



MATCH HEADER

**Fixture:** Gillingham vs Crewe Alexandra  
**Competition, Round:** EFL League Two 2025–26, MD5  
**Date, Kick-off:** Sat 23 Aug 2025, 15:00 BST  
**Venue, capacity:** Priestfield, 11,582  
**Referee team:** Abigail Byrne; ARs Peter Lowe, Daniel D’Urso; 4th Ayrton Hursey

OPPOSITION PREDICTED XI

No	Name	Pos	Age	Nat	Foot	Key Fact
1	Tom Booth	GK	20	ENG	R	2 clean sheets in 4
2	Lewis Billington	RB	21	ENG	R	First senior goal Jan 2024
18	James Connolly	CB	23	WAL	L	Wales U21; ~80 EFL apps
5	Mickey Demetriou	CB	35	ENG	L	Captain; 500+ career games
3	Reece Hutchinson	LB	25	ENG	L	Attacking LB; 2G in 4
6	Max Sanders	CM	26	ENG	R	Anchor; ex-Brighton, Lincoln
8	Conor Thomas	CM	31	ENG	R	2G at Salford (MD1)
19	Owen Lunt	CM	20	ENG	R	Academy grad; Kenny’s nephew
20	Calum Agius	AM	19	WAL	R	Wales U21; 2G in 4
26	Tommi O’Reilly	RW	21	ENG	R	Villa loanee; debut goal
24	Josh March	ST	28	ENG	R	Scored vs Fleetwood; 10G '24–25

MANAGER SNAPSHOT

Lee Bell, 42, ENG — 4-3-3/4-2-3-1; quick transitions; high press.

- 2023–24 L2 playoff finalists (lost at Wembley).
- Declined Burton (L1) Dec 2024 to stay.
- Backs academy; front-foot, shoot-on-sight.

FORM AND TABLE POSITION

**Last 5:** Fleetwood A 4–1 W; Crawley H 1–0 W; Stockport A (Cup) 1–3 L; Accrington H 2–0 W; Salford A 3–1 W.  
**Position:** 1st, 12 pts. **Trend:** quick starts; strong set-pieces; 2 CS.

TACTICAL NOTES, STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES

- In-possession 4-3-3/4-2-3-1; width from full-backs.
- Aggressive press; rapid transitions after turnovers.
- Build via pivot; switches then low cut-backs.
- Midfield runners key scorers early season.
- Creative dip if wide supply stifled.

KEY PLAYERS AND MILESTONES

- Conor Thomas, CM — 2G MD1; late box arrivals.
- Reece Hutchinson, LB — 2G; overlaps, left delivery.
- Calum Agius, AM — Wales U21; tidy movement, 2G.

THREAT SUMMARY

- Early goals and momentum from fast starts.
- Corners/free-kicks to aerial targets (Demetriou).

ANECDOTES, OPPOSITION ONLY

- 2024 “Lakeside Miracle”: playoff semi won on pens with loan GK.