**HISTORY OF SWINDON SUPERMARINE FC**

The football club was founded in 1992 from the amalgamation of two established Hellenic League clubs - Swindon Athletic and Supermarine. After the merger Swindon Supermarine regularly finished in the top eight in the Hellenic Premier Division.

In 1994/95 under managers Alan Dyton and Leo Colucci we entered the Wiltshire Premier Shield for the first time and went all the way to the final only to lose out to Trowbridge Town. That all changed in the 1996/97 season when we won our first trophies since the club's merger when we defeated Devizes Town in the final of the Wiltshire Premier Shield and a successful season came to a close when we won the Hellenic Premier Division Challenge Cup with a win over Kintbury Rangers. Under the guidance of John Fisher and former Swindon Town stalwart Don Rogers in the 1997/98 season the team won their last two fixtures to secure our first Hellenic Premier Division Championship.

In the 2000/01 season the team won the Hellenic League Premier Division championship title and the retention of the Floodlight Cup. With the championship secured the application to join the Southern League (sponsored by Dr Martens) was accepted. To secure promotion several ground improvements were successfully undertaken to meet the league's guidelines.

Manager Alan Dyton informed the club of his decision to step down from his role because of work commitments so in July 2001 the club appointed Swindon Town's community officer Clive Maguire as first team manager and equally pleasing was that Alan decided to assist Clive that season. Unfortunately, Clive resigned his managerial post at the end of October and after acting as caretaker manager for three games Alan also left the club.

Clive's resignation came after a disastrous start to the season with twelve defeats from thirteen games. The club then secured the services of the vastly experienced John Murphy. John had managed Cinderford Town, Witney Town, Trowbridge Town and Cheltenham Town and had achieved a few successes in the Southern League. With John at the helm the team staged a tremendous come back in the league to ensure Southern League survival.

The following 2002/03 season was unfortunately far worse than our first season in the Southern League and at the end of September 2002 John Murphy decided to relinquish his managerial position with the club rooted at the bottom of the league.

The committee promoted the club's Academy Director, Tom Jones, to the manager’s position but just a month later he resigned following eight defeats. A few days later former Cirencester manager Ray Baverstock accepted the manager’s position and the difficult task of saving the club from relegation. Ray began the daunting task of keeping the club in the Southern League which he duly obliged with a record seven wins from the last eight league.

The 2003/04 season started so differently from our first two seasons in the Southern League. With Ray and his team at the helm the team started very well with 18 points and a mid-table position by the end of October 2003. So, it was a complete shock to everyone at the club when Ray decided to step down at this time due to personal commitments.

Although Ray returned briefly after reconsidering his position he was gone again within a couple of games. Tommy Saunders' footballing exile ended with the former Chippenham Town boss being unveiled as the man to take over at Swindon Supermarine shortly afterwards. Unfortunately, Saunders' reign only lasted a couple of months as he resigned.

His Assistant, Mark Collier took over the job for the following game against Stourport Swifts and duly led the side to their first victory in seven games. Following that win Mark was offered the position as manager which he accepted and took us to safety with a 17th place finish in the Western Division and Southern League football for the 2004/05 season.

For a fifth consecutive season we started the 2005/06 league campaign in the Southern League, with Mark Collier in his first full season as manager and Ian Howell as his assistant and the club had its most successful season to date with a fifth place finish and a place in the end of season play-off's. Unfortunately, the side lost in the playoffs to a strong Hemel Hempstead Town who went on to secure promotion to the Premier Division.

The 2006/07 season was a successful one as the team scrapped into a play-off place and duly went through to win 2-0 in the play-off final win over Taunton Town to take us into the Southern League Premier Division for 2007/08 season. The team were also successful in winning the Wiltshire Premier Shield with a 2-1 victory over Swindon Town in the final.

The following 2007/08 season, the first season in the Southern league Premier Division the side finished a very creditable 12th place and had something to build on. The 2008/09 season saw the team in the top six in January and they had an excellent FA Trophy run only losing in the last sixteen at Conference side Ebbsfleet. The cup meant the side having to play three games a week in the last month or so and dropped out of contention for a play-off place and finished the campaign in mid-table.

The 2009/10 season saw the team struggle for most of the campaign and it was only in March 2010 that they moved out of the relegation places with a run of good results and finished in fifteenth position, seven points away from relegation.

During the summer of 2010, the Executive Committee released a statement indicating that the team was likely to be disbanded and be disbanded from the Southern League due to a lack of funding. They informed manager Mark Collier that they could not give him the necessary assurances to finance another season in the Southern League and appealed for the friends and supporters of the club to help with a survival plan.

To continue playing in the Southern League a new Executive Committee was urgently required, with new members and an increase in numbers who would commit to finding the required finance. The old Executive Committee and a few enthusiastic supporters met each week over a six-week period then in the second week of June 2010 a new committee was formed to take the club into the new season and in the Southern League!

A commitment to financing a playing budget was made by the new committee and Mark Collier accepted the position of continuing as club manager and began the task of recruiting a playing squad for the 2010/11 season and by August 2010 Collier was confident he had a squad of players that could compete with the remaining twenty-one clubs and maintain a place in the Premier Division come May 2011.

