Dartford Glentworth in the Kent Senior Trophy before a quarter-final defeat to Crockenhill, and a win over Sheppey United before defeat to Darenth Heathside in the Kent League Cup. All the defeats were at Reachfields, to add to the disappointment.

Mick Filmer was virtually ever-present in goal, Ian Daffin started the season as full-back before moving into midfield, Terry Collins taking over his role, with Paul Roberts the other full-back. Adrian Bray and Dalton Perkins were the centre-backs, Graham Best, Glenn Dempsey and John Champion in midfield and Paul Prior, Alan Hughes and Tony Hunter up front. Prior top scored with 23 goals, Hughes and Hunter both managed 16. Hythe played 39 games, winning 21, drawing 6 and losing 12, and scoring 83 goals.

1980-1981 Kent League Table....

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Cray Wanderers	32	24	5	3	92	27	65	53
Chatham Town	32	22	6	4	61	23	38	50
Crockenhill	32	20	5	7	63	37	26	45
Erith & Belvedere	32	19	5	8	57	30	27	43
Sittingbourne	32	18	5	9	74	29	45	41
Hythe Town	32	18	5	9	70	45	25	41
Sheppey United	32	16	9	7	45	33	12	41
Faversham Town	32	12	11	9	36	28	8	35
Tunbridge Wells	32	10	9	13	33	49	-16	29
Darenth Heathside	32	9	10	13	45	52	-7	28
Deal Town	32	10	7	15	46	49	-3	27
Dartford Glentworth	32	11	3	18	40	60	-20	25
Slade Green	32	10	5	17	39	51	-12	23
Whitstable Town	32	7	7	18	33	58	-25	21
Kent Police	32	5	9	18	43	67	-24	19
Herne Bay	32	4	6	22	23	67	-44	14
Ramsgate	32	2	3	27	26	121	-95	7

Slade Green deducted 2 points for fielding an ineligible player

1980-1981 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Competition	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
26/07/1980	Swanley Town	F	Home	2-4		Tony Hunter, Jimmy McMorran
02/08/1980	Hastings Town	F	Away	0-2		

09/08/1980	Merstham	F	Away	2-1		Doug Parker, Paul Prior pen
12/08/1980	Ashford Town	F	Away	2-0		Hunter 2
16/08/1980	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Home	3-1		Hunter, McMorran, Glenn Dempsey
20/08/1980	Deal Town	KL	Away	1-0		Dempsey
23/08/1980	Crockenhill	KL	Away	2-3		Prior 2, 1 pen
27/08/1980	Ramsgate	KL	Away	4-1		John Champion, Prior 3
30/08/1980	Faversham Town	KL	Home	1-1		Prior
06/09/1980	Deal Town	KL	Home	0-0		
13/09/1980	Darenth Heathside	KL	Home	4-2		Stuart Taylor, McMorran 2, Prior pen
20/09/1980	Sheppey United	KLC2	Away	3-1		Champion, Hunter, Prior
27/09/1980	Banstead Athletic	FAVP	Home	0-2		
04/10/1980	Sheppey United	KL	Away	3-0		Hunter 3
11/10/1980	Whitstable Town	KL	Home	2-0		Dempsey, McMorran
18/10/1980	Herne Bay	KL	Away	1-1		Prior pen
25/10/1980	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Home	4-2		Dempsey, Hunter, McMorran, Prior
01/11/1980	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Away	0-3		
08/11/1980	Faversham Town	KST1	Away	4-2aet		Alan Hughes 2, Dalton Perkins, Hunter
15/11/1980	Kent Police	KL	Home	3-1		Hughes 2, Steve Harris
22/11/1980	Slade Green Athletic	KL	Away	1-3		Hunter
25/11/1980	Sittingbourne	KL	Away	2-1	290	Hughes, Ian Daffin
29/11/1980	Cray Wanderers	KL	Home	2-3		Adrian Bray, Dempsey
06/12/1980	Sittingbourne	KL	Home	4-1		Prior 2, Hunter, McMorran
13/12/1980	Darenth Heathside	KLCQF	Home	1-2		Hughes
20/12/1980	Kent Police	KL	Away	8-3		Hunter 2, Prior, Hughes 4, Dick Purnell
03/01/1981	Ramsgate	KL	Home	6-2		Hughes 2, Prior 3, Daffin
10/01/1981	Dartford Glentworth	KST2	Away	2-0		Graham Best, Prior pen
17/01/1981	Darenth Heathside	KL	Away	1-0		Prior
24/01/1981	Sheppey United	KL	Home	2-1		Hughes, Daffin
31/01/1981	Whitstable Town	KL	Away	2-0		Hughes, Champion

07/02/1981	Herne Bay	KL	Home	3-1	Hunter, Hughes, Daffin
14/02/1981	Tunbridge Wells	KL	Away	1-0	Prior
21/02/1981	Crockenhill	KSTQF	Away	2-2aet	Prior pen, Hunter
28/02/1981	Crockenhill	KSTQFR	Home	1-3	Hughes
07/03/1981	Chatham Town	KL	Away	1-2	Hunter
21/03/1981	Erith & Belvedere	KL	Away	0-1	
04/04/1981	Cray Wanderers	KL	Away	1-3	Prior pen
11/04/1981	Corinthian	F	Away	2-2	**
20/04/1981	Dartford Glentworth	KL	Home	1-2	Hunter
25/04/1981	Chatham Town	KL	Home	1-1	Paul Roberts
29/04/1981	Faversham Town	KL	Away	2-0	Dempsey, Hunter
02/05/1981	Erith & Belvedere	KL	Home	1-3	Dempsey
04/05/1981	Crockenhill	KL	Home	3-3	Best, Prior 2, 1 pen

1981-1982.....

This season saw Hythe under the new management of 'Curly' Russell and although the stated plan was to continue the good work of the previous manager Bob Davis, the pre-season news was that six of last season's squad had left the club. Winger John Champion had retired but Mick Filmer, Paul Roberts, Dalton Perkins, Graham Best and Paul Prior had moved to other clubs. Glenn Dempsey, Tony Hunter and Ian Daffin were said to be staying but by the end of August they too had departed.

This meant a number of new signings. Ivan Pickering joined from local football, Tim Hulme joined from (Folkestone) Invicta, Paul Lynch and Stan Gardiner from Folkestone Reserves. Others joined at regular intervals but the turnover of players was large.

The season started well with just the one defeat in the first six games and good wins over Deal Town and Faversham Town. Three different goalkeepers had been used in this spell before Alan Hopgood arrived and kept his place. The good run was ended by a demoralising defeat at Kent Police, who would finish bottom of the table and only won one other game all season. The next three games were also lost.

A home win over Slade Green and a 4-3 win at Herne Bay steadied things, this was a game where Kevin Hambrook, making his debut, made the winner with a cross that Stuart Taylor headed in. The next new signing was Tommy Horsfall, who had played League football at Southend United, Cambridge United and Halifax Town after a transfer from Dover. He helped

Hythe to a run of only one defeat in seven games in November and December which saw the club climb to eighth place in the table. In the draw at Sheppey Hythe came back from 0-2 down with an injury-time equaliser against a home side containing former players Perkins, Demspey, Hunter and Prior.

The new year saw a steady decline in fortunes, after a break for bad weather Hythe lost five games in a row before getting a couple of wins, including their revenge over Kent Police. After this, it was a return to defeats and after the fourth one, a 4-0 reverse at home to Chatham, manager Russell was dismissed. Chairman Jim Robb appointed Glenn Dempsey as the replacement and Hythe finished the season with a mini-flourish, winning the last three games and moving up to a final position of eleventh.

In the cups, Hythe had lost at Swanley Town in the FA Vase, beaten Slade Green and lost to Corinthian in the Kent Senior Trophy, and beaten Herne Bay and lost to Chatham in the League Cup.

Hythe had a large number of players with many just playing a handful of games. Once the season settled down, the regulars were Alan Hopgood in goal, Paul Linch and Stan Gardiner as the full-backs with Adrian Bray at centre-back partnered by Tim Hulme, Steve Long and, later on, Micky Dix. Midfield was Terry Collins, Terry Carter, Byron Caukwell and Mark Hatcher with Ivan Pickering, Micky Heynes and Tommy Horsfall as the forwards. Pickering was leading scorer with 17 goals, followed by Heynes with 6 and Bray with 5. In total Hythe played 35 games, winning 12, drawing 7 and losing 16, scoring 60 goals. Terry Collins was voted as Player of the Year with Derek Graham the reserves' choice.

1981-1982 League Table....

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Erith & Belvedere	30	17	10	3	45	22	23	44
Sittingbourne	30	16	11	3	63	33	30	43
Chatham Town	30	18	5	7	61	34	27	41
Sheppey United	30	16	5	9	60	40	20	37
Crockenhill	30	11	13	6	54	41	13	35
Slade Green	30	11	13	6	45	32	13	35
Whitstable Town	30	11	12	7	48	37	11	34
Cray Wanderers	30	13	6	11	51	40	11	32
Deal Town	30	11	10	9	44	36	8	32
Ramsgate	30	9	9	12	44	47	-3	27

Hythe Town	30	10	7	13	48	52	-4	27
Darenth Heathside	30	10	4	16	37	50	-13	24
Tunbridge Wells	30	8	6	16	36	58	-22	22
Herne Bay	30	7	6	17	36	63	-27	20
Faversham Town	30	4	8	18	26	50	-24	16
Kent Police	30	2	7	21	35	98	-63	11

