



Spring Farm Park  
Rainham  
Essex

Brentwood Sunday Football League  
Division 2

Season 2019-20

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## **Player Profiles**

Name: Tyler Bunn  
Age: 22  
Position: Goalkeeper  
Games: 4  
Goals: 0  
Bookings: 0

Name: Charlie Puncher  
Age: 22  
Position: Goalkeeper/Defender  
Games: 19  
Goals: 0  
Bookings: 0

Name: Ryan Gooday  
Age: 23  
Position: Midfield  
Games: 22  
Goals: 3  
Bookings: 1

Name: Luke Mainhood  
Age: 26  
Position: Defender  
Games: 20  
Goals: 2  
Bookings: 0

Name: George Light  
Age: 26  
Position: Defender  
Games: 22  
Goals: 5  
Bookings: 4

Name: Michael Herd  
Age: 26  
Position: Defender  
Games: 17  
Goals: 0  
Bookings: 0

Name: John O'Neil  
Age: 31  
Position: Defender  
Games: 18  
Goals: 3  
Bookings: 1

Name: Daniel Rogers  
Age: 23  
Position: Midfield  
Games: 21  
Goals: 3  
Bookings: 0

Name: Harry Light  
Age: 23  
Position: Midfield  
Games: 20  
Goals: 3  
Bookings: 7

Name: Oliver Jones  
Age: 26  
Position: Striker  
Games: 21  
Goals: 13  
Bookings: 3

Name: Callum Murphy  
Age: 23  
Position: Midfield  
Games: 21  
Goals: 1  
Bookings: 0

Name: Ben Hollis  
Age: 31  
Position: Midfield/Striker  
Games: 10  
Goals: 1  
Bookings: 0

Name: Charlie Amato  
Age: 23  
Position: Defender/Midfield  
Games: 20  
Goals: 3  
Bookings: 1



Name: Jordan Somers  
Age: 25  
Position: Midfield/Striker  
Games: 16  
Goals: 5  
Bookings: 0

Name: Ronnie Jackson  
Age: 21  
Position: Midfield  
Games: 14  
Goals: 3  
Bookings: 0

Name: Jas Hothi  
Age: 28  
Position: Defender  
Games: 11  
Goals: 0  
Bookings: 0



Name: Reece Rhodes  
Age: 26  
Position: Defender  
Games: 18  
Goals: 1  
Bookings: 0



Name: Charlie Mace  
Age: 26  
Position: Midfield  
Games: 17  
Goals: 6  
Bookings: 0

Name: Phil Howard  
Age: 26  
Position: Midfield/Striker  
Games: 14  
Goals: 1  
Bookings: 0



Name: Ben Little  
Age: 17  
Position: Midfield/Striker  
Games: 19  
Goals: 6  
Bookings: 5

## Roll of Honour 2018-19

Players' player of the year- **Ryan Gooday**

Manager's player of the year- **John O'Neill, Michael Herd, Luke Mainhood**

(best defensive record in all four divisions)

Golden boot- **Oliver Jones**

Most improved player- **Jas Hothi, Charlie Puncher**

Clubman of the year- **Phil Howard**

Golden moment- **Tyler Bunn**  
(double save v Herongate)

## **Match reports & Team sheets**

### **Zone 4 0-4 CFC Rainham (28/07/19) (pre-season)**

CFC Rainham got the new campaign off to a winning start against a fellow Division 2 side Zone 4. It was the first run out since the end of the last campaign however, you would never have known from the way Rainham began the game. Rainham were carving the opposition open at will and should have been at least a couple of goals to the good before the inevitable breakthrough came. Harry Light's whipped corner found its way underneath the crossbar and straight into the top corner, he claims it was meant, others know the truth. Further dominance in the second half led to some sharper finishing from the away side as debutant Jordan Somers headed home from Gooday's cross and Oli Jones notched his first of the season smashing home a bobbling ball in the penalty box. Fellow new signing Charlie Mace added further gloss to the scoreline stealing in at the back post after an excellent cross from Dan Rogers. Reece Rhodes also made his debut at centre half and looked assured and composed, hopefully adding further solidity to a strong back 4 from last season. A great way to start the new season.

### **Global Reserves 3-4 CFC Rainham (18/08/19) (pre-season)**

With notable absentees due to the holiday season, a slightly depleted squad headed to Frances Bardsley school to face a team with a great reputation in Sunday League football. Things got off to the worst possible start for Rainham, after having had their fair share of the ball in the opening 15 minutes and wingers Ben Little and Ronnie Jackson looking lively, they conceded 2 goals in the space of 5 minutes past stand-in keeper Harry Light. However, heads did not drop and on the stroke of half time a fantastic passing move sent Phil Howard one on one with the goalkeeper at a tight angle from the left hand side. Howard coolly gave the keeper the eyes, shaping to bend it to the far post like his hero Thierry Henry and whipped the ball into the near post to get Rainham back in the game. Parity was then restored soon after half time with new signing Charlie Mace really announcing himself. Driving from the centre of midfield, Mace unleashed from 25 yards and bent the ball into the top left hand corner. Global were then controversially given a penalty with Reece Rhodes seemingly to have won the ball however the penalty was given and dispatched. Credit to Rainham who then bounced back once more from disappointment. Mace again tried his luck from distance and his shot was too hot for the keeper to handle as it burst through his gloves into the net. Fitness was clearly on Rainham's side in the last 5 minutes as they piled on the pressure and saved the best goal for the winner. The ball was worked to the left hand side where Howard drove a low cross into the box looking for Gooday. Gooday cleverly showed great awareness and dummied the ball, leaving the on-rushing Oli Jones to calmly side foot the ball into the corner. A fantastic performance and result against a good side. The signs are promising for the season ahead.

