



Jon Main

For such a deadly finisher, it came as a shock to find out that Jon Main couldn't get into his school team: "there were some proper players at Erith School at the time!" he joked. But the prolific forward soon made up for it when he broke into local non-league football with VCD Athletic, where he scored 43 goals in his first season and 16 the next before heading out to Brisbane for four months. "I scored 15 times in 20 games for the Capalaba Bulldogs, before returning to England and a step-up to join Cray Wanderers." After half a season with the Wands, Jon joined Tonbridge Angels – and the goals kept flowing. After scoring 44 in 2006/07, Main was suddenly on the radar of professional clubs and he went on trial at three EFL clubs including Swindon Town and Wolves, but no full-time deal materialised.

After agreeing a deal to join AFC Wimbledon in November 2007 for a then-record fee thought to be £25,000 and 68 goals in 86 games for the Angels, Jon played against the Dons (and naturally he scored) in the Ryman Premier Division, with his soon-to-be teammates occasionally forgetting that fact



with some meaty challenges! 26 year-old Main experienced full-time sized crowds with the Dons and responded with trademark goals over the next three seasons. He'd already bagged 21 at Tonbridge and set himself a target of 40 for the season, falling just short but still helping AFC Wimbledon to promotion, with "my best goal at Kingsmeadow by far" reserved for the play-off semi-final with Hornchurch when he ran half the length of the pitch, beating two defenders and slotting the ball under the advancing Urchins goalkeeper.

The Dons went straight through Blue Square South the following season, with the arrival of strike partner Danny Kedwell proving the perfect foil. Main was training to be an electrician and the sparks certainly flew as the duo's goals took AFC Wimbledon to the title, helped by a unique goalscoring incentive scheme whereby whenever one of them scored, both would get a goal bonus! Mainy cleaned up in the end-of-season awards too. His 33 goals saw him gain the triple accolade

of Non-League Player of the Year, the Conference South Golden Boot and being named in the BSS Team of the Year. Another memorable goal came in a tense title decider at Hampton, where his header gained the Dons a valuable draw to set up finishing the job at home to St. Albans City the following week.



The Blue Square Premier (now the National League) was his biggest step-up yet and posterior cruciate, tendonitis and medial ligament



injuries began to take their toll, but he still registered 11 goals. And of course when his big Kent buddy Kedwell fired home the penalty that took the Dons back into the Football League after just nine years, Jon bolted straight on to the pitch to deservedly join in with the celebrations.

It was sadly time to bid farewell to AFC Wimbledon after 61 goals in 91 matches and 'Mainy' helped Dartford then Welling United to further successes, before



surprisingly announcing his retirement at just 32. But the lure of pulling on his boots was hard to resist and a few comebacks followed. Ramsgate, Thamesmead, Erith & Belvedere, Phoenix Sports, Erith Town and, after another hiatus, Welling Town – at the age of 35. "My Mrs likes to go shopping on Saturdays, so I've read the script and realised I needed to get involved again!" Now 43, his football is confined to a local vets team, but there's no shopping for his wife Stephanie and their daughter Stella today as we welcome them all to Plough Lane as our WOPA special guests.