1981-1982 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
08/08/1981	Swanley Town	F	Home	0-3		
11/08/1981	Ashford Town	F	Away	0-1		
15/08/1981	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Away	3-3		Ivan Pickering, Dick Maxted, Tom Hunter
20/08/1981	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	3-0		Pickering 2, Terry Collins
22/08/1981	Sheppey United	KLD1	Home	0-0		
29/08/1981	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	2-3		Byron Caukwell 2
05/09/1981	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	1-1		Micky Heynes
12/09/1981	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	4-0		Pickering 3, 1 pen, OG
26/09/1981	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	3-4		Pickering 2, Heynes
29/09/1981	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	1-3		Adrian Bray
03/10/1981	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	1-3		Stuart Taylor
10/10/1981	Swanley Town	FAVP	Away	2-3	17	Mark Hatcher, Taylor
17/10/1981	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Home	2-1		Bray, Taylor pen
24/10/1981	Herne Bay	KLC2	Away	4-3		Alan Hughes 2, Terry Carter, Taylor
31/10/1981	Chatham Town	KLD1	Away	2-5		Carter, Collins
07/11/1981	Slade Green Athletic	KST1	Home	3-0		Hughes, Hatcher, Tim Hulme
14/11/1981	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	1-1		Collins
21/11/1981	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	2-0		Pickering, David Bible
28/11/1981	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	2-2		Pickering, Tommy Horsfall
05/12/1981	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	0-2		
19/12/1981	Sheppey United	KLD1	Away	2-2		Pickering, Heynes
28/12/1981	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	4-1		Pickering 4, 1 pen

16/01/1982	Corinthian	KST2	Home	2-3	Pickering, Heynes pen
30/01/1982	Erith & Belvedere	KLD1	Away	0-2	
06/02/1982	Chatham Town	KLC3	Away	1-2	Horsfall
13/02/1982	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	1-3	Hatcher pen
20/02/1982	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	1-2	Bray
27/02/1982	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	3-3	Heynes, Bray, Horsfall
06/03/1982	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	2-0	Carter, Ian Johnson
13/03/1982	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	2-1	Caukwell, Johnson
27/03/1982	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	0-1	
03/04/1982	Erith & Belvedere	KLD1	Home	0-2	
09/04/1982	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	1-2	Hulme
10/04/1982	Chatham Town	KLD1	Home	0-4	
24/04/1982	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	2-0	Pickering, Horsfall
27/04/1982	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	1-0	Bray
01/05/1982	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	2-1	Micky Dix pen, Heynes

1982-1983.....

Manager Glenn Dempsey saw quite a few changes to the squad that had finished the previous season. Terry Collins and Micky Dix both rejoined Folkestone Town and leading scorer Ivan Pickering signed for Sheppey United. Some old faces returned after a season away, Ian Daffin, Tony Hunter and Paul Roberts. Roberts had the misfortune to break his leg in the first pre-season friendly but a rapid recovery saw him back in the side ten weeks later. There were new signings in Chris Williams from New Romney and Trevor Ellse from Rye. Dave Williams returned and became the reserve team player-manager.

The season got off to a steady and unspectacular start, the first six games saw three wins and three defeats. The side was strong defensively but finding it difficult to score goals. This situation was helped when both Pickering and Collins returned to the club at the end of September. Two wins and a draw in the next three games saw Hythe climb to second in the table before taking a 6-2 thumping at Reachfields by Sittingbourne, for whom ex-Hythe player Paul Prior scored one of the goals. The manager described the performance as 'diabolical'.

It proved to be a turning point, the next game saw a 7-0 win at Kent Police followed by a dramatic win over Cray at home, turning a 3-0 deficit into a 4-3 victory to move top of the table. The club then went twelve games unbeaten before suffering disappointing defeats to Alma Swanley and Beckenham Town, sides in the bottom half of the table. The away game at Cray was remarkable

with the Hythe coach running out of fuel on Wrotham Hill and the players having to be ferried to the ground by a couple of the players who had driven their own cars to the game. It kicked-off half-an-hour late and Hythe salvaged a point in a 1-1 draw.

Bad weather in January and February saw the season extended well into May, Hythe had slipped to second after drawing too many games and the championship was decided on a Tuesday evening at Crockenhill, the home side winning 1-0 to clinch the title against a Hythe side missing all their usual forwards. The club won their final game 4-0 to finish as runners-up. It had been a close run thing, with the manager suffering selection problems all season through injuries, suspensions and unavailability.

Hythe managed only one win in the three cups. Wick triumphed in the FA Vase after a replay, Deal won at Reachfields in the Kent Senior Trophy and after a win over Tunbridge Wells in the League Cup, Slade Green won the quarter-final tie.

Alan Hopgood was again the regular goalkeeper, Ian Daffin and Paul Roberts the full-backs, Adrian Bray and Tim Hulme, until his departure in March, were the centre-backs. Terry Collins, Alan Hughes and Clive Barham and David Bible were the midfielders with Tony Hunter, Chris Williams, Ivan Pickering and Micky Heynes the forwards. Hunter top-scored with 16 goals, Williams got 13 and Pickering 11. In total, Hythe won 19 games, drew 8 and lost 10, scoring 71 goals. Adrian Bray was voted Player of the Year with goalkeeper Lee Harrington winning the reserves' award.

Although the reserves had a poor season in the league they did reach the final of the Division Two cup, losing to Erith & Belvedere Reserves in the final at Sheppey.

1982-1983 League Table.....

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Crockenhill	32	19	6	7	55	26	29	44
Hythe Town	32	18	7	7	66	37	29	43
Deal Town	32	15	11	6	51	34	17	41
Sittingbourne	32	15	10	7	70	33	37	40
Tunbridge Wells	32	14	9	9	52	46	6	37
Herne Bay	32	13	10	9	33	32	1	36
Chatham Town	32	12	11	9	42	36	6	35

Cray Wanderers	32	12	10	10	65	33	32	34
Beckenham Town	32	12	9	11	46	46	0	33
Sheppey United	32	13	6	13	51	49	2	32
Alma Swanley	32	12	8	12	50	49	1	32
Slade Green	32	12	7	13	41	35	6	31
Faversham Town	32	11	5	16	40	53	-13	27
Darenth Heathside	32	5	12	15	27	51	-24	22
Whitstable Town	32	6	9	17	36	59	-23	21
Kent Police	32	6	7	19	34	80	-46	19
Ramsgate	32	4	9	19	22	82	-60	17

1982-1983 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
07/08/1982	Swanley Town	F	Home	2-1		Chris Williams, Tony Hunter
11/08/1982	Dover	F	Away	2-2		Terry Carter, Tim Hulme
16/08/1982	Ashford Town Reserves	F	Away	4-0		Trevor Ellse, Hulme, Hunter,
18/08/1982	Folkestone Town	F	Away	0-2		
21/08/1982	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	0-1		
28/08/1982	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Away	1-0		Hulme
30/08/1982	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	2-0		Ellse, Hunter
04/09/1982	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	3-2		Williams 2, Hulme
11/09/1982	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	0-1		
18/09/1982	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	0-1		
25/09/1982	Tunbridge Wells	KLC2	Home	3-2aet		Williams, Hulme, Micky Hey
28/09/1982	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	1-0		Hunter
02/10/1982	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	2-2		Hunter, Williams
09/10/1982	Wick	FAVP	Home	1-1aet	50	Ivan Pickering
16/10/1982	Wick	FAVPR	Away	0-3	61	
23/10/1982	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	3-2		Hulme, Terry Collins, William
30/10/1982	Deal Town	KST1	Home	1-2		OG
06/11/1982	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	2-6		Williams, Pickering
13/11/1982	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	7-0		Pickering 3, Hunter 2, William

20/11/1982	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	4-3	Hulme, Williams, Pickering 2
04/12/1982	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	4-0	Williams, Adrian Bray, Heynes
18/12/1982	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	1-1	Heynes
27/12/1982	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	2-2	Bray, Heynes
15/01/1983	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	3-1	Pickering, Collins, Williams
22/01/1983	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	1-0	Hulme
29/01/1983	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	1-0	Alan Hughes
05/02/1983	Sheppey United	KLD1	Away	3-1	Heynes, Williams, Hughes
26/02/1983	Slade Green Athletic	KLCQF	Away	0-1	
05/03/1983	Chatham Town	KLD1	Home	3-1	Hunter, Williams, Hughes
12/03/1983	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	1-1	Pickering
19/03/1983	Sheppey United	KLD1	Home	4-1	Williams, Heynes 2, Hunter
26/03/1983	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	2-3	Pickering, Clive Barham
01/04/1983	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	3-1	Hunter 2, Bray
02/04/1983	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	0-1	
16/04/1983	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Home	0-0	
23/04/1983	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	4-1	Hughes, Hunter 2, 1 pen, Co
26/04/1983	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	1-1	Pickering
30/04/1983	Chatham Town	KLD1	Away	2-2	Hunter 2
01/05/1983	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	2-1	Hunter, David Bible
10/05/1983	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	0-1	
14/05/1983	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	4-0	Doug Parker, Bible, Hughes,
03/06/1983	A Belgian side ??	F	Away	7-0	Heynes 2, Pickering, Hughes, OG

1980s (part 2).....

1983-1984.....

For the second season running, Hythe suffered the misfortune of a broken leg in pre-season, this time it was Andy Couzens, who had only signed towards the end of the previous season to replace Tim Hulme. The side had also lost Terry Collins after a change in job but added forward Bruce Marchant from Lydd, defender Kevin Easter from local football and Dalton Perkins, who re-signed after two seasons away.

After the first home game the pitch was declared unfit for play and the next home match was postponed. In May the club had spread 250 cubic yards of top soil on the pitch but it was very poor quality and full of stones and other debris that all needed to be cleared.

The start of September saw the club sign Dave Westgarth, a former Folkestone Player of the Year who had also played for Maidstone and Dover. It was a poor start to the season, with five defeats in seven games. Three victories in the cups brightened things a little but league defeats were mounting, particularly a 5-1 home defeat to a Faversham side managed by the former Hythe boss Bob Davis. By now Tim Hulme had returned to the club.

It was not until November 26th, with the club second from bottom in the table, that the third league victory of the season was achieved. Four wins in a row helped before New Year defeats at Deal and Herne Bay. These would prove to be the last league defeats of the season. Goalkeeper Lee Harrington was stretchered off in that Deal game and would miss the rest of the season. Striker Ivan Pickering moved away due to his job as a Royal Navy PTI; the club signed ex-Folkestone defender John Smith and goalkeeper Cliff Egan, who had played for Erith & Belvedere before moving to the Hythe area.