### **Barn Sports 4-1 CFC Rainham (08/09/19) (League)**

A result that nobody saw coming and perhaps that was the problem. After an encouraging pre season, Rainham were sent back down to Earth with a bump as life in Division 2 started with a defeat. The performance didn't warrant the result and on most other days Rainham would win this game however Barn Sports were more clinical in both boxes and that proved the difference. After utter dominance for the first half hour and Jordan Somers, George Light and Oli Jones all coming close to opening the scoring, Barn Sports took the lead against the run of play after a mix up between Tyler Bunn and Jonno O'Neill led to the latter heading past his own keeper. Rainham soon after had the chance to level before half time however, last season's top scorer Oli Jones saw his penalty smartly saved. The real defining period of the game came just after half time as further defensive lapses first from a corner and then a simple goal kick saw Barn Sports increase their lead to 3-0, some excellent finishes past Tyler Bunn it had to be said. Rainham continued to plug away and had a glimmer of hope when George Light's through ball found Dan Rogers who squared for Oli Jones and the striker made no mistake this time with a fantastic diving header. Further efforts from Light, Gooday, Murphy and Howard were thwarted by the excellent Barns goalkeeper on the day as the ball simply would not go in for the away side. With just minutes remaining Barn Sports sealed their victory as they broke away and worked the ball past Bunn. A harsh awakening to life in a new division.

### **Albion 1-2 CFC Rainham (15/09/19) (KRKO Cup)**

Rainham picked up their first competitive win of the season, grinding out a result against fellow Div 2 side Albion in the Ken Robinson cup. Rainham made their way to the Semi final of this competition last season and looked in the mood for another cup run from the off. Early strikes from Ben Little, Dan Rogers and Oli Jones were thwarted by the keeper before the breakthrough eventually came. Oli Jones has scored some spectacular goals for Rainham in his time but this could have been the best yet. A cross from Dan Rogers was only half cleared as the ball looped into the air 16 yards out. Not known for his flexibility Jones somehow managed volley and swivel at the same time and sent the ball over the goalkeeper into the top right hand corner. A special goal. He then doubled his and Rainham's tally just before half time after good work from Ryan Gooday and Callum Murphy sent Jones through on goal and he made no mistake drilling the ball into the corner with his weaker foot. The second half followed the same pattern with Rainham dominating the ball and creating chances however the third and killer goal didn't come. Then, with around 15 minutes to go, a rare lapse in concentration at the back allowed Albion to steal in and drag themselves back in the game. Rainham then endured 15 minutes of pressure with constant long throws and crosses into the box but stood firm to progress to the next round. A special mention to Michael Herd who came on in the second half for his first action of the season after his knee injury sustained the previous season.

### **South Brentwood 1-2 CFC Rainham (22/09/19) (Div 2 League Cup)**

Rainham made it back to back away cup victories in a tight and tense battle against a very good South Brentwood side. The home side made a strong start to the game as Rainham struggled to get a foothold in the game. Tyler Bunn twice had to make early saves from shots from distance and both fullbacks Jas Hothi and Luke Mainhood made crucial interceptions as Rainham weathered an early storm against a team that clearly liked to play football the right way. The breakthrough however came against the run of play and after a 5 minute spell of better possession and territory, George Light opened the scoring with a deflected strike after being teed up by Ryan Gooday. This seemed to settle Rainham and they could have extended their lead before the break with Jones and Somers growing into the game and missing a good chance apiece. Again South Brentwood came knocking at the start of the second half and this time were rewarded with a fantastic driven effort across Bunn which nestled in the far corner. Rainham were now on the back foot and had to hold strong. The winning goal in the game though was a thing of beauty. Starting from Bunn rolling the ball to Mainhood, both centre halves O'Neill and Herd exchanged patient passes before Herd found the killer ball through the lines to substitute Harry Light who combined well with his brother to send Jones away down the left hand side. Jones clipped the ball inside to the midfield run from deep of Mace who found himself through on goal and delicately chipped the ball over the keeper to send Rainham through the next round. An average performance but a fantastic result.

### **Frenford 2-2 CFC Rainham (aet)(Rainham win 2-3 on pens) (06/10/19) (Essex Cup)**

A game of high emotions to say the least but CFC Rainham truly announced themselves as a Sunday League team to be respected after seeing off a huge club in Frenford FC. Boasting a squad that included several of their 'Olympian' Saturday squad, Frenford came into the game as clear favourites. You wouldn't have known this however from the first 40 minutes of the first half. Rainham were superb. Some of the football was amongst the best the team had played and created several golden opportunities to take the lead however found themselves up against a goalkeeper in form and a post that the ball seemed to be attracted to. Mace, Jones, Gooday and Light all saw great chances go begging before disaster struck just before half time. In their first real attack, Frenford found some space in the middle of the park and a ball through the Rainham defence was pounced upon by the Frenford striker who rolled the ball neatly past Bunn. Frenford started the second strong and could have been further in front were it not for two fantastic blocks first from O'Neill then from Charlie Amato to keep Rainham in the game. Then, a moment that would have pleased manager Keith Light as the goal came straight from the half time team talk. Gooday stood over a free kick 25 yards out and quickly noticed Ben Little free of his marker at the side of the wall. Gooday fired the ball into Little who simply opened his body and guided the ball into the corner. A fantastic finish and Rainham were back in the game. The game ebbed and flowed with both sides throwing bodies forward to try and get the win. There was a flash point between brothers George and Harry Light midway through the half as tempers flared before Frenford began to come on strong with 15 minutes to go. What occurred next was one of the best saves I am sure to have been witnessed on a Sunday league football pitch. A whipped free kick from the left picked up speed with the gushing wind and took a slight deflection off O'Neill and seemed to be heading straight into the top corner, only for the right finger tips of Tyler Bunn who diverted the ball onto the bar and away to safety. A stunning moment. This seemed to put wind back into the sails of Rainham who twice could have stolen it at the end with both George Light and Oli Jones hitting the upright yet again. Into extra time and after a thrilling second half both teams seemed to have run out of energy. With the game almost certainly heading for penalties, a lapse in concentration at the back from Rainham allowed a long ball to drift through to the Frenford forward who again was composed and rolled the ball past Bunn with just seconds left on the clock. With heads down Rainham could barely muster the

strength to send one last long ball forward, which resulted in a free kick being given 25 yards out. With the last kick of extra time, George Light stood over the free kick and brilliantly curled the ball into the top right hand corner to keep Rainham's cup hopes alive. Penalties. Frenford converted their first two penalties, as did Ryan Gooday and Oli Jones who banished memories of last March. Tyler Bunn then made a superb stop before Harry Light coolly placed the ball past the keeper who was trying his very best to put the Rainham boys off. A further save from Bunn, left Charlie Mace with the chance to win it for Rainham but unfortunately he saw his shot creep over the bar. Frenford didn't capitalise on that though thankfully and blazed their final penalty to give Rainham a well-deserved victory. Sources say that the Light brothers did make up after the game but it took until the Friday of the following week...

