



Merstham Football Club

Press Release (19th September 2018)

Merstham Football Club is delighted to announce the signing of three new players.

In a whirlwind twenty-four hours, Manager Hayden Bird has secured Fabio Saraiva on a permanent deal, along with Dulwich Hamlet duo Walter Figueira and Amadou Tangara.

In talking exclusively to the Club Website, Hayden explained his decision to bolster the playing squad.

"Although we are sitting in and around mid-table, mistakes have been costly. In my opinion, we should be in the top six and the next round of the FA Cup. Last week was very disappointing and I've decided to make changes in personnel."

"I had a choice, act early while we were only 2pts from 6th and 5pts from 2nd, or be patient, work with the players and find the solutions within the group."

"It's always my preference to try to work together to improve but I could not ignore the calibre of these players once they were made available."

"Fabio is an outstanding talent. The Woking Manager is a friend and I'd like to thank him for making this possible. Both Dowse and Geoff have been a great help."

"Fabio and I have always worked very well together and enjoyed an excellent relationship. I'm delighted he has returned to the Club and he is very pleased to be back."

"Chris is an excellent goalkeeper and part of our plans. However, he has made mistakes and is the first to admit it. At this stage, we need to protect Chris and let him rebuild his confidence. It's not a criticism and is perfectly natural for a young goalkeeper. Amadou impressed me for Dulwich last season, both in his technical ability and his ability to play under pressure. His introduction will take a little pressure off Chris and in working together, I think both goalkeepers will improve. I'm delighted to sign him."

"Walter is a player I like very much. He is a very technical player who will excite everyone. As a striker, he has the ability to score goals, play intricate football in tight areas and the pace to run in behind."

"Without Charlie, we have two young players up front, being complimented by Dan Bennett. It's not fair to ask young men such as Calum and RJ to shoulder such responsibility without support, while we can't expect Beno to suddenly decide he is a centre forward at thirty years old!"

"Signing a striker made sense to the balance of the squad and in Walter, we have a very good one! He initially joins us for three months on loan."

Hayden confirmed all three players will be in Saturday's squad in the League Cup at Thamesmead on Saturday.

"This is a trophy we can win and therefore, a strong team will travel to Thamesmead.

Following three arrivals, Hayden Bird has confirmed two departures in Tom Howard and Sean BonnettJohnson.

"It's really unfortunate that Tom's circumstances changed," explained Hayden.

"Tom has been promoted at Chelsea, which restricts his availability. Due to his new responsibilities at Cobham, he will not be available to train or play some weekends. It's a real shame, but we are delighted to see Tom going so well in Chelsea's Academy."

"Sean has left in search of regular football. He suffered an injury in pre-season which has set him back a little. It's been frustrating for him and we all understand his decision. He wants to play and we simply cannot give him the guarantees he is looking for. Sean is a very good footballer and a really good lad. We will miss him."

Everyone at Merstham echoes Hayden's sentiments and wishes both Sean and Tom great success.