

**FREE**

(donations welcome – to be split  
between Brandon Heritage  
Centre and the Poppy Appeal)

**BRANDON**  
**1918-2018**  
**ARMISTICE**  
**CENTENARY**  
Heritage Centre  
FOOTBALL MATCH

PROGRAMME.

**Brandon Rec'**

**Vs**

**Town Street**

Kick Off ~ 11.00am Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018

# The war, Armistice and football in Brandon

In 1914, Brandon finished their Ouse Valley League football season on a winning streak, with home wins against Weeting (2-0) and Lakenheath (2-1), and a final fixture, a 2-1 win at Elveden, on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April. The players then put away their hob nail boots, with some players dusting down their cricket whites in anticipation of playing another sport through the summer. Then, in August, war was declared and league football was cancelled. No doubt troops billeted in Brandon played a game or two, but no regular fixtures were played in war time. The reason was highlighted when Brandon hosted Lakenheath in April 1917 and neither team were able to field enough players, making it a 10-aside match. Brandon dominated the game, winning 5-1.

The Armistice of November 1918 saw men come home from war, but their priority was to get a job and return to pre-war civilian life. In the summer of 1919, when life had settled back to some sort of normality, league football resumed. A new resident, at Brandon Hall, Colonel de Lotbiniere (later General) donated land for a new football team – Brandon Recreation (Rec’). He also became their Club President. You may recognise familiar names who served on their committee – **Whitta, Clarke, Rought-Rought, Wood, Relhan, Grass, Lingwood, Bullock, Edwards, Challis, Holmes, Field and Gentle**. Many were businessmen or shop keepers.

If Brandon Rec’ was run by influential decision makers of the town, then another team would need to cater for the football needs of Brandon’s labourers. Or more precisely, the working class living in Town Street. The Town Street squad, otherwise known as ‘Tip, also featured some familiar surnames – **A. Field** (captain), **Dent, Royal, Carter, Whitta, Rumsey, Thompson, Smith, Dixon and Tilney**.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
<b>Town Street</b>	16	10	4	2	37	16	24
<b>Brandon Rec’</b>	16	10	3	3	52	16	23
<b>Elveden</b>	16	8	4	4	47	16	20
<b>Thetford</b>	16	8	4	4	24	22	20
<b>Methwold</b>	16	8	3	5	32	15	19
<b>Feltwell</b>	16	7	2	7	30	36	16
<b>Mundford</b>	16	4	4	8	35	39	12
<b>Lakenheath</b>	16	4	2	10	28	47	10
<b>Northwold</b>	16	0	0	16	7	75	0

In April 1919, the conclusion of this first post-war season, saw Town Street crowned as league winners ... but only just by one point. Brandon Rec’ seemed to be the more entertaining, with 68 goals in their 16 matches.

After more than four years of war, peace reigned supreme in Brandon. This was most evident at an end of season bash, when a Town Street XI took on a ‘Rest of the League’ team, followed by a reception at the Ram Hotel. Food and drink was laid on and representatives from all teams attended, along with the Norfolk Football Association. The King was toasted, then Mr A. Field (Town Street captain) was awarded the league champions shield. Sixteen Tip players were given winners medals.

# After the 1914-18 war ...

It was a big occasion when these two teams of Brandon played against each other, a fixture often held on Boxing Day. By the 1930s, the cordiality of the 1919 season was long forgotten. One resident recalled occasions when linesmen would not fully run the line. It seems they feared the women of 'Tip who constantly gave them verbal abuse and threatened bodily harm if decisions did not go their way! In fact, there was usually some sort of hassle on the pitch too. Where one team saw a hard, but fair, challenge, the opponent saw an aggressive dirty player. Tempers would flare and often get out of hand. It was once recalled that Eric Field's sliding tackles were legendary, but often the spark for igniting tension too. When it came to Tip vs Rec', the rivalry was up there, matching the likes of Manchester Utd/City, or 'Old Firm' derby clashes.



Brandon Rec', black & white stripes, 1922-23

Rec' played at various venues in Brandon, but most remember them playing on the field opposite Manor Road. It is known Town Street played on a field opposite the old Crown pub, which was later covered with bungalows. It was no secret the players got changed in the pub before trotting across the road for the match. Some even 'fortified' themselves with a swift drink before kick off! Tip's most successful season was in 1950, when they won the Suffolk Junior Cup. Brandon Town reserves were still using the colours of Tip into the 1990s.



Town Street over-40s, 1960s



Rec' Juniors, 1920s

## Trophy

The trophy on display today was offered to the winners of a charity match held in Brandon during 1935. Donated by Mr. Arthur Towler, the aim was to raise funds for Brandon Red Cross Society, who in turn were aiming to buy a new ambulance for the town. This aim, long before the National Health Service provided emergency vehicles, became reality just in time for the Second World War. The cup is on display today with permission from Brandon Heritage Centre.



Brandon Town reserves, 1990s



# Timeline of rules

1872 – Wanderers beat Royal Engineers, 1-0, to win the first F.A. Cup Final.

1930 – Uruguay beat Argentina, 4-2, to win the first World Cup.

- 1863 At the Freemasons Tavern, in Blackheath, the original rules of the game were first written down.
- 1869 Goal kicks introduced.
- 1872 The first corner kicks appear.
- 1875 Goalposts get cross bars!
- 1891 Until now, the rules had been enforced by two umpires, one from each team, while a third umpire was ‘referred’ to in the event of a dispute. Now, the third umpire was given sole responsibility and became known as the ‘referee’. Perhaps it was no coincidence this year also saw the first penalty kick.
- 1902 The penalty spot was created, before then a penalty could be taken anywhere on the 12-yard line.
- 1912 Goalkeepers restricted to handling the ball in their area, prior to this they could handle the ball anywhere on the pitch!
- 1920 Players no longer offside from a throw-in.
- 1925 Offside rule shook up so only two defenders between attacking player and goal. Previously it was three.
- 1990 Offside rule changed so the attacking player could be in line with second from last defender. Also, denial of an obvious goal scoring chance became an instant red card.
- 1992 Back pass outlawed.
- 2013 Goal line technology introduced.
- 2017 The first appearance of the Video Assistant Referee (VAR).

1966 – England win the World Cup ... they also make the semi-finals in 1990 & 2018.

---

This event is only possible through the funding of Tesco Bags of Help, and combined assistance of Brandon Heritage Centre, Brandon Remembrance Playing Field Committee, Brandon Town Community Football Club and the many volunteers – **THANK YOU ALL!**

If this match has sparked an interest in what was happening in Brandon during WW1, then why not visit Brandon Heritage Centre’s new WW1 display? The centre, opposite the Fire Station, is open Saturdays & Sundays, 10am to 4pm, finishing on 18<sup>th</sup> November. Pop along and pick up your **FREE** booklet about Brandon during WW1. If you fancy watching more local football, then come and support one of Brandon’s youth or adult squads. Who knows, maybe you will see a most historical contest!

- Darren Norton