The next seven games saw six victories, including a 4-2 win at Beckenham played in ankle-deep mud. Sadly, there was a 4-3 defeat in the Kent Senior Trophy semi-final to Corinthian, a side who were not members of any league at the time. This was Hythe's fourth appearance in the Kent semi-finals, losing them all.

The league form was strong and of the final nine games, six were won and three drawn to see the side finish in third position. It had proved to be a season of two halves.

Hythe had their best run in the FA Vase with wins over Bexhill and Egham before a second round defeat at Newport (Isle of Wight). There were Kent Senior Trophy wins over Deal, RASRA and Beckenham before the defeat to Corinthian. The Kent League Cup saw an early exit to Herne Bay.

The Hythe squad had Lee Harrington in goal, then Cliff Egan, full-backs Ian Daffin, Paul Roberts and John Smith, defenders Tim Hulme, Kevin Easter and Adrian Bray, midfielders Dave Westgarth, Clive Barham and David Bible and forwards Tony Hunter, Bruce Marchant, Ivan Pickering and Micky Heynes. Marchant top-scored with 17 goals, Hunter got 13 and Heynes 11. For this season the Kent League changed from two points to three points for a win. In total, Hythe played 38 games, winning 22, drawing 5 and losing 11, scoring 83 goals. Player of the Year was Ian Daffin, with Dick Purnell the Reserves' winner.

Chairman Jim Robb stood down in March, after a 40-year connection as player, secretary and chairman with firstly Hythe Albion and then Hythe Town from 1969.

1983-1984 League Table.....

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Sittingbourne	30	24	3	3	87	26	61	75
Sheppey United	30	21	3	6	61	28	33	66
Hythe Town	30	17	5	8	63	39	24	56
Cray Wanderers	30	14	7	9	66	40	26	49
Tunbridge Wells	30	12	7	11	61	44	17	43
Crockenhill	30	11	10	9	37	34	3	43
Herne Bay	30	13	4	13	42	43	-1	43
Beckenham Town	30	12	6	12	56	54	2	42
Deal Town	30	13	3	14	54	54	0	42
Faversham Town	30	12	6	12	40	41	-1	42
Slade Green	30	11	4	15	38	52	-14	37
Darenth Heathside	30	9	8	13	44	50	-6	35
Alma Swanley	30	8	10	12	39	50	-11	34
Kent Police	30	8	6	16	27	63	-36	30
Whitstable Town	30	4	9	17	37	62	-25	21
Ramsgate	30	4	3	23	22	94	-72	15

1983-1984 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Competition	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
04/08/1983	Herne Bay	F	Away	2-1		Bruce Marchant, Tommy Horsfall
11/08/1983	Hastings United XI	F	Away	2-2		Chris Williams, Micky Heynes
15/08/1983	Ashford Town	F	Away	0-2		
20/08/1983	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	2-3		Tony Hunter 2
23/08/1983	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	6-0		Hunter, Ivan Pickering, Marchant, Barham
27/08/1983	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	P-P		Postponed, pitch unfit after summer
03/09/1983	Sheppey United	KLD1	Away	2-4		Hunter, Adrian Bray

10/09/1983	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	3-0		Heynes, Williams, Marchant
24/09/1983	Herne Bay	KLC1	Home	1-2aet		Ian Daffin
27/09/1983	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	1-4		Barham
01/10/1983	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	1-3		Heynes
08/10/1983	Bexhill Town	FAVP	Home	4-1aet 40		Dave Westgarth, Barham, Hunter
15/10/1983	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Away	2-2		Hunter 2
22/10/1983	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	1-5		Hulme
29/10/1983	Deal Town	KST1	Away	3-2		Pickering, Marchant, Westgarth
05/11/1983	Egham Town	FAV1	Home	1-0	50	Marchant
19/11/1983	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	0-1		
26/11/1983	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	4-1		Pickering, Barham, Marchant, Westgarth
03/12/1983	Newport IOW	FAV2	Away	2-5	244	Marchant, Hunter
10/12/1983	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	4-1		Pickering, Barham, Hulme 2
17/12/1983	RASRA	KST2	Away	2-0		Marchant 2
27/12/1983	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	3-1		Marchant, Pickering, Westgarth
31/12/1983	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	3-1		Marchant, Hulme, Bible
02/01/1984	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	1-2		Westgarth
07/01/1984	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	1-2		Westgarth
21/01/1984	Sheppey United	KLD1	Home	1-0		Barham
04/02/1984	Beckenham Town	KSTQF	Away	4-2		Barham 2, Marchant, Heynes
11/02/1984	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	1-0		Hunter
18/02/1984	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	4-1		Marchant, Hunter, Heynes 2
25/02/1984	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	0-0		
10/03/1984	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	1-0		OG
17/03/1984	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	2-1		Heynes, Barham
24/03/1984	Corinthian	KSTSF	Home	3-4		Hunter, Heynes, Bray
31/03/1984	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	2-2		Bible, Heynes
07/04/1984	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Home	2-0		Hunter, Heynes
18/04/1984	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	3-0		Hunter, Hulme, Bible
21/04/1984	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	5-2		Marchant 3, Hulme, Terry Collins
23/04/1984	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	2-0		**

28/04/1984	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	2-1	Heynes, Hunter
30/04/1984	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	2-0	Marchant, Bible
05/05/1984	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	0-0	
12/05/1984	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	2-2	Marchant 2

1984-1985.....

Manager Glenn Dempsey was able to stick with the squad that finished the previous season with a 15-match unbeaten run. The only change saw a fit-again Lee Harrington resume as goalkeeper, Cliff Egan dropping to the reserves.

The season started with a tame draw at home to Beckenham Town but the next six were all victories that saw Hythe top the early league table. The away game with Ramsgate in October was remarkable in that Hythe were awarded their first penalty in 48 games. Needless to say, it was missed, Tony Hunter shooting straight into the keeper's arms.

The first defeat since the previous January was at home to Tunbridge Wells in the Kent Senior Trophy, swiftly followed by a FA Vase defeat at Banstead but the unbeaten run in the league continued into the new year. It came to an end with a 2-1 defeat at Crockenhill in February, after 31 matches and thirteen months. It had been Hythe's first game for five weeks after bad weather had wiped out all of January's fixtures. The side remained on top of the table, with Dempsey winning the Manager of the Month for December.

That defeat started another, unwanted run as Hythe lost the next three games including against Whitstable at a snow-covered Reachfields. They dropped to second in the table behind Sittingbourne but put together another run of three wins and two draws to return to the top. Easter saw two remarkable results that would shape the end of the season. On Good Friday Hythe beat Tunbridge Wells 4-1 at Reachfields, played the return game at Culverden the next day and lost 4-0.

April saw Lee Harrington change jobs and was unavailable on Saturdays, so Cliff Egan returned in goal. Striker Alan Hughes broke his leg scoring for the reserves, and Duncan Hood was carried off in the final league game with a serious knee injury.

The final six league games saw five wins and one draw, at Four Area Met Police, which was to prove disastrous. Hythe finished the season with a 3-1 win over Sittingbourne and were top of the table. Tunbridge Wells had four games remaining, against bottom half sides, and were twelve points behind, with a better goal difference. All four games were won and Hythe finished as runners-up by the narrowest of margins.

In the cups there was just the one victory, at Merstham in the FA Vase. Banstead were victorious in the next round. In the Kent Senior Trophy and Kent League Cup there were first round defeats to Tunbridge Wells and Sittingbourne.

Lee Harrington was the goalkeeper, Ian Daffin and John Smith the full-backs, Duncan Hood and Adrian Bray the central defenders. In midfield was Clive Barham, David Bible and Dave Westgarth and the forwards were Tony Hunter, Micky Heynes and Bruce Marchant. Marchant top-scored with 14 goals, Heynes got 12, Hunter 11 and Westgarth 10. In total Hythe played 36 games, winning 23, drawing 6 and losing 7, scoring 74 goals.

Tony Hunter and Duncan Hood were both selected twice for Kent Representative games against the AFA and London Universities.

For the third season in a row, Hythe had arranged a weekend trip to Antwerp to play a game and enjoy a few beers. Two weeks before the trip there was the Belgian Heysel Stadium tragedy and UEFA banned all English sides from travelling to Europe, with Hythe one of the earliest victims.

1984-1985 League Table.....

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Tunbridge Wells	32	22	6	4	83	39	44	72
Hythe Town	32	22	6	4	70	33	37	72
Sittingbourne	32	21	4	7	77	43	34	67
Beckenham Town	32	17	8	7	67	46	21	59
Cray Wanderers	32	17	2	13	59	51	8	53
Greenwich Borough	32	15	6	11	62	49	13	51
Faversham Town	32	13	8	11	44	42	2	47
Darenth Heathside	32	13	7	12	45	43	2	46
Metropolitan Police	32	10	13	9	66	66	0	43
Whitstable Town	32	12	4	16	43	44	-1	40
Alma Swanley	32	11	7	14	47	49	-2	39
Deal Town	32	9	10	13	50	57	-7	37
Herne Bay	32	7	8	17	43	57	-14	29

Slade Green	32	7	7	18	35	66	-31	28
Kent Police	32	8	3	21	48	88	-40	27
Crockenhill	32	6	7	19	34	63	-29	25
Ramsgate	32	6	6	20	36	73	-37	24

1984-1985 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
04/08/1984	Thames Polytechnic	F	Home	3-1		OG, Alan Hughes 2
07/08/1984	Hastings United XI	F	Away	3-0		Tony Hunter 3
11/08/1984	RASRA	F	Home	1-0		Hughes
18/08/1984	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	1-1		Hughes
21/08/1984	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	1-0		Bruce Marchant
25/08/1984	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Home	3-2		David Bible, Dave Westgarth
28/08/1984	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	2-0		Adrian Bray, Derek Graham
01/09/1984	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Away	2-0		Bible, Marchant
04/09/1984	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	2-1		Bray, Marchant
08/09/1984	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	1-0		Micky Heynes
15/09/1984	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	1-1		Marchant
22/09/1984	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	7-2		Westgarth 2, Clive Barham, Marchant
29/09/1984	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	1-1		Westgarth
06/10/1984	Merstham	FAVP	Away	3-0	50	Marchant, Daffin, Barham
13/10/1984	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	2-0		Heynes, Marchant
20/10/1984	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	3-1		Hunter 2, 1 pen, Bray
27/10/1984	Tunbridge Wells	KST1	Home	0-1		
03/11/1984	Banstead Athletic	FAV1	Away	1-2	54	OG
10/11/1984	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	3-0		Marchant 2, Heynes
01/12/1984	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Home	6-3		Westgarth 3, Heynes 2, John
08/12/1984	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	1-0		Westgarth
29/12/1984	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	3-1		Hunter, Marchant, Barham
02/02/1985	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	1-2		Westgarth
09/02/1985	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	1-3		Heynes

