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# SPORT

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FOOTBALL: Stones boss upbeat after Fleet defeat | Boro pick

## Bartlett remains positive in hunt for play-off place

#### By Ron Walker

GORDON Bartlett is hopeful his Wealdstone side can still reach the play-offs despite falling 12 points adrift with Saturday's 4-2 defeat by Ebbsfleet United.

The Stones twice fell behind to goals in either half from Dave Winfield and Danny Kedwell.

But they hit back both times against their big-spending visitors, with Eddie Oshodi and Johnny Wright levelling up.

An own goal, David Hunt will want to forget, put Fleet back in front when he headed beyond Jonathan North while unmarked.

The hosts pushed for an equaliser, but shipped a fourth to Sam Deering's injury-time finish.

Wealdstone chairman Peter Marsden told the Harrow Times earlier in the season he expected the club to have a shout of promotion in the final months of the season - which looks increasingly unlikely despite seven points from the final three games of 2016.

But Bartlett, who has been at the Stones' helm for some 22 years, is still positive of achieving that aim. getting in the play-offs but we are playing catch-up," he said. "It's going to be tough, but it can be done.

"It's a long shot and we would need some good fortune, but I'm hoping for some better form in the second half of the season.
"The confidence around the club

has improved a lot recently, and we know what that can do."

On the game itself, Bartlett felt his charges were unlucky with the timing of the crucial fifth goal, with the match balanced on a knife-edge at the time.

He added: "We scored and then Hunty is unfortunate with the own goal - we were in control and had chances before then.

"They're a very good side with some excellent players, and we pushed even at 3-2 but got caught up the pitch late on."

The Stones have added a familiar face to their squad with Nathan Mavila re-joining from Maidstone, while Liam Goulding has made his move permanent.

An FA Trophy trip to Southport awaits for Bartlett and his men this Saturday, with kick-off in the second-round tie at 3pm.



Stones boss Gordon Bartlett still has hopes for a play-off push, although his

### up valuable Surrey point

#### **HARROW EARN LATE 2-2 DRAW AT LEATHERHEAD IN FIRST POINT OF 2017**

HARRY Newman's goal three minutes from time picked up a welcome 2-2 draw for Harrow Borough at Leatherhead on Saturday, as they put their battering from the previous week behind them.

The Boro were improved as they picked up a first point of the year in Surrey, having twice fallen behind.

The Tanners were ahead inside five minutes through Adam Cash's closerange finish, and nearly established an even greater lead before Daniel Carr was stopped by a Brendan Hazlett save.

That miss would prove more crucial than the hosts may have expected given their early dominance, when Sahr Kabba grabbed a second goal in two games from Marc Charles-Smith's knock-down.

David Taylor struck the far post from Joshua Webb's free-kick as Boro improved, and they ended the half the better side

However, moments from the restart

they were behind again.
D'Sean Theobalds finished off a smart move as the visitors were caught upfield with Francis Babaloa and Josh Webb caught out, allowing the Tanners man to slot beyond Hazlett.

But in an end-to-end half, Webb's freekick three minutes from time was cleared to Michael Bryan, and his shot turned home by substitute Newman.

On Tuesday night, Borough were beaten 3-0 by Hanwell Town at Earlsmead in the Middlesex Charity Cup, and will host Canvey Island on Saturday.







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