### **CFC Rainham 5-4 Scruttons (13/10/19) (Essex Cup)**

Last week's game had virtually everything, this week's game did have the LOT. On a blustery Sunday morning, conditions weren't great for football and Rainham were up against a Scruttons side that boasted several Ryman league talents. Perhaps too much respect was shown in the first half as Scruttons played some lovely football and carved Rainham open three times to take a comfortable 3-0 half time lead. A stern half time team talk from Keith Light let Rainham know this, yet proved to instill a bit of belief in the team as well. Shortly after half time, a Harry Light corner was headed home by Jonno O'Neill to give Rainham a glimmer of hope before they were well and truly back in the game as a Ryan Gooday cross was turned into their own net by the unfortunate Scruttons defender. Momentum had shifted but a moment of controversy followed as Puncher, making his first appearance in the sticks of the season, seemed to have claimed a through ball into his body before it was kicked from his hands and placed into an empty net. The goal stood yet the decision only seemed to give Rainham further motivation. Following his initial corner being sent back out to him, Harry Light cut inside and unleashed a fizzing shot straight across the keeper into the far corner. 3-4 and Rainham were piling on the pressure. They were soon, remarkably, on level terms as further great work from Callum Murphy and Ryan Gooday sent Ben Hollis in behind the Scruttons defence and he made no mistake placing the ball past the on-rushing goalkeeper. With 10 minutes remaining the stunning comeback was complete and it was a goal worthy of winning any football match. Jones battled well with the centre half from a long ball and the ball dropped 25 yards from goal to Ben Little, who struck the ball first time on the half volley. When I say the ball rifled into the top corner, I mean the goalkeeper didn't even have time to turn his head before the ball was nestling in his net. A fantastic comeback and manager Keith Light stated the second half was the best half of football ever produced by his team. It led them to the 3rd round of the County cup- the furthest Rainham have ever been.

### **Portville 2-3 CFC Rainham (20/10/19) (League)**

Our first points of the league campaign were won with a dogged performance against all odds. After a fairly even start to the game, Portville took the lead following an error from Charlie Puncher. Rainham quickly bounced back when Harry Light's wonderfully flighted free kick to the back post found an unmarked Jonno O'Neill who calmly cushioned the ball into the corner to level things up. Another disastrous piece of defending allowed Portville to go back in front after it seemed Rainham had taken control of the game. A long, hopeful free kick drifted all the way through to allow Portville to nip in and slot home. With half time approaching, Ryan Gooday sent a low cross into the box which found Oli Jones with his back to goal. Jones controlled the ball and swivelled expertly to guide the ball home- a real poacher's finish. Then, as the half time whistle blew a moment of madness as both George and Harry Light were put in the sinbin for dissent. That meant Rainham played the first 10 minutes of the second half with 9 men but held their shape brilliantly with Callum Murphy in particular covering acres of ground along with Ben Little and Dan Rogers pressing from the front. Rainham actually looked the more threatening in that period and their hard work was rewarded when 11 men were finally restored onto the pitch. A Gooday corner floated to the back post found Charlie Amato who rose and powered the ball into the corner. His first ever goal for the club and what an important one it would prove to be. There was still time though for Charlie Puncher to cancel out his unfortunate first half mistake with a fine save from a strike from the edge of the box after Rainham failed to clear their lines on several occasions. A superb first league win against a side that would surely be challenging for honours come the end of the season.

### **CFC Rainham 5-1 CISK Sports (27/10/19) (KRKO Cup)**

A blistering start to the game saw Rainham advance through yet another cup competition. Charlie Mace opened the scoring inside the first 2 minutes cutting in from the left and smashing the ball into the roof of the net after smart play from Luke Mainhood in the build up. The second was another sublime finish after Oli Jones laid the ball off to Dan Rogers, the winger placed the ball powerfully into the far corner to score his first of the season. A rare goal from Callum Murphy on the stroke of half time virtually put the game beyond doubt, Murphy drilling the ball home from the edge of the area. A comfortable second half saw Rainham control the game without exerting themselves too much. Ryan Gooday notched his first goal of the season from the penalty spot after Ronnie Jackson was fouled in the box. It was then Jackson himself who poached a 5th for the home side taking advantage of some sloppy defending

to clip the ball into the back of the net. CISK did claim a consolation late on but it was a comfortable passage into the next round for Rainham, who earned themselves a glamour tie against Hashtag United of the Premier Division.

### **Shenfield Eagles 2-1 CFC Rainham (03/11/19) (League)**

Rainham's stuttering start to the league campaign continued with a dismal performance against Shenfield Eagles. Rainham started the game really sloppy and lacked composure on the ball, surprising since the team were flying off the back of 6 straight wins. Eagles made the breakthrough after 15 minutes, some good play down their right hand side sent a floating cross into the box, to their 6 foot 8 striker who was unbelievably left unmarked 6 yards out to give Puncher no chance. Disastrous defending. Suddenly, this seemed to wake the away side up and after a good spell of possession, the pivotal point of the game came but unfortunately Rainham were on the wrong end of a shocker of a refereeing decision. After a Reece Rhodes defensive header from a corner found Charlie Mace, the midfielder skipped past two challenges and found himself clean through on the Shenfield Eagles goal. As Mace looked to slot the ball home, a Shenfield defender swiped the legs of Mace, no intention of playing the ball and was already walking for an early bath... however he was then stopped in his tracks with the award of just a yellow card and a free kick to Rainham. A decision that went against all rules of our game but we had to swallow it. Perhaps slight justice was done from the resulting free kick as George Light sent the ball crashing into the top right hand corner, a replica of his Extra time free kick just weeks earlier. Game on and Rainham now had the sense of injustice to spur them on, yet another lapse in concentration at the back meant an attempted cross field ball was intercepted and allowed Shenfield Eagles to run through and regain the lead just before half time. The away side huffed and puffed and piled on the pressure in the second half, at times almost camped in the Eagles half, yet chances for Jones, Somers and O'Neill went begging and in the end a real lack of quality cost Rainham some valuable points. Would the correct referee decision have changed the course of the game? Probably but that didn't take away the fact this was a poor poor performance.