26/02/1985	Sittingbourne	KLC1	Home	0-2		
02/03/1985	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Away	1-2		Hunter
09/03/1985	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	4-2		Dick White, Bible, Smith, Ma
12/03/1985	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	1-0		Bray
16/03/1985	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Home	1-1		Hunter pen
23/03/1985	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	2-0		Bray, Hunter
30/03/1985	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	1-1		Marchant
05/04/1985	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	4-1	130	OG, Barham, Bible, Steve H
06/04/1985	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	0-4		
13/04/1985	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	3-1		Hunter, Barham, Marchant
20/04/1985	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	3-1		Hunter 2, 1 pen, Westgarth
24/04/1985	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	2-0		Heynes, Hunter
27/04/1985	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Away	1-1		Marchant
04/05/1985	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	3-0		Hunter, Heynes 2
11/05/1985	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	3-1	220	Smith, Marchant, Daffin

1985-1986.....

Manager Glenn Dempsey made a number of additions to the squad for the new season, which included the return of Tim Hulme and Lee Harrington. Striker Steve Ireland and defender Mark Palmer joined from New Romney. Full back Les Thirtle joined, as did former Bromley Green pair Joe and Mark Valler. Micky Heynes had left to join Folkestone.

There was action off the field, with the club building a 200-seater stand (where the current clubhouse is) with sponsorship from Burlington Insurance. It was officially opened on August 10 with a game against a Past Hythe XI. The only previous cover was a small wooden structure on the Ranges side.

Another change saw Hythe enter the FA Cup for the first time. It seems that the club could have entered years earlier but nobody had considered it. Hythe's first tie was away to Lancing, where preparations were thrown when both goalkeepers were unavailable. Midfielder Mark Hatcher was forced to play in goal but was hardly troubled in a 3-0 Hythe win. The next round saw Southern League Ashford Town come to Reachfields and a crowd of over 300 watched a giantkilling thanks to a lone Tim Hulme goal. It set up another home tie, against Isthmian Premier side Croydon, with Hythe outclassed in a 5-1 defeat. They had lasted longer than Folkestone and Dover in the competition though.

It would prove to be an unusual season for Hythe; used to challenging for the league title and next to no cup success; 85-86 would prove to be the opposite. Cup games regularly interrupted the league games, wins were far too rare and Christmas arrived with the club in 15th position. By this time regular Clive Barham had joined Canterbury in the Southern League.

Bad weather saw only four games played in January and February, one of which saw Hythe score all four goals in a 2-2 draw at Greenwich. The squad saw some additions for the last three months, which would see 19 games played. Roger King, brother of reserve team player Andy King, was signed from Ramsgate, John McQuillan joined from Bromley Green and both Micky Heynes and Ivan Pickering signed on dual terms from Folkestone.

To help with the fixture backlog Hythe played what was believed to be the first-ever Kent League game on a Sunday, gaining a 5-2 win at Four Area (Met Police). A second Sunday game later that month, at home to Alma Swanley, was less successful, losing 5-1.

In the Kent Senior Trophy Hythe reached their fifth semi-final, and produced their fifth defeat, at Four Area (Met Police), just six days after winning there in the league.

The league season was a disappointment, with more defeats than victories, Hythe finishing in 13th place a long way behind champions Alma Swanley. Lee Harrington was the regular goalkeeper, Ian Daffin and John Smith the full-backs, centre-backs saw no regular pairing, midfield also saw many changes with only Tim Hulme as a regular. Forwards were Tony Hunter, Bruce Marchant, Steve Ireland, Micky Heynes and Joe Valler. Hulme top scored with ten goals, Marchant and Ireland managed nine each. Hythe played 46 games, their most since joining the Kent League, winning 18, drawing 8 and losing 20, scoring 69 goals. Player of the Year was Bruce Marchant, with Andy King winning the reserves' award. Secretary Ted Maycock received a medal from the KCFA for long and meritorious service to local football over 34 years.

1985-1986 League Table.....

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
Alma Swanley	34	22	9	3	78	39	39	75
Sittingbourne	34	21	7	6	76	37	39	70
Crockenhill	34	21	5	8	68	33	35	68
Darenth Heathside	34	17	11	6	57	32	25	62
Tunbridge Wells	34	15	13	6	99	58	41	58
Faversham Town	34	16	6	12	53	50	3	54

Greenwich Borough	34	13	10	11	51	54	-3	49
Ramsgate	34	12	8	14	50	53	-3	44
Kent Police	34	12	7	15	53	61	-8	43
Thames Polytechnic	34	11	9	14	36	49	-13	42
Herne Bay	34	12	6	16	34	52	-18	42
Hythe Town	34	11	7	16	50	59	-9	40
Metropolitan Police	34	12	4	18	54	63	-9	40
Cray Wanderers	34	9	12	13	34	51	-17	39
Beckenham Town	34	10	7	17	43	64	-21	37
Whitstable Town	34	9	9	16	37	52	-15	36
Slade Green	34	5	10	19	14	42	-28	25
Deal Town	34	6	4	24	36	74	-38	22

1985-1986 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
10/08/1985	Past Hythe XI	F	Home	6-0		Tony Hunter 3, David Bible, Ma
12/08/1985	Canterbury City	F	Away			
13/08/1985	Ashford Town	F	Home	1-1		Tim Hulme
17/08/1985	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Home	0-1		
21/08/1985	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	2-0		Adrian Bray, Ian Daffin
24/08/1985	Lancing	FACP	Away	3-0	116	Bruce Marchant 2, Bible
28/08/1985	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	3-1		Hunter 2, 2 pens, Steve Ireland
31/08/1985	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Home	2-3		Marchant, John Smith
07/09/1985	Ashford Town	FAC1Q	Home	1-0	300	Hulme
14/09/1985	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	2-1		Ireland 2
21/09/1985	Midland Bank	FAVP	Home	2-1	60	Daffin, Clive Barham
28/09/1985	Croydon	FAC2Q	Home	1-5	356	Barham pen
01/10/1985	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	0-3		
05/10/1985	Kent Police	KLC1	Away	1-0		Glenn Dempsey
12/10/1985	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	2-2		Marchant, Barham
19/10/1985	Camberley Town	FAV1	Away	1-3	30	Barham
26/10/1985	Kent Police	KST1	Home	3-0		Bible, Hulme, Barham

02/11/1985	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	0-2	
09/11/1985	Crockenhill	KLC2	Home	1-2	Joey Valler
16/11/1985	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	1-2	Marchant
23/11/1985	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Home	1-0	Marchant
30/11/1985	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	0-1	
03/12/1985	Dover Athletic	F	Away	2-2	Ireland, Hulme
07/12/1985	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	3-1	Ireland, Hulme, J Valler
14/12/1985	Deal Town	KST2	Home	1-0	J Valler
21/12/1985	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	0-1	
28/12/1985	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	1-1	Hulme
11/01/1986	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Away	2-2	Ireland 2
18/01/1986	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	0-1	
01/02/1986	Corinthian	KSTQF	Home	2-2aet	Hunter, Smith
04/02/1986	Corinthian	KSTQFR	Away	1-0	Ivan Pickering
08/03/1986	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	1-2	OG
15/03/1986	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	2-2	John McQuillan, Steve Harris
16/03/1986	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Away	5-2	Marchant, Hulme, Daffin, Ireland, Dempsey
22/03/1986	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KSTSF	Away	2-3	Hulme 2
25/03/1986	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	0-2	
29/03/1986	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	1-4	Hunter
31/03/1986	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	2-4	Smith, Marchant
05/04/1986	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	1-0	J Valler
12/04/1986	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Away	0-2	
13/04/1986	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	1-5	Marchant
21/04/1986	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	3-0	Ireland, OG, Micky Heynes pen
23/04/1986	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	0-0	
28/04/1986	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	2-2	Hunter, Hulme
30/04/1986	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	2-0	Heynes, Hulme
03/05/1986	Slade Green Athletic	KLD1	Away	3-1	Heynes pen, J Valler, Hulme
05/05/1986	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	3-1	Heynes 2, J Valler

07/05/1986	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	1-3	Ireland
14/05/1986	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Home	1-4	Heynes pen
17/05/1986	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	3-3	Hunter 3

1980s (part 3).....

1986-1987.....

Hythe's fund-raising activities reached new heights in the close season with goalkeeper Lee Harrington and Bruce Marchant's sister-in-law Jackie Sanders making a sponsored parachute jump which raised around £500 for the club. Manager Glenn Dempsey kept most of last season's squad but would lose Mark Hatcher, soon to move to the West Country and John Smith had retired. Tim Hulme and Steve Ireland had signed for Folkestone and Micky Heynes loan had ended. There was good news with the return of Duncan Hood, out for the whole of the previous season with a knee injury, and also Adrian Bray who had not played since November.

The pre-season games saw a couple of heavy defeats with many players still unavailable but the pitch was looking in excellent condition after much work in the summer. The first league game was a poor 2-0 home defeat to Slade Green but the club went the next six games unbeaten, although four were drawn. As cup games began to interrupt the league schedule there were four games without a win and the club was down in eleventh place in mid-November, when they were able to concentrate on the league.

December and January saw five wins in eight games to improve the league position a little but this was undone in February and March with five defeats in eight games to drop to twelfth. A slight rally during April saw four wins and the final game saw a Bruce Marchant hat-trick enough to beat Faversham 3-2 and Hythe finished in eleventh position.