The 2010/11 season saw the club maintain its Southern League Premier Division status with a very creditable 10th place finish, but besides the solid league performance the team had an exceptional FA Cup run when they went further than ever before as they reached the Second Round and only lost 1-0 away to NPower League 1 side Colchester United. A memorable day for all connected to SSFC and its supporters.

A short while after this FA cup run the club accepted the resignation of Manager Mark Collier and Assistant Tom Jones in February 2011 due to personal reasons. Experienced players Gary Horgan and Matt Robinson took over in a caretaker role and rallied the players to perform extremely well and finish the season on a high with three consecutive wins.

The 2011/12 season ended in disappointment for the whole club when the team were relegated from the Southern Premier Division to the Division One South & West after finishing in 22nd place, although only losing our position in the Premier Division for the 2012/13 season on goal difference.

Shortly after the 2011/12 season ended and after long discussions with Gary and Matt the outcome was that a new manager would be appointed for the 2012/13 season in the South & West Division One. Within a matter of days Highworth Town manager Dave Webb was approached by the club committee with a view of taking over the managerial position at the Webb's Wood Stadium.

Dave Webb accepted the offer and along with his assistant at Highworth Lee Spalding, they were duly appointed Manager and Assistant Manager in May 2012 and quickly began the job of building a side ready and prepared for the tough season ahead in 2012/13 and beyond.

In Dave Webb’s first two seasons he managed to lead them to two playoff finishes and two semi-final defeats defeat’s, both at the hands of Merthyr Town, the first on penalties. Last season was something of a non-event as the squad struggled with some devastating injuries that were the main reason for a fourteenth-place finish and a much better season was expected in this 2015/16 season.

The 2015/16 season saw a couple of wins in the FA Cup and FA Trophy that helped the club’s funds. The team finished the season in a playoff position and just as they did in 2012 and 2013, they unfortunately lost at the semi-final stage once more. On this occasion it came from a 2-1 defeat at Taunton Town but overall although a disappointing end the players did themselves proud and were unlucky to lose a game they dominated.

The 2016/17 season saw a team shake up at the beginning with a few experienced players being released and a group of youngsters set to make their mark on the team and the Southern League. The players worked hard all season and all but for a late slip we could have made the playoffs as the team finished in sixth place, just one position outside the playoffs. In the Cups we had a couple of games in each of the major competitions, the FA Cup and FA Trophy, but was successful in winning the Wiltshire Senior Cup, beating neighbours Highworth Town 2-1 in the final.

In mid-January the following season, 2017/18, manager Dave Webb departed the club and his assistant, Lee Spalding, took on the role of Caretake Manager until the end of the season. Come the end of the season Lee and his team finished in fifth place and a playoff position with a Semi-Final at Evesham United. After drawing 1-1 after extra time Marine went through 5-4 on penalties and a playoff final at third placed Wimborne Town. In another tight game, which ended 0-0 after extra time, Marine won 4-3 on penalties and won promotion back to the Evo-Stik South Premier Division and what will be the Premier South Division for season 2018/19.

The first season back in the Southern League Premier Division in 2018/19 was a good season. With the team growing in confidence as the season progressed, we put in some excellent performances against the top sides, but unfortunately dropping too many points against the teams lower down the table. But for that we could have finished somewhere near the playoff positions rather than the 11th place finish we achieved. All in all, though, it was a good achievement to finish midtable in our first season back at this level.

As everyone is aware last season the club, along with all other clubs from Step 3 to 7, had their season ended prematurely when the Covid-19 virus struck. All football at our level was cancelled and declared null and void come April 2020. It was a huge disappointment as the team were settled in fourth place in what was an extremely successful season up to then and a playoff game to potentially looking forward to, but we will never know!

Season 2020/21 started late in September 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic and we saw less league fixtures than the previous season as we only played seven games before we went into lockdown in the last week of October. We did play four further games in the FA Trophy before losing 4-0 to Bath City in the Third Round Proper in Bath.

In January 2021 the FA and Southern League concluded that the 2020/21 season should be null and void and along with everyone we are now hopeful that we would complete the 2021/22 season which we did with a fairly good start to our league campaign we then dipped in the middle and come good at the end of the season when we only lost one in our final eight league games and ended the 2021/22 season in 12th place. It was disappointing in both FA Cup and Trophy with early exits at Poole Town in the FA Cup and on penalties at Tiverton Town in the Trophy. Although we retained the Wiltshire Premier Shield with a 5-2 win over Corsham Town in the final.

The 2022/23 season was the club’s 30th Year Anniversary and it was an historic season with our highest ever position with a sixth-place finish. Just one place and two points off the playoffs. There were several highlights during the season but one of the most outstanding was the 4-0 win over National League South highflyers Dartford with George Dowling scoring a great hat-trick. Disappointedly we suffered a 2-1 home defeat to Harrow Borough in the following round. In the FA Cup we reached the Third Qualifying Round but lost heavily to another National League South side in Farnborough.