### **Leigh United 5-1 CFC Rainham (10/11/19) (Essex Cup)**

Rainham's journey in the county cup came to an end on the seafront as Leigh United proved too strong in the end however, the score line was very flattering and on another day it could have been a very different story. Rainham will look back and regret missed chances on the stroke of half time. Leigh started the game very strong and it was clear they were a good footballing side with set patterns of play and quality on the ball. The breakthrough came early with a stinging shot from the edge of the box finding the far corner beyond Puncher. Rainham then had to weather a considerable storm, Puncher making 2-3 superb saves as the movement and quick incisive passing of the opposition allowed them to create chance after chance. Then, Rainham began to get a bit closer to their men, flew into a few challenges and the game turned on its head. After great play in the middle between Ben Hollis and Harry Light the ball was switched out to the right to Dan Rogers, who had already proved he had the beating of the full back. Rogers cut the ball back to Oli Jones on the edge of the box and with his left foot struck a shot that took a slight deflection but snuck into the corner away from the despairing dive of the keeper. 1-1 and suddenly Rainham were the ones in control of the game. Gooday sent a magnificent free kick into the back post which found O'Neill unmarked, agonisingly his header back across goal was just out the reach of two on rushing Rainham players. Then, from a Leigh corner, Callum Murphy sent Harry Light breaking away and he sliced open the Leigh defence sending Ben Little through on goal however his shot was saved by the legs of the goalkeeper. Two glorious chances to take a half time lead squandered. After a fairly even opening to the second half, two quickfire goals from Leigh United turned the cup tie in the favour, two good finishes past Charlie Puncher. With Rainham pushing on to find a route back into the game Leigh twice caught the away side on the break in the final moments to finish with a flattering scoreline but a passage into the fourth round. A good display from Rainham against good opposition but there was a sense of what could have been as they left the changing rooms.

### **Herongate 0-0 CFC Rainham (17/11/19) (League)**

0-0 is a rare score line in Sunday League football and what is even rarer is a 0-0 in Sunday league that was as entertaining as this one. A tale of two halves was apt for this encounter as Rainham flew out of the traps. Oli Jones found himself through on goal in the opening minutes following a long ball over the top but just dragged his shot wide. Charlie Mace was causing havoc down the left hand side and set up Ryan Gooday and Harry Light for a chance apiece with their efforts well saved by the Herongate keeper. Mace also saw an effort ruled out for offside in a tight call. Rainham dominated the first half but just couldn't quite find that finishing product. The second half was a complete transformation. Herongate had the bit between their teeth and they were now first to every first and second ball piling on the pressure to the Rainham backline. Set pieces were causing Rainham problems with Herongate hitting the woodwork on one attempt and Luke Mainhood making a vital block on another. Charlie Puncher was then called into action with a fantastic save from a driven shot heading for the roof of the net. Herongate were pushing for the winner and would have snatched it had it not been for a wonderful saving challenge from Michael Herd as it looked for all the world the striker was going to tap home a cross from the right hand side. After hanging on for most of the second half, with 5 left on the clock Rainham

wrestled back the initiative once more and perhaps should have won it with virtually the last kick of the game. The fresh legs of Ronnie Jackson drove down the left hand side and pulled the ball back for Charlie Amato however his shot just went wide of the post. 3 games without a win for Rainham but a battling performance and a good point against a fellow newly-promoted side.

### **CFC Rainham 4-1 Shenfield Eagles (24/11/19) (Div 2 League Cup)**

Without a win in 3, some teams may have felt the pressure of a cup quarter final against a team that had recently been victorious against you. Not this Rainham side who simply blew away Shenfield Eagles with some outstanding football. Rainham seized the initiative from the off as Harry Light drove at the Shenfield defence before slipping in striker Oli Jones just right of the centre of the goal. Jones made no mistake, rifling the ball under the keeper to give Rainham a dream start. Just minutes later the lead should have been doubled as Harry Light was played through by Charlie Mace but saw his effort saved by the keeper and the rebound was just cleared from the reach of Ryan Gooday, who was ready to fire the ball home. Rainham didn't have to wait long for the second though, as persistent play down the right hand side from Dan Rogers found Harry Light with the ball on the by-line. Light swiftly cut the ball back for Oli Jones to escape his marker at the front post and guide the ball inside the post to extend the lead. Further dominance from the home side then led to a spectacular third and Harry Light, architect yet again, drove a ball inside the Shenfield full back for Charlie Mace to coolly chip the on-rushing keeper from just outside the box and into the empty net. 3-0 at the break and barring any lapses in concentration, a place in the semi finals assured. Rainham made sure this wasn't the case and managed the game exceptionally well. Halfway through the half any doubts were well and truly quashed as Phil Howard picked up the ball on the left hand side and sent a superb pass through to Ronnie Jackson, who kept his composure and rolled the ball beyond the reach of the keeper and into the corner. There was time for a late consolation for Shenfield Eagles, a terrific strike from distance beating stand-in keeper Jordan Somers. That did not take the gloss off of a fantastic performance and result from Rainham and Harold Hill awaited in the semi finals. A special mention to Jordan Somers who stood in the sticks and looked as assured and composed as regular keepers Tyler Bunn and Charlie Punter- a real team effort.