There were a few comings and goings during the season. Neil Cugley, who was at Dover for the season, signed on dual-registration and managed 6 appearances and a goal. A defeat at Herne Bay in November saw Jeff Ross and Dave Arter score for the home side, two players who would be in Hythe shirts a few years later. Paul Prior was persuaded out of retirement in November and made a few appearances from then on. Nicky Hall was signed in December, ex-Ashford and Hastings and was a regular in midfield and Clive Barham returned, having left for Canterbury the season before, he had been with Folkestone for most of the season. Even Frank Ovard played the one game, away at Herne Bay in a 3-2 defeat.

Hythe made their second appearance in the FA Cup but lost 1-0 at Southwick, then in Isthmian Division One. The Vase saw away wins at East Grinstead and Thames Polytechnic before a home defeat to Harefield United, of Isthmian Division Two. There were instant defeats in the Kent Senior Trophy at Herne Bay and in the Kent League Cup to Darenth Heathside.

Regulars through the season were Lee Harrington in goal, defenders Ian Daffin, Mark Valler and Adrian Bray, David Bible and Neil Smith in midfield and forwards Tony Hunter, Joe Valler and Bruce Marchant. In total, Hythe played 40 games, winning 13, drawing 11 and losing 16, scoring 61 goals. Marchant was top scorer with 16 goals, Joe Valler was second with nine.

The Manager's Player of the Year was Bruce Marchant, and Geoff Ewins for the reserves. Players' Player was David Bible, and Andy Bates. Supporters' Player was Ian Daffin and Sportsman was Dave Gooding.

1986-1987 League Table.....

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Greenwich Borough	34	24	6	4	113	36	77	78
Crockenhill	34	22	9	3	63	31	32	75
Alma Swanley	34	20	7	7	69	34	35	67
Ramsgate	34	18	8	8	59	42	17	62
Herne Bay	34	17	9	8	76	58	18	60
Sittingbourne	34	17	8	9	60	43	17	59
Tunbridge Wells	34	14	8	12	56	45	11	50
Whitstable Town	34	14	8	12	45	47	-2	50
Darenth Heathside	34	13	7	14	53	50	3	46
Cray Wanderers	34	12	8	14	56	48	8	44
Hythe Town	34	11	11	12	51	48	3	44
Slade Green	34	12	6	16	50	51	-1	42
Thames Polytechnic	34	9	6	19	48	72	-24	33
Metropolitan Police	34	9	6	19	37	73	-36	33
Beckenham Town	34	7	10	17	37	61	-24	31
Deal Town	34	8	7	19	45	73	-28	31
Faversham Town	34	7	11	16	32	67	-35	31
Kent Police	34	4	1	29	37	108	-71	13

1986-1987 Results...

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
26/07/1986	Dover Athletic	F	Home	1-1		Tony Hunter
02/08/1986	Swanley Town	F	Home	2-2		Paul Martin 2
05/08/1986	Ashford Town	F	Home	1-4		Joey Valler
09/08/1996	Hounslow Town	F	Home	2-5		Bruce Marchant, Adrian Bra
16/08/1986	Slade Green	KLD1	Home	0-2		
20/08/1996	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	1-0		J Valler
23/08/1996	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	1-1		Mark Hatcher
27/08/1986	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	4-0		J Valler, Bray, Marchant 2
30/08/1986	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	2-2		Ian Lancaster, Steve Harris
03/09/1986	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	1-1		Marchant
06/09/1986	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	1-1		Lancaster
13/09/1986	Southwick	FAC1Q	Away	0-1	118	
20/09/1986	East Grinstead Town	FAVP	Away	3-1aet	41	Harris 2, Terry Collins pen
27/09/1986	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	0-1		
04/10/1986	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	1-1		Harris
11/10/1986	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Home	0-4		
18/10/1986	Thames Polytechnic	FAV1	Away	4-1	55	Marchant, David Bible 2, La
28/10/1986	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	0-2		
01/11/1986	Herne Bay	KST1	Away	2-3		Bray, J Valler
08/11/1986	Harefield United	FAV2	Home	1-2	40	Marchant
15/11/1986	Darenth Heathside	KLC2	Away	0-4		
22/11/1986	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Home	1-0		J Valler
29/11/1986	Slade Green	KLD1	Away	0-1		
06/12/1986	Canterbury City	F	Away			
13/12/1986	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	2-1		Neil Smith, Bray
20/12/1986	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	2-2		Nicky Hall, N Smith
27/12/1986	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	4-2		Bible, Hunter 2, J Valler
03/01/1987	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	2-0		N Smith, Marchant
24/01/1987	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Home	2-0		Bible, J Valler
07/02/1987	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Away	2-2		Marchant, J Valler

14/02/1987	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	0-1	
21/02/1987	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Away	2-3	J Valler 2
28/02/1987	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	1-1	Hunter
07/03/1987	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	0-2	
14/03/1987	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	0-1	
21/03/1987	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	2-2	Marchant, Hunter
28/03/1987	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	2-3	Neil Cugley, N Smith
29/03/1987	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Away	1-0	Marchant
04/04/1987	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	2-2	Paul Prior, Marchant
11/04/1987	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	4-0	Hall, Hunter, Marchant, Pri
20/04/1987	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	1-2	Clive Barham
22/04/1987	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	4-2	Marchant, Bible, Prior pen,
25/04/1987	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	2-3	Marchant, Barham
30/04/1987	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	1-1	Prior
02/05/1987	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	3-2	Marchant 3

1987-1988.....

It would prove to be a momentous season in the history of Hythe Town but the first half would see business as usual. Again, pre-season preparation was difficult due to players missing and some late signings. Steve Ireland returned to the club after a season at New Romney, defender Graham Mitchell joined from Herne Bay and Stuart Patterson was signed as the first choice goalkeeper, joining from Folkestone Invicta. Defender Dave McDonald and striker Paul Godden both joined from Ashford, Dickie Rhodes joined from Folkestone and Paul Prior signed on again as an occasional striker.

The league season got off to a strange start, three wins were followed by four defeats and it would be March until Hythe managed two league wins in a row. There was a 6-2 defeat at Eastbourne United in the FA Cup which was shortly followed by a 2-1 home defeat to Chertsey Town in the FA Vase. The great storm of October 1987 saw Reachfields' two-year-old stand have the roof lifted off and the front wall collapse, to be cordoned off and never rebuilt. The next game did see Hythe's best win of the season, as they blew away Thames Polytechnic 6-0. There was a thrilling defeat to Southern League Corinthian in the Kent Senior Trophy, losing 4-5 after extra time. A run of six games with only a single point had seen the club fall to thirteenth place in the table.

But the new year saw news break of a takeover bid for the club by local businessman Tony Walton, the owner of Lympe Industrial Estate. His proposals were put to an EGM on February 11th and passed, with Walton becoming chairman, replacing Mick Leach who had been chairman for the previous five years. Walton's plans were to rebuild the ground in the summer, when Neil Cugley would arrive from Margate to be player-manager. This news did not go down well at Margate, who suggested that Cugley should move immediately. He signed for Hythe and Walton made him manager in place of Glenn Dempsey, his first game in charge was a 2-1 win at Cray Wanderers in March.

The side was strengthened by the return from Folkestone of Micky Heynes; ex-Folkestone, Dover and Ashford's Chris Hamshare and Ashford's Steve Brignall would arrive soon after. Cugley's second game was a home Kent League Cup semi-final with Cray, when Hythe's biggest crowd of the season, nearly 250, saw the home side reach the final by coming from behind thanks to two goals from David Bible. The league results picked up, twelve wins from the last fourteen games saw Hythe climb the table to finish in fifth place. The Kent League Cup final ended in disappointment, being well beaten by Tunbridge Wells in the final at Herne Bay.

Stuart Patterson was the regular keeper, full-backs were Ian Daffin, Russell Milton and later Neil Hearnden, centre-backs Adrian Bray and Mark Valler. The midfield was David Bible, Tony Hunter and Nicky Hall; Bruce Marchant played the whole season up front, with Steve Ireland and Paul Godden until the later stages when it was Neil Cugley and Micky Heynes. Tony Hunter top-scored with 14 goals, Nicky Hall scored 12. Hythe played 44 games, winning 23, drawing 4 and losing 17, scoring 89 goals in total.

1987-1988 League Table.....

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Greenwich Borough	36	26	5	5	111	50	61	83
Faversham Town	36	23	7	6	92	36	56	76
Whitstable Town	36	20	8	8	57	37	20	68
Sittingbourne	36	17	11	8	68	53	15	62
Hythe Town	36	19	4	13	70	58	12	61
Kent Police	36	16	8	12	69	66	3	56
Cray Wanderers	36	16	7	13	72	52	20	55
Beckenham Town	36	16	5	15	61	55	6	53
Tunbridge Wells	36	14	10	12	57	50	7	52
Ramsgate	36	14	8	14	55	53	2	50

Darenth Heathside	36	11	11	14	57	58	-1	44
Alma Swanley	36	11	11	14	41	47	-6	44
Metropolitan Police	36	11	8	17	45	61	-16	41
Slade Green	36	10	9	17	54	60	6	39
Danson	36	10	9	17	44	68	-14	39
Deal Town	36	11	5	20	40	67	-27	38
Thames Polytechnic	36	10	8	18	37	65	-28	38
Herne Bay	36	9	8	19	35	69	-34	35
Crockenhill	36	4	6	26	21	82	-61	18

