

Online donations fund Hickey surgery

Wealdstone midfielder Tom Hickey has undergone surgery on his anterior cruciate ligament and lateral collateral ligament after raising the money online to fund the surgery.

The 21-year-old, who joined the Stones in the summer from Hampton & Richmond Borough, suffered the injury in training in December but faced a wait until May if he underwent the surgery on the National Health Service.

Undergoing the surgery privately would set Hickey back £6,600, a fee non-league clubs quite simply cannot cover.

Hickey said: "I twisted awkwardly in training with no contact and heard a loud pop noise. The MRI scan showed a ruptured ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) and a damaged LCL (lateral collateral ligament) on the outside of the knee, both of which needed to be fixed.

"I was fortunate the club paid for me to have a private MRI scan so I did not have to wait too long to find out what I had done.

"I was told, however, I would have to wait until May for an operation on the NHS so that would probably have resulted in me missing the majority of next season if not all of it [as I would face] nine to 12 months of rehabilitation."

However, Hickey was able to undergo surgery privately on Saturday whilst his team-mates were succumbing 3-1 to Weston-super-Mare, all thanks to the ingenuity of several close friends.

The midfielder explained: "A few of my best friends, Tom South and Rebecca Thomson, actually completely surprised me with the site to



Wealdstone midfielder Tom Hickey hopes to return to action next season.

Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

help raise funds. It's now raised £2,500 and I can't thank everyone enough, especially those two."

At the time of writing, Hickey's GoFundMe page has been open for nine days and a grand total of 46 donations have raised almost half of the cost of the personal trainer's surgery.

"I need to thank a lot of people.

Everyone at Wealdstone, including staff and players for all their support, the fans, my friends and family, even complete strangers for all their kind donations. It means a lot and the support has been more than overwhelming."

Hickey is now hopeful of returning to action in four to five months, meaning he would be able to assist

Gordon Bartlett's side as early as next season.

Three goals in 20 minutes saw Wealdstone surrender their 11-game unbeaten Conference South record against Weston-super-Mare on Saturday; Sean Cronin pulling one back from the penalty spot after the break.

The Stones will look to bounce back at Staines Town on Saturday.

'You can't ask for any more'

New Harrow Borough boss Steve Baker began his tenure with a 2-0 win over Peacehaven & Telscombe on Saturday and said he could not stress the importance of starting with a victory.

Goals from Kameron English and David Taylor – on their first league starts of the season – sealed the win for relegation-threatened Boro, who move within two points of safety in the Ryman Premier Division.

Reflecting on the win, Baker said: "I can't stress how important it was. We knew the overall situation before Saturday, so the quicker you get the points on the board, the better.

"We knew before Saturday we needed nine wins from 15."

Baker continued: "You can't ask for any more than that. We knew it would be a hell of an ask to keep the club up. The one thing you hope is you will get a reaction from the squad you have got.

"We rode our luck at times and got the luck that (former boss) Dave Anderson probably didn't get in the last few weeks."

Baker's first starting XI did not include any new signings but the former Chipstead boss already has four signings lined up, three of whom were eligible for Tuesday's London Senior Cup quarter-final at Beckenham.

Midfielder Dan Moody has followed Baker from Chipstead, whilst Darryl Brown has joined from North Greenford United, Josh Webb from Burnham and forward Evandro Delgado has re-joined from Potters Bar.

Boro return to league action with a trip to Bognor Regis town on Saturday.

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