### **CFC Rainham 1-3 Hashtag United (08/12/19) (KRKO Cup)**

Hopes of a repeat semi final appearance in this competition were dashed but Rainham's reputation and respect certainly grew after giving the Premier division side an almighty scare. Hashtag United with thousands of YouTube followers and a rising stock even in the semi-professional game, walked away from Spring Farm Park breathing a huge sigh of relief. Perhaps the reputation of the visitors was in the minds of the Rainham boys early on, as a disastrous start to the game ultimately decided the tie. Firstly a long hopeful ball caused confusion in the Rainham back line and the Hashtag striker pounced to round Charlie Punter and somehow managed to squeeze a shot past Michael Herd on the goal line. One quickly became two as George Light was caught in two minds and allowed the Hashtag winger to cross the ball for the advancing midfield who swept the ball past Punter to make it 2-0 inside ten minutes. Then, Rainham woke up and started playing their own game. Jordan Somers, who caused havoc for 90 minutes up top on his own, won a free kick just outside the box. It was in range of George Light but unfortunately he saw his free kick graze the top of the bar. Callum Murphy then won the ball back in the middle of the park and sent Somers away with his fizzing strike well saved by the Hashtag keeper and Dan Rogers saw his effort creep just wide from the rebound. After seeming to have a foothold back in the game, a rare Hashtag attack resulted in their third. Sloppy defending yet again this time from a set piece, saw the ball drop kindly for the Hashtag centre half to poke home from inside the six yard box. A tough task now but Rainham soon had the opportunity to get back in the game. Ben Hollis clipped a beautiful ball in the path of Jordan Somers who yet again had the beating of the Hashtag back four, only to be brought down inside the box. Harry Light stepped up but drove the ball too close to the keeper who tipped the ball away to safety. Credit to Rainham though who did not give up and after half time finally got their reward. A Harry Light corner was headed straight back out to him, his second delivery was much better and curled to the back post where Somers diverted the ball with the faintest of glances into the corner. Game on and it was all Rainham. Charlie Amato saw a stinging drive tipped round the post, Ben Little missed a great chance following a great run from Ronnie Jackson and somehow Callum Murphy saw a shot blocked when it looked destined for the back of the net. Rainham's chances further improved when a rattled Hashtag went down to ten men following two reckless challenges from their left back. Still Rainham probed but just couldn't find that second goal and when Somers sent Ben Little through on goal, the young forward did everything right opening his body and placing it into the far corner, only for the ball to hit the post and bounce to safety. Missed chances and defensive lapses were the difference on the day but yet again Rainham proved they could mix it with anybody on a Sunday League football pitch.

### **CFC Rainham 3-2 Barn Sports (15/12/19) (League)**

Rainham signed off for Christmas with 3 vital points in a tough game against a good side. In a tight, scrappy opening, the game was lit up with two moments of magic for the home side. Firstly a looping free kick from Ryan Gooday was headed into the air by the Barns defence but only as far as Oli Jones on the edge of the box, who with a scissor kick motion volleyed the ball over the keeper

and into the corner of the net. Who knew the big man was so flexible? Secondly, and with the wind in their sails at this point, good play down the left between Ben Hollis and Luke Mainhood set up Jordan Somers on the edge of the penalty area. Somers first touch gave himself some space before clipping the ball straight into the roof of the net, goalkeeper no chance. Two brilliant finishes put Rainham in control after a tight opening period. However, an injury to Hollis just before half time, seemed to break the stride of the home side and whilst they were still adjusting to the change, Barn Sports took advantage with another brilliant finish on the turn just outside the box- nestling straight into the top corner of Puncher's net. Shortly after half time, the comeback from Barns was complete when a long hopeful free kick began what can only be described as pinball in the Rainham box and the ball eventually fell kindly for the opposition midfield to smash the ball home from close range. There were some weary bodies on the pitch for Rainham and Barn Sports seemed to have control of the game before a sin bin for them changed the complexion of the game. Dissent to the referee allowed Rainham to wrestle momentum back and this resulted in the winning goal. Great play down the left from Somers and Little meant the ball was crossed to the back post where Ronnie Jackson ghosted in unmarked to stab the ball home after an initial scramble. A vital goal for the home side. There were no more alarms as Rainham professionally negotiated the remaining ten minutes of the game, despite a late sin bin for Ben Little for kicking the ball away. A very important three points and some revenge for our opening day defeat.

### **CFC Rainham 1-0 Portville (05/01/20) (League)**

Rainham started off 2020 recording back to back wins for the first time in the league this season with a hard fought win over rivals Portville. With a slow start to the game, it seemed like Christmas had taken its toll on both sides but Rainham made the breakthrough with their first real attack of the game. Some solid play in the middle of the park from Charlie Amato sent Ryan Gooday away down the right wing. Gooday's cross was only half dealt with by the Portville defence and this hesitancy was pounced upon by Oli Jones to hit his snapshot underneath the goalkeeper and into the net. This seemed to spring Rainham into life and the hosts could have been further ahead before half time but were thwarted by the magnificent Portville keeper, who always seemed to save his best for Rainham. Jordan Somers went close with a header, Harry Light hit the post with a rare strike with his right foot and an even rarer chance for Michael Herd from a corner was well stopped. Rainham's dominance continued in the second half but the elusive second goal deserted them and while Portville's threat was virtually non-existent the game became a bit edgy towards the latter stages. Still the Portville keeper kept Rainham at bay, with Rogers and Mace coming close in the second half with their fresh legs. Despite a few set pieces in the last few minutes, Rainham negotiated the game well and came away with a vital three points-completing the league double over the opposition in the process.