1987-1988 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
01/08/1987	Hounslow Town	F	Home	1-5		*
4/5 Aug??	Ashford Town	F	Home	0-5		
08/08/1987	Shillington	F	Home	1-3		*
15/08/1987	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	1-0		Nicky Hall
18/08/1987	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	4-2		Dickie Rhodes, David Bible, Bruce Ireland
22/08/1987	Slade Green	KLD1	Home	2-0		Rhodes, Hall
26/08/1987	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	2-4		Bible, Marchant
29/08/1987	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	0-1		
31/09/1987	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	0-1		
05/09/1987	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	0-4		
12/09/1987	Eastbourne United	FAC1Q	Away	2-6	69	Hall, Tony Hunter
19/09/1987	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	2-1		Graham Mitchell, Marchant
03/10/1987	Chertsey Town	FVP	Home	1-2	130	Ireland
10/10/1987	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	2-6		Mitchell, Hunter
17/10/1987	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Home	6-0		Ireland 2, Paul Godden, Hall, Bible
24/10/1987	Whitstable Town	KST1	Home	2-0		Ian Daffin, Bible
31/10/1987	Danson	KLD1	Away	1-1		Marchant
07/11/1987	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	0-2		
14/11/1987	Crockenhill	KLC2	Home	4-1		Daffin, Godden, Hunter, Bible

21/11/1987	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Away	4-1		Marchant, Mark Valler pen, Hunter
28/11/1987	Danson	KLD1	Home	0-1		
05/12/1987	Corinthian	KST2	Home	4-5aet		Hunter 3, Duncan Hood
12/12/1987	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Home	0-3		
19/12/1987	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	1-4		Paul Prior
26/12/1987	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	2-2		Hunter, Ireland
09/01/1988	Slade Green	KLD1	Away	2-4		Ireland, Bible pen
13/02/1988	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	1-2		Hall
20/02/1988	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	2-1		Hall, OG
27/02/1988	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	1-1		Hunter
05/03/1988	Sittingbourne	KLCQF	Home	3-2		Hall, Marchant, Bible
12/03/1988	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	1-1		Hall
19/03/1988	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	2-1		Micky Heynes, Hunter
26/03/1988	Cray Wanderers	KLCSF	Home	2-1	250	Bible 2
02/04/1988	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	2-1		Hunter, Hall
04/04/1988	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	2-1		Heynes, Adrian Bray
09/04/1988	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Away	2-0		Neil Cugley, *?
10/04/1988	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Home	1-0		Heynes
13/04/1988	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	3-4		Cugley 2, Heynes
16/04/1988	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Away	1-3		Heynes
18/04/1988	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	3-0		Steve Brignall, Heynes, Hall
21/04/1988	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	6-0		Brignall, Heynes 2, Marchant 2, C
23/04/1988	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	3-2		Hall, OG, Steve Harris
25/04/1988	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	3-1		Rhodes 2, Hall
30/04/1988	Tunbridge Wells	KLCF	Neutral	1-4	330	Hunter
02/05/1988	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	1-0		Hunter
04/05/1988	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	4-2		Neil Hearnden pen, Hunter, Rhod
07/05/1988	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	3-1		Cugley, Hamshare, Brignall

1988-1989....

Player recruitment for the new season had started before the previous season had ended, thanks to Neil Cugley's earlier than intended arrival. Micky Heynes and Steve Brignall had played at the end of the 87-88 season and the summer saw plenty more activity. Tim Hulme returned to Hythe, from Dover Athletic, Mark Stanton joined from Folkestone Invicta, goalkeeper Lee Smelt, ex-Nottingham Forest, Halifax and Cardiff signed, as did Dave Carr, a local boy whose career spanned Luton Town, Torquay United, Maidstone and Dover. More June arrivals were Shaun Carey, after impressing for rivals Tunbridge Wells, Bruce Quarterman from KCL champions New Romney and another return for Terry Collins.

The club was to become a limited company and work was well under way on the new dressing rooms, clubhouse, covered terracing and floodlights. It was expected that most of the previous season's first team would continue to play for the club in the reserves, in Kent League Division Two. The club also entered a third team, Hythe 'A', in the Kent County League Eastern Section Premier Division, under manager Keith Tebbutt. Season tickets were on offer at £20, with match admission £1 and 50p. Shirt sponsors were Chairman Tony Walton's window company Larchimage, and the club colours were changed to reflect this, with yellow shirts and green shorts.

July arrivals were Paul Brenchley, a full-back from Ashford, Frank Ovard (again), lastly with Crawley before playing the summer in Sweden, and Folkestone full-back Kevin Smart.

After an unbeaten pre-season, which included a 6-0 win at Hythe's twin town Berck-sur-Mer, Hythe got off to a flying start. The first three league games saw a 7-0 win at Ramsgate, a 6-0 home win over Met Police (Hayes) and another 7-0 away win, at Herne Bay. Reality returned in the next game, losing 2-1 at home to Alma Swanley, who would prove to be Hythe's nearest challengers in the first half of the season.

The FA Cup saw a trip to the Feltham Arena and a game on one of the early and unpopular old Astro turf pitches where Hythe managed a 1-1 draw. The replay saw the inaugural game under the new Reachfields floodlights and Hythe were coasting, 2-0 up, when goalkeeper Lee Smelt was injured and was taken to hospital with a broken collar bone. Outfield players Heynes and Mark Valler both had spells in goal but were unable to prevent Feltham scoring five goals.

September saw Joey Valley rejoin the club, Ricky Fusco sign from Margate and Mark Hyham arrive from Gillingham's youth team. Even Tony Howes, our goalkeeper ten seasons previously, was needed to cover three goalkeeper injuries. Mark Stanton was signed from local football.

Hythe continued their league matches, many were won, some by large scores but there were still the shock defeats, including twice to third-placed Faversham. By October Hythe were 15 points clear at the top, having scored 60 goals in 14 games.

In the FA Vase there was an easy win over Sittingbourne followed by an epic battle with Hastings in the first round. Hythe led 3-0 with 15 minutes remaining only for Hastings to draw level, with two of the goals from Peter Heritage, which didn't go unnoticed. A glorious goal from Shaun Carey won the tie in extra-time. Sadly, the next round saw an extra-time 1-0 defeat at Romsey Town.

Hythe managed their seventh league win in a row with a 9-0 beating of Chatham Town, helped by a Mark Stanton hat-trick but the local paper highlighted a typically cheeky goal scored by Frank Ovard, who received a tap pass from a penalty by Dave Carr. Hythe ended the year still 15 points ahead, with the reserve side also top of their division.

The new year saw a blip in form with two defeats, at Deal and at home to Sittingbourne. Hythe's reaction was to sign Peter Heritage for £4,000, described by Dave Carr as the toughest forward he had faced in non-league football. The recovery was not instant as Hythe exited the Kent Senior Trophy at Cray and the Kent League Cup at Whitstable and lost again in the league to Sittingbourne.

The club closed the ground for three weeks to complete ground improvements in the hope of promotion. It did not affect first team home games but two reserve fixtures were cancelled, which did not please the Kent League. They fined the club £250 and deducted six points, dropping the reserves to second place.

Two more players arrived, this time on loan, Jason Wheeler from Crawley and Mark Smelt from Leatherhead. Bad weather had seen the first team without a game for six weeks. Desperate for a game, the first team fulfilled a reserve team fixture at Hastings, winning 6-1 and adding to the displeasure of both Hastings, the reserves' nearest rivals, and the league. Back on the pitch, Hythe could only manage a home 4-4 draw against Darenth Heathside in front of over 500 in the newly improved ground.

April saw Hythe cruise to the title with three games to spare, winning eight games in a row and ending up breaking three league records. Frank Ovard had broken the individual scoring record with 36 goals, the club broke Greenwich's goalscoring record by 20 goals, ending with 133 and a league record points total of 90. In the same week that the first team clinched the league title, the reserves also won their division and beat Folkestone Reserves 3-1 in the Division Two Cup final at Reachfields. It proved a bittersweet moment, with the news that the reserves (virtually last season's first team) were being disbanded in an attempt to ease the problems with the Reachfields playing surface. The newly formed 'A' team finished fifth in the County League and were beaten finalists in the Invitational Cup.

In May came the news that Hythe had been accepted (promotion was not automatic in those days) into the Beazer Homes (Southern) League for the following season, with Bashley and Yate Town.

There was one further battle with the Kent League as all Hythe's prize money was withheld for 'failing to buy tickets for the presentation evening'. After a couple of weeks of newspaper headlines and bad publicity for the club, league and the league's sponsors, a cheque for £2,000 arrived without comment. The club could now look forward to Southern League football, with the Chairman publicly stating, seriously or not, that the aim was the Football League within ten years.

Goalkeeping duties were shared between Lee Smelt and Tony Howes, full-backs were Kevin Smart and Ricky Fusco, centre-backs were Dave Carr and Neil Cugley. Tim Hulme, Shaun Carey, Steve Brignall and Mark Hyham were the regular midfield, with Paul Stanton, Frank Ovard and, later, Peter Heritage up front. Ovard was leading scorer with 36, Stanton scored 27 and Hulme managed 18. Hythe played 48 games, winning 34, drawing 4 and losing 10, scoring 152 goals. Kevin Smart was voted Player of the Year, with Paul Stanton runner-up.

1988-1989 League Table.....