### **Emerson Oak 0-1 CFC Rainham (12/01/20) (League)**

Perhaps the most important result of the season so far with a defensive display that had Keith Light reminiscing his days of George Graham and Arsenal! Emerson Oak were flying and in the middle of a 10 game unbeaten run stretching back to October that had seen them rise to 2nd spot in the table. Things didn't get off to the best of starts for Rainham as the ever-reliable Luke Mainhood was forced off 10 minutes into the game following a robust challenge. A yellow card was extremely lenient in our view as the cut sat 3 inches deep in the middle of Luke's shin. Jonno O'Neill came on to replace Mainhood, which meant a reshuffle to left back for Recce Rhodes and the Rainham back four had to deal with some early pressure. Excellent interventions from Herd, O'Neill and Rhodes thwarted an aerial bombardment from the home side as it became very clear as to what their main threat was going to be. Rainham themselves however, looked a threat going forward too and should have taken an early lead as Jordan Somers was played through by Charlie Mace but saw his effort blocked by the Emerson Oak goalkeeper as the angle narrowed. Halfway through the first half, Rainham really began to take control of the game and following a succession of set pieces they made the breakthrough. Ryan Gooday's corner to the back post was met initially by Jonno O'Neill who saw his header cleared by a mixture of the post and an Oak defender on the line, the ball rebounded out to Charlie Amato who instinctively drove the ball back towards goal. His shot was probably going out for a throw, however it took a wicked deflection and looped into the vacant far corner to give the away side a vital lead. The dubious goal panel did award the goal to Amato with unconfirmed reports that he offered a substantial bribe to do so. Nevertheless, Rainham were now majorly in the ascendency and how they only went into the break 1 up was beyond belief. Another Ryan Gooday free kick caused havoc in the Emerson Oak box and following a scramble, Jordan Somers was there to poke the ball home for 2-0. Celebrations were cut short when remarkably the referee deemed the goalkeeper to have had two hands on the ball before Somers poked home. The smirks from the opposition defence told all you needed to know about that decision. Then, moments before half time the Light brothers stood over a dangerous free kick on the edge of the box and it was George Light who won the argument. His case was almost justified as he saw his free kick crash against the crossbar and bounce down for Charlie Mace who skied the rebound. With a ferocious wind now against them, Rainham knew that one may not have been enough going into the second half. What followed was without doubt their best defensive display of the season. From front to back every player dug in and ran until they dropped. Jordan Somers, chased every single lost cause, wingers Gooday, Mace and then Rogers helped in attack and defence, Gooday even playing through a nasty gash to his head (maybe it knocked some sense into the Spurs supporter but that could be asking too much). Callum Murphy was phenomenal in the middle of midfield winning every

single header and challenge he went into and the back four mopped up anything that did actually get through to them. Charlie Puncher kicked into the wind exceptionally well and did what little he had to do confidently- a free kick straight into his grasp the only shot on target in the second half. As the final whistle blew the reactions of the Rainham players told you how important this win was and a real statement had been made to the rest of the division.

### **CFC Rainham 2-4 Herongate (19/01/20) (League)**

A damaging defeat in a game where decisions and luck did not go our way. Rainham were without Charlie Puncher and Luke Mainhood, which meant a bit of a reshuffle for manager Keith Light. Jordan Somers admirably volunteered the gloves after his heroics back in November. However, the game did not start well for Rainham. Herongate launched a long throw into the penalty area and Somers, commanding his box so well, looked set to punch the ball clear. Unfortunately, the ball spun off of the keepers gloves the wrong way and trickled into the back of the net. Rainham then took control of the game with Oli Jones, Charlie Mace and Ryan Gooday causing havoc in the attacking third. Chance after chance went begging for the hosts before they were deservedly level just before the break and what a goal it was. Oli Jones did brilliantly hustling down a long hopeful ball and managed to secure the ball on his chest, out of the corner of his eye he spotted Ryan Gooday coming in from the right hand side. Jones fizzed the ball into Gooday, whose first touch was brilliant, yet his second even better as he swerved the ball over the goalkeeper from the edge of the box and it looped into the top corner. A fantastic finish and thoroughly deserved. Rainham again started the second half on the front foot, constant pressure rained down on the Herongate goal with Jones hitting the bar and substitute Ronnie Jackson being denied by a superb block at the back post. It seemed only inevitable that Rainham would take the lead. Then, the turning point of the game. Rainham defended a corner well and the ball broke to the left of the penalty area, George Light looked to have forced his winger to the byline and made a challenge to prevent the cross with the ball going behind. Unfortunately for Rainham, this was deemed as a penalty and despite vigorous protests, Herongate slotted home the penalty to seize back the initiative. Somers was replaced in goal by Harry Light to try and give Rainham more of an attacking edge but with around 20 minutes to go, Light was left exposed on the break and tried to smother the ball at the strikers feet but it agonizingly bobbed free and allowed Herongate to further extend their lead. The game seemed lost for Rainham who were now letting their emotions towards the referee get the better of them. However there was a glimmer of hope after a long throw from Reece Rhodes was flicked on by Somers and was deemed to have hit the hand of the defender. George Light stepped up and slotted the ball into the corner to make it 2-3. Rainham piled forward in search of the equaliser and almost secured it when Oli Jones pounced on a loose ball but saw his shot tipped over the bar. The game was put beyond doubt in the final moments as Rainham were caught trying to play out from the back and Herongate nipped in to square the ball and place the ball into an empty net. A disastrous day in Rainham's push for promotion after two excellent results post Christmas.

### **South Brentwood 3-2 CFC Rainham (26/01/20) (League)**

It seemed the footballing gods had it in for us during this period of the season. Rainham were cruising and should have gone on to comfortably dispatch of a fellow promotion rival. Yet, a 2 goal lead was squandered and more disputes with the officials cost us the game. Rainham started the game on the front foot and were rewarded for their constant pressure when Charlie Amato tried his luck from distance. The ball took a slight deflection, which seemed to wrong foot the goalkeeper and the ball squirmed into the back of the net. A great start for the away side and it didn't take long to further extend their lead. Some great pressing from Jordan Somers forced the error from the Brentwood defender and Somers made no mistake when bearing down on goal to slot the ball through the legs of the keeper and into the net. The game changed just before half time. George Light was sent to the sin bin for dissent and South Brentwood took advantage of the extra man, smashing home a cross at the back post. The second half was now slightly more of an even contest and after Dan Rogers broke away and was seemingly brought down by the last defender, the referee had another decision to make. Remarkably, no foul was awarded and in the aftermath, Harry Light was sent to the sin bin for further alleged dissent. Rainham tried their best to keep their cool and defend their lead but with even manager Keith Light questioning the decisions of the referee it was clear the game was heading in the wrong direction for the away side. Seconds before Light was allowed back on the field, the equaliser came causing fury amongst the Rainham team as Keith Light had proved Harry Light should have been allowed back on the field over 2 minutes before the goal. Keith was then himself sent to the changing rooms. The inevitable winner for South Brentwood came as they beat the Rainham offside trap and slotted past Charlie Puncher to snatch the win. Further salt was put into the wounds in the dying embers of the game as South Brentwood began to show clear dissent towards the referee yet no action was taken. Consecutive defeats snatched from the jaws of victory for Rainham. Yes they will look back and know they should have handled the situations better but the officiating in both games left a very bitter taste in our mouths.