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Hythe Town	38	29	3	6	133	41	92	90
Deal Town	38	24	4	10	80	35	45	76
Faversham Town	38	22	7	9	68	36	32	73
Darenth Heathside	38	20	8	10	69	44	25	68
Sittingbourne	38	18	12	8	59	43	16	66
Alma Swanley	38	18	10	10	66	46	20	64
Cray Wanderers	38	19	7	12	67	53	14	64
Whitstable Town	38	18	9	11	75	42	33	63
Ramsgate	38	19	6	13	66	61	5	63
Slade Green	38	17	10	11	60	59	1	61
Tunbridge Wells	38	16	8	14	58	57	1	56
Kent Police	38	16	5	17	61	74	-13	53
Crockenhill	38	11	12	15	52	51	1	45
Danson	38	12	5	21	55	67	-12	41
Metropolitan Police(Hayes)	38	11	7	20	50	83	-33	40
Greenwich Borough	38	8	15	15	53	56	-3	36
Beckenham Town	38	8	10	20	41	68	-17	34
Thames Polytechnic	38	8	10	20	44	83	-39	34

Chatham Town	38	3	8	27	41	105	-64	17
Herne Bay	38	3	4	31	27	121	-92	13

1988-1989 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Comp	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
?	Lydd Town	F	Away?	3-1		***
?	Berck sur Mer	F	Away	6-0		*****
?	Ashford Town	F	Away?	3-2		***
10/08/1988	Canterbury City	F	Away	1-1		Micky Heynes
13/08/1988	Hastings Town	F	Home	3-2		Frank Ovard, Tim Hulme 2
17/08/1988	Ramsgate	KLD1	Away	7-0		Heynes 3, Neil Cugley 2, Dave Ca
20/08/1988	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Home	6-0		Ovard 4, 1 pen, Heynes, Bruce Q
23/08/1988	Herne Bay	KLD1	Away	7-0		Heynes 3, Ovard 2, Hulme, Carr
27/08/1988	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Home	1-2		Shaun Carey
29/08/1988	Deal Town	KLD1	Home	3-2		Ovard, Carr, Steve Brignall
03/09/1988	Feltham	FACP	Away	1-1	66	Hulme
07/09/1988	Feltham	FACPR	Home	2-5	300	Heynes 2, 1 pen
10/09/1988	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Home	3-0		Heynes 2, Carey
17/09/1988	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Away	3-2		Ovard 2, 1 pen, Quarterman
20/09/1988	Faversham Town	KLD1	Away	1-4		Ovard pen
24/09/1988	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Home	4-1		Mark Hyham 2, Mark Stanton, Ov
27/09/1988	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Home	4-1		Carr, Cugley, Ovard, Kevin Smart
01/10/1988	Danson	KLD1	Away	4-1		Hyham, Carey, Ovard, Stanton
05/10/1988	Kent Police	KLD1	Home	8-1		Ovard 4, 1pen, Stanton, Brignall, Smith
08/10/1988	Sittingbourne	FAVP	Home	2-0	200	Stanton, Hulme
15/10/1988	Tunbridge Wells	KLD1	Away	4-1		Hyham, Hulme, Ovard 2, 1 pen
19/10/1988	Herne Bay	KLD1	Home	5-0		Hyham, Carey, Styanton, Cugley,
22/10/1988	Kent Police	KST1	Home	1-0		Brignall
26/10/1988	Faversham Town	KLD1	Home	0-2	400+	
29/10/1988	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Home	4-0		Stanton, Hyham, Cugley, Ovard
05/11/1988	Hastings Town	FAV1	Home	4-3aet350		Cugley, Hulme 2, Carey

12/11/1988	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Home	4-2		Brignall, Ovard 3, 1 pen
19/11/1988	Kent Police	KLC2	Home	3-0		Ovard 2, Stanton
23/11/1988	Chatham Town	KLD1	Away	2-0		Ovard, Carey
26/11/1988	Romsey Town	FAV2	Away	0-1	aet 114	
03/12/1988	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Away	3-0		Carey 2, Stanton
10/12/1988	Alma Swanley	KST2	Home	4-2		Hulme, Carr 2, Ovard
17/12/1988	Chatham Town	KLD1	Home	9-0		OG 2, Hulme, Stanton 3, Carr, Ov
21/12/1988	Whitstable Town	KLD1	Home	2-2		Cugley, Stanton
27/12/1988	Kent Police	KLD1	Away	5-2		Stanton 4, Hulme
31/12/1988	Cray Wanderers	KLD1	Away	1-0		Ovard
02/01/1989	Deal Town	KLD1	Away	0-1		
07/01/1989	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Home	1-3		Stanton
14/01/1989	Metropolitan Police (Area 4)	KLD1	Away	6-3		Stanton 2, Hulme, Carey, Ovard,
21/01/1989	Cray Wanderers	KSTQF	Away	1-2	aet	Peter Heritage
28/01/1989	Thames Polytechnic	KLD1	Away	7-1		Ovard 3, Stanton 2, Heritage, Cu
01/02/1989	Gillingham XI	F	Home	3-2		Hulme 2, Stanton
04/02/1989	Whitstable Town	KLCQF	Away	1-3		Heritage
08/02/1989	Gillingham XI	F	Away	1-0		Heritage
11/02/1989	Sittingbourne	KLD1	Away	1-2		Heritage
24/03/1989	Darenth Heathside	KLD1	Home	4-4	500+	Carr, Hulme, Jason Wheeler, Her
30/03/1989	Danson	KLD1	Home	3-1		Stanton, Hulme, Heritage
01/04/1989	Slade Green	KLD1	Away	4-0		Hulme 3, Heritage
08/04/1989	Ramsgate	KLD1	Home	3-1		Carey 2, Wheeler
12/04/1989	Crockenhill	KLD1	Home	4-1		Hulme 2, Carr, Stanton
20/04/1989	Beckenham Town	KLD1	Away	4-0		Stanton 2, Heritage, Carey
23/04/1989	Alma Swanley	KLD1	Away	1-0		Stanton
27/04/1989	Slade Green	KLD1	Home	4-1	300	Heritage, Carr, Carey, Stanton
29/04/1989	Crockenhill	KLD1	Away	1-0		OG
01/05/1989	Greenwich Borough	KLD1	Away	0-0		

1989-1990.....

Once again it was a busy summer with comings and goings. Ricky Fusco retired at the age of 35, Frank Ovard signed for Folkestone and Timmy Hulme would soon be transferred to Premier Division Ashford for £2,000. The boss of the disbanded reserve side, Dave Williams, moved to Folkestone as assistant to manager Carl Gilbert. Forward Simon Bryant was the first signing, from Deal Town, followed by midfielder Grant Gallacher from Crawley Town and Terry White, from Hastings Town, for £4,000. July saw the arrival of Mark Weatherly from Gillingham, where he had made over 500 Football League appearances. It suited him to go part-time, and he soon became mine-host of Carriages Wine Bar in Hythe. Jason Wheeler and Malcolm Smith impressed in the friendlies, where Hythe were unbeaten in seven tough games, as did goalkeeper Steve O'Brien, a former Eire youth international. Pat Hilton, another local man with League experience, also signed. Season tickets were £30/£20 with match admission £1.50/80p.

The season did not quite start as planned. A late arrival at Buckingham Town for the first game, due to traffic gridlock for the nearby Bon Jovi concert, saw the side do well to draw 0-0. Frank Ovard had returned from Folkestone in time for the first home game, which was also 0-0, followed by a single goal defeat at home to Andover. Hythe's first goal, and first win, came on Bank Holiday Monday when Simon Bryant's goal earned a 1-0 win at Margate.

The sixth league game, a defeat at Bury Town, was remembered for an ex-England international playing for Hythe. Mark Barham, ex-Norwich, Hull and Middlesbrough and brother of Clive Barham was 'between clubs' and played just the single game. After this game striker Peter Heritage signed for Gillingham for a fee of £30,000.

Hythe's modest start of 11 points from 8 games was interrupted as the cup games began. FA Cup wins over Three Bridges, Molesey and Whitstable saw Vauxhall Opel Premier side Hayes come to Reachfields. On a day of gale force winds and torrential rain the game finished goalless, with Fusco making a return after unretiring. Hayes won the replay 3-0 and got to visit Peterborough United in the first round proper. Paul Hyde was the goalkeeper who kept Hythe at bay for the two games. Folkestone were the opponents in the Southern League Cup, the first leg at Cheriton Road finished 2-2 and the second leg was goalless, Folkestone winning 4-2 on penalties in front a new Hythe record attendance of 726. Two rounds were passed in the Vase, with wins over Malden Vale and Littlehampton – in the former game the coup-de-grace was delivered by Frank Ovard where he rounded the keeper, walked the ball to the goal line, stopped it and went down on all fours to head the ball over the line. There were two more signings in Chris Vidal, a striker who had impressed when playing for Molesey earlier, and Jed Nohilly, a midfielder from Dulwich and before that Northampton, Tonbridge and Gravesend.

After eight cup games Hythe returned to league duties at Dunstable. It was chairman Tony Walton's stated intention to climb the leagues and promotion was the main, if not the only, aim. After a poor performance and a 2-0 defeat, manager Neil Cugley was relieved of his duties. Dave Carr moved up from the assistant's position, Lee Smelt became assistant from his previous position of coach.

There was a reaction from the team and Hythe got to Christmas with only a single defeat in ten games, and two more Vase victories over Camberley and Deal. On Boxing Day Folkestone came to Reachfields and a fine performance saw Hythe win 3-1 in front of another record attendance, this time 1,094. The late consolation goal for Folkestone was from Neil Cugley, now at Cheriton Road as just a player. Two more holiday wins saw Hythe move up to ninth place with a few games in hand.

But that saw the league winning run end, with four draws and a defeat in the next five league games that again had many cup games squeezed in as bad weather added to the fixture pile-up. Collier Row were beaten in the Vase, after a replay, as were Abingdon Town after a replay and a few postponements, in the next round. By now Tommy Warrilow had joined Hythe from Crawley for £15,000, to play at centre-half or centre-forward.

It was a trip to Rushden Town in the sixth round, a tough ask having had to play on the previous Monday and Wednesday. A lone Frank Ovard goal decided the tie but the hero was goalkeeper O'Brien who stopped everything that Rushden could fire at him and a place in the semi-finals was achieved. Before then it was back to league action but with the Vase an understandable distraction only five points were gained from five matches.

Hythe were at home to Yeading in the semi-final first leg and it was a thrilling game. Simon Bryant and Frank Ovard had put Hythe 2-0 up before the visitors rallied to equalise. A rare goal from Jason Wheeler won the tie 3-2 to send most of the new (and still existing) record crowd of 2,147 home happy. The ridiculous fixture schedule saw Hythe have to play a league game the very next day and another on the Wednesday before the vital second leg at Yeading's Warren ground. Hythe went behind midway through the second half and lost the tie in the 89th minute when a cross took a big deflection away from keeper O'Brien's reach.

With eleven league games left there was still the faintest chance of promotion, with eleven wins, and it was a brave attempt with nine wins and two defeats and Hythe ended up in sixth position, ten points behind champions Bashley but only five behind Poole Town in second place. So near and yet so far.

The club did end up with a piece of silverware, even if it wasn't the major prize. Hythe had entered the Knight Floodlight Competition, the sponsored name for the Eastern Professional Floodlight Cup, a prestigious competition usually competed for by East Anglian clubs. Hythe won their mini-group with four wins out of four against Dover and Aveley and qualified for the quarter-finals. This saw a trip to Heybridge Swifts and victory thanks to a lone Frank Ovard goal. The semi-final saw Harlow Town visit Reachfields where a goal in each half by Terry White was enough for a 2-1 win. The final, and Hythe's 72nd and final game of the season, involved another trip to Collier Row, who had been narrowly defeated in the Vase fourth round. Frank Ovard had put Hythe ahead in the first half, Row equalised with eight minutes remaining but there was still time for Mark Weatherly to head an 88th minute winner.

Steve O'Brien played in virtually every game, full-backs were Kevin Smart, Malcolm Smith and Terry Collins, centre-backs Dave Carr and Mark Weatherly, midfielders Jason Wheeler, Jed Nohilly, Mark Stanton, Terry White and Mark Hyham. Strikers were Simon Bryant, Frank Ovard and Chris Vidal. Ovard top scored with 22 goals, White and Bryant both got 17 and Shaun Carey (12) and Stanton (11) also made double figures. Hythe played 72 games (and 8 friendlies!), winning 41, drawing 18 and losing 13, scoring 125 goals. Steve O'Brien was voted as Player of the Year, Pat Hilton won the Chairman's award.

1989-1990 Southern League Southern Table.....

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Bashley	42	25	7	10	80	47	33	82
2	Poole Town	42	23	8	11	85	60	25	77
3	Buckingham Town	42	22	10	10	67	46	21	76
4	Dunstable	42	20	14	8	56	38	18	74
5	Salisbury	42	21	9	12	72	50	22	72
6	Hythe Town	42	20	12	10	69	48	21	72
7	Trowbridge Town	42	20	9	13	79	64	15	69
8	Hastings Town	42	20	9	13	64	54	10	69
9	Bury Town	42	18	12	12	76	62	14	66
10	Baldock Town	42	18	11	13	69	52	15	65
11	Burnham	42	17	11	14	77	52	25	62
12	Fareham Town	42	14	14	14	49	53	-4	56
13	Yate Town	42	16	6	20	53	52	1	54
14	Witney Town	42	16	6	20	54	56	-2	54
15	Canterbury City	42	14	10	18	52	52	0	52
16	Margate	42	12	15	15	46	45	1	51
17	Folkestone Town	42	14	9	19	61	83	-22	51
18	Andover	42	13	11	18	54	70	-16	50
19	Hounslow	42	11	5	26	39	82	-43	38
20	Erith & Belvedere	42	8	11	23	34	73	-39	35
21	Corinthian	42	6	10	26	44	93	-49	28

22	Sheppey United	42	6	7	29	35	83	-48	25
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1989-1990 Knight Floodlight Cup Group 1 table....

Pos		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Hythe Town	4	4	0	0	11	3	8	12
2	Dover Athletic	4	2	0	2	6	4	2	6
3	Aveley	4	0	0	4	2	12	-10	0

1989-1990 Results.....

Date	Opponents	Competition	Venue	Score	Att	Scorers
31/07/1989	Tunbridge Wells	F	Away	1-1		Weatherly
01/08/1989	Redbridge Forest	F	Home	2-0		Weatherly, White
03/08/1989	Gillingham	F	Home	2-1		Bryant, White pen
07/08/1989	Cray Wanderers	F	Away	2-0		Heritage, Wheeler
08/08/1989	Ashford Town	F	Home	1-0		Stanton
12/08/1989	Crawley Town	F	Home	1-1		Heritage
15/08/1989	Tonbridge	F	Away	2-0		Weatherly, White pen
19/08/1989	Buckingham Town	SLSD	Away	0-0	110	
23/08/1989	Baldock Town	SLSD	Home	0-0	560	
26/08/1989	Andover	SLSD	Home	0-1	375	
28/08/1989	Margate	SLSD	Away	1-0	402	Bryant
02/09/1989	Bashley	SLSD	Home	1-1	452	White
09/09/1989	Bury Town	SLSD	Away	1-3	356	Ovard
13/09/1989	Sheppey United	SLSD	Home	4-1	367	Carr, White, Ovard, Gallacher
16/09/1989	Three Bridges	FAC1Q	Away	2-0	114	Ovard 2
19/09/1989	Ashford Town	F	Home	3-1		???
23/09/1989	Yate Town	SLSD	Away	2-1	221	Weatherly, Ovard
30/09/1989	Molesey	FAC2Q	Home	2-1	246	Smart, Ovard
07/10/1989	Malden Vale	FAVP	Home	3-1	288	Ovard 2, Cugley
10/10/1989	Erith & Belvedere	SLSD	Away	1-1	219	Carey
14/10/1989	Whitstable Town	FAC3Q	Home	2-0	336	Ovard, Smart
18/10/1989	Folkestone Town	WIC1R1L	Away	2-2	*678	Carey, Ovard
21/10/1989	Slade Green	KST1	Home	3-0	170	G Smith, Stanton, White pen

24/10/1989	Aveley	KFC	Away	2-1	50	Carr, Wilson
28/10/1989	Hayes	FAC4Q	Home	0-0	489	
31/10/1989	Hayes	FAC4QR	Away	0-3	767	
04/11/1989	Littlehampton Town	FAV1	Home	3-1	207	G Smith, Weatherly, Stanton
08/11/1989	Folkestone Town	WIC1R2L	Home	0-0aet	726	Lost 4-2 on pens
11/11/1989	Dunstable Town	SLSD	Away	0-2	140	
18/11/1989	Margate	SLSD	Home	1-1	286	Wilson
21/11/1989	Baldock Town	SLSD	Away	3-2	147	Stanton, Carey pen, Vidal
25/11/1989	Camberley Town	FAV2	Away	1-0	86	White
27/11/1989	Hounslow	SLSD	Away	2-0	82	Nohilly, Vidal
02/12/1989	Corinthian	SLSD	Home	2-1	179	Hyham, Ovard
05/12/1989	Sheppey United	SLSD	Away	0-1	125	
09/12/1989	Faversham Town	KST2	Away	2-1	88	Wilson, Stanton
12/12/1989	Fareham Town	SLSD	Away	1-1	122	Weatherly
16/12/1989	Deal Town	FAV3	Away	1-0	278	White
21/12/1989	Aveley	KFC	Home	5-1	97	Bryant, Vidal, Smart, Nohilly, W
26/12/1989	Folkestone Town	SLSD	Home	3-1	1094	Carr, Stanton, Wheeler
30/12/1989	Canterbury City	SLSD	Home	4-1	424	Vidal 2, Bryant, Stanton
01/01/1990	Hastings Town	SLSD	Away	1-0	639	Vidal
06/01/1990	Hounslow	SLSD	Home	1-1	276	Bryant
13/01/1990	Trowbridge Town	SLSD	Away	1-1	450	Bryant
16/01/1990	Dover Athletic	KFC	Away	3-1	1109	Bryant, Ovard, White pen
20/01/1990	Collier Row	FAV4	Home	1-1aet	445	Ovard
24/01/1990	Collier Row	FAV4R	Away	3-1	391	Ovard, Bryant 2
27/01/1990	Alma Swanley	KSTQF	Away	2-2aet		White pen, Bryant
29/01/1990	Dover Athletic	KFC	Home	1-0	674	White
05/02/1990	Alma Swanley	KSTQFR	Home	5-2	282	Stanton, Weatherly, Bryant, W pen
17/02/1990	Corinthian	SLSD	Away	2-2	102	Ovard, Bryant
21/02/1990	Abingdon Town	FAV5	Away	1-1aet	702	Bryant
24/02/1990	Poole Town	SLSD	Home	1-1	335	Nohilly

26/02/1990	Abingdon Town	FAV5R	Home	3-1aet	533	White, Bryant, Stanton
28/02/1990	Buckingham Town	SLSD	Home	1-2	275	Carr
03/03/1990	Rushden Town	FAVQF	Away	1-0	1439	Ovard
06/03/1990	Andover	SLSD	Away	3-1	133	Nohilly, Bryant, White
10/03/1990	Burnham	SLSD	Away	0-0	105	
12/03/1990	Salisbury	SLSD	Away	0-2	381	
14/03/1990	Bashley	SLSD	Away	2-6	310	Weatherly, Allon
17/03/1990	Sittingbourne	KSTSF	Away	0-1	254	
19/03/1990	Fareham Town	SLSD	Home	1-1	346	Weatherly
24/03/1990	Yeading	FAVSF1L	Home	3-2	2147	Bryant, Ovard, Wheeler
25/03/1990	Trowbridge Town	SLSD	Home	3-1	307	Stanton, Nohilly, Bryant
28/03/1990	Witney Town	SLSD	Away	1-2	150	Smith
31/03/1990	Yeading	FAVSF2L	Away	0-2	1546	
02/04/1990	Salisbury	SLSD	Home	5-1	260	Weatherly, White, Carey 2, Ovard
04/04/1990	Burnham	SLSD	Home	4-3	232	Carey 2, Carr, Wheeler
07/04/1990	Canterbury City	SLSD	Away	2-0	187	Carey 2
11/04/1990	Witney Town	SLSD	Home	2-0	187	Ovard 2
12/04/1990	Heybridge Swifts	KFCQF	Away	1-0	167	Ovard
14/04/1990	Hastings Town	SLSD	Home	0-1	418	
16/04/1990	Folkestone Town	SLSD	Away	3-0	762	Carey, Stanton, Wheeler
18/04/1990	Erith & Belvedere	SLSD	Home	4-0	247	Stanton, Nohilly, Carey 2
21/04/1990	Dunstable Town	SLSD	Home	0-2	313	
28/04/1990	Bury Town	SLSD	Home	4-3	224	Bryant, White, Allon 2
29/04/1990	Yate Town	SLSD	Home	1-0	201	Allon
02/05/1990	Harlow Town	KFCSF	Home	2-1		White 2
05/05/1990	Poole Town	SLSD	Away	1-0	349	White pen
09/05/1990	Collier Row	KFCF	Away	2-1	270	Ovard, Weatherly