### **CFC Rainham 5-1 Zone 4 (02/02/20) (League)**

After back to back defeats in controversial circumstances, Rainham got back to winning ways in style hammering the league leaders in a dominant display. Rainham were superb from start to finish and gave them a glimmer of hope to get back in the promotion race. Rainham raced into a 2 goal lead with Reece Rhodes heading in a Ryan Goodday free kick and then Harry Light calmly finishing (with his right foot!) after great closing down from Jordan Somers. Zone 4 then pulled one back, bundling in a free kick before the real turning point of the game. Capitalising on a sloppy back pass, Luke Mainhood stole in from his new left wing back position to finish superbly and put Rainham into a 3-1 half time lead. The second half, surprisingly, was a stroll with the expected pressure from Zone 4 not materialising and a fourth for Rainham was added from the spot by Ryan Goodday before Ronnie Jackson rounded off the scoring with a header after smart work from Ben Little. A great result to boost confidence ahead of another tough run of games.

### **CFC Rainham 3-0 Emerson Oak (23/02/20) (League)**

Three weeks without a game and some key players missing through injury, Rainham came into the game on the back foot against a fellow promotion-chasing side. However, the boys got off to the perfect start, taking control of the game when Charlie Amato's beautifully flighted ball was finished off by Ben Little with a brave header ahead of the on-rushing goalkeeper. Playing against the wind in the first half, Rainham then endured a lot of pressure from the visitors but defended brilliantly with Charlie Puncher making one great save low down after Emerson Oak resorted to shots from distance. Half time came at the right time and then early in the second half the game was put beyond Oak's reach. Dan Rogers, who worked tirelessly all game up top, chased down what seemed a lost cause to dispossess the opposition keeper and roll the ball into an empty net. Further gloss was then put on the scoreline as Ben Little pounced on yet more hesitant defending to round the goalkeeper and slot the ball into the corner from a tight angle. January's blip was well and truly buried as Rainham put themselves back in the hunt for promotion.

### **CFC Rainham 4-3 South Brentwood (01/03/20) (League)**

Perhaps a contender for game of the season. South Brentwood, the only unbeaten team left in the league knew a victory here would all but secure their promotion and really dent our hopes. They started brightly and took an early lead with a great strike from the edge of the box, Puncher stood no chance. Rainham rode an early storm and could have been further behind were it not for some great last ditch defending from Jonno O'Neill and George Light. Then, we found our rhythm and a great burst from Charlie Mace put Jordan Somers through on goal, Somers took his shot early to catch the keeper cold and drove the ball expertly into the corner. For all Rainham's hard work to get back into the match, this was quickly diminished as Rainham failed to stop a cross entering the box which was then brilliantly turned home by the South Brentwood striker on the spin. Half time approaching, Rainham rallied again and Jonno O'Neill slammed home a header from Harry Light's corner to enter the break all square. Again contending with a strong wind, Rainham started the second half on the front foot and spent the first 10 minutes camped in Brentwood's half. The pressure eventually told when George Light's free kick from the left found its way into the corner. Credit to Brentwood, with momentum seemingly with Rainham in the game, a quick counter saw them equalise despite goal line blocks from Michael Herd and then George Light, the ball was eventually smashed home. 3-3 with 15 minutes left and Rainham needing victory to press home their promotion push up stepped Dan Rogers after some strong play from Mainhood and Somers on the left a low cross was bundled home by Rogers at the back post (despite their linesman doing his very best to disallow the goal for all sorts of reasons) to give Rainham their 3<sup>rd</sup> league win in a row against the top 3 teams and left us in 4<sup>th</sup> place just 6 points behind the promotion spot with games in hand.

## **CFC Rainham 4-4 Harold Hill (AET, Rainham win 6-5 on pens) (08/03/20) (Div 2 League Cup)**

If you thought the week before was a rollercoaster then you had seen nothing yet. Rainham were looking for their first ever cup final and were up against a Harold Hill side who nobody knew a lot about having only played 6 league games all season with a mixed bag of results. Maybe this uncertainty was a factor to the start of the game and two set pieces in the first 15 minutes caused trouble at the back for Rainham and they found themselves 2-0 down and manager Keith Light with his head in his hands. Rainham struggled for rhythm and for half an hour were poor with misplaced passes, missed headers, we were second best to everything. Then a spark. Oli Jones back from injury did well to challenge what seemed a lost cause and poked the ball through to strike partner Ben Little. With the keeper charging from his goal and the ball bouncing awkwardly, Little kept his composure and cutely lobbed the ball over into the empty net to give Rainham a route back into the match. Momentum had shifted and just a few minutes later a well worked throw-in from George Light and Oli Jones meant a cross looped to the back post where Luke Mainhood was rushing in and met the ball with a brilliant cushioned volley which gave the keeper no chance. You could sense the nerves being released from the Rainham players and the comeback was complete seconds before half time. Callum Murphy hustled his way through a few challenges and played the ball out to George Light, who then played a teasing cross which evading the Harold Hill defenders and goalkeeper for Oli Jones to nod into an empty net. Unfortunately, the half time message from Keith to see out the game professionally did not work out as two minutes into the second half a Harold Hill equaliser from yet another set piece threw the game wide open. Things got worse for the home time shortly after, with a cross that was for all the world heading behind and out of play swung back onto the corner of the crossbar and bounced down perfectly for the Harold Hill striker to tap home. 25 minutes to save the semi final. Rainham threw everything at Hill for the remainder of the game yet it seemed the ball just would not fall for us. With time running out, a clipped cross from Harry Light found Oli Jones on the edge of the box and with a body swerve only ever seen late on a Saturday night from him, sent three defenders the wrong way to drill in the equaliser. Extra time loomed. Extra time seemed to fly by with both teams taking cautious approach however with virtually seconds left great play from Gooday set up Ben Little 6 yards out centre of the goal. How the ball didn't end up in the net is a mystery as Ben's effort followed by Oli's and Harry's strikes were somehow kept out. Penalties and the memories of the semi-final shootout from the previous year were there for all involved. Gooday and Jones dispatched the first two spot kicks with Harold Hill matching, then, a breakthrough as Charlie Puncher stood tall to beat away Hill's third penalty. That advantage was soon gone as Callum Murphy saw his penalty saved for Rainham. With the score at 3-2 Harold Hill, Jonno O'Neill broke all rules regarding centre halves to guide his penalty into the top corner. Sudden death and George Light had to score to keep Rainham alive- which he did sending the keeper the wrong way. Harry Light then had the same scenario... and it ended with the same result another cool, calm penalty. Then the moment. Puncher guessed correctly and with a strong hand palmed the ball to safety which left Reece Rhodes the opportunity to send Rainham through. Rules regarding centre halves were thankfully also broken on this occasion as Rhodes slammed the ball home sparking celebrations. A first cup final for CFC Rainham and it was well and truly deserved.

## **Finance Report**

Having unfortunately finished the season prematurely, we were left with 10 matches to complete the season, therefore our final end of season balance is less than we would have expected. However, it has still been a productive year. We have purchased new goals to be used for training, a complete new away kit and various other small items to keep the running of the club ticking over and we still have a balance of £488. After purchasing our end of season awards through a great deal from Steve, we will have approximately £400.

There are still a few subs outstanding from season 2019-20 and with our squad signing on for the season 2020-21 at £75 we will have enough money to pay our necessary fees (pitch, league administration, insurance etc) to begin the season whenever that may be.

The club accounts are kept on a weekly basis and are available to see if anyone would like to see. The account is held by RCFC secretary Mr Graham Burr. Finally, if there is anyone that feels that something needs to be purchased by the club then please feel free to contact me and let me know, I am happy to hear suggestions.

Keith

## **Future Plans**

Last year the club's plan was to try and begin a 'B' team as soon as possible however, this will probably have to stay as a future plan due to the unforeseen ending to the current season. Along with that, I have started discussions with various people about forming a CFC Rainham Ladies side and a Junior side that will help to build the size of the club. Both of these are in early discussions and will hopefully progress over the following year.

Building on the success of the cricket side of the club, we are pushing hard to expand the football side of the club to ensure that we can give sporting opportunities for families as a whole.

## **Managers View**

At the start of this season our plans were to get promotion to Division 1 and repeat a decent cup run of some description from our first season. We started our pre-season training as usual at the beginning of July, with the loss of Rushi, Nikhil, Dan and Jay from last years' squad so we were on the lookout for quality replacements. A few trialists came and went but fortunately for us, we picked up four quality players in Charlie Mace, Jordan Somers, Reece Rhodes and Ben Little, who we picked up from the youth section of the club. That was the most pleasing signing for me as my plan is to be able to give youth a chance to represent our club in both cricket and football. The training sessions were attended reasonably well and after having had two good pre-season friendlies under our belt I felt we were in a strong position starting the season.( Again without the hard work of Steve Gooday we would never be in the situation of starting a league campaign).

My overall opinion of the season is that we generally played good, quality football but just had the odd blip against inferior teams. Games in which we should have won comfortably we lost and this cost us having a better league record. Having said that, the run in which we were on before the season was cruelly cut short, I feel if that would have continued I am confident we would have secured promotion in the league and would have won the Divisional Cup. Therefore, that would have met the goals that I set for the team at the start of the season. I hope we can continue the momentum we gathered from this season into next as I feel we have a very capable squad to go again to try and win some trophies. I hope you have all enjoyed this season as much as Steve and I have and we already can't wait for the new season to commence as and when that will be.

Have a good rest and see you soon.

Gaffer

## Race for the Golden Boot

Oli Jones	13
Ben Little	6
Charlie Mace	6
George Light	5
Jordan Somers	5
Charlie Amato	3
Ryan Gooday	3
Ronnie Jackson	3
Harry Light	3
John O'Neill	3
Dan Rogers	3
Luke Mainhood	2
Ben Hollis	1
Phil Howard	1
Callum Murphy	1
Reece Rhodes	1
Own Goals	1

## Brentwood Sunday League Division 2 Final table

<b>Pos</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>GF</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>GD</b>	<b>PTS</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>South Brentwood</b>	12	10	1	1	38	20	18	31
<b>2</b>	<b>Zone 4</b>	12	9	1	2	38	21	17	28
<b>3</b>	<b>Emerson Oak</b>	16	8	1	7	41	28	13	25
<b>4</b>	<b>CFC Rainham</b>	12	7	1	4	26	21	5	22
<b>5</b>	<b>Albion</b>	13	6	3	4	33	28	5	21
<b>6</b>	<b>Portville</b>	15	6	2	7	36	41	-5	20
<b>7</b>	<b>Barn Sports</b>	15	6	1	8	41	30	11	19
<b>8</b>	<b>Herongate</b>	12	4	4	4	29	34	-5	16
<b>9</b>	<b>CISK Sports</b>	10	4	0	6	25	27	-2	12
<b>10</b>	<b>Shenfield Eagles</b>	13	3	3	7	31	41	-10	12
<b>11</b>	<b>Harold Hill</b>	8	3	1	4	23	25	-2	10
<b>12</b>	<b>Dynasty United</b>	14	1	0	13	9	54	-45	3

### Remaining fixtures:

15/03/20- Albion H (double header)

22/03/20- CISK Sports H (double header)

29/03/20- Shenfield Eagles H

### TBA:

Harold Hill (H)&(A)

Dynasty United (H)&(A)

Zone 4 (A)

