

# SPORT

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## DEFENDER thanked for 'outstanding contribution'



Jerome Okimo in action against Southend United last season. Picture: Jon Taffel

# 'Club legend' Okimo leaves Wealdstone

by Anthony Matthews

CLUB captain Jerome Okimo has left Wealdstone to seek regular first team football for the forthcoming season.

The Stones "regretfully" announced his departure on their website and stated: "Jerome leaves here in every sense a club legend and we thank him for his outstanding contribution over both spells at The Vale and he will always be welcomed back."

The defender made 271 appearances during two spells with the club, weighing in with nine goals as he played a central part in their last two title-winning promotions.

Having played more than 300 times for Chalfont St Peter, Jerome was signed by Gordon Bartlett in

2013 and was to become a stand-out performer in the backline as Wealdstone secured the Isthmian Premier League title, earning him a move into the Football League with Stevenage.

Okimo then played for Braintree Town in the National League before Bartlett brought him back to Grosvenor Vale in 2017.

His performances in National League South were rewarded with the captain's armband from Bartlett's successor Bobby Wilkinson as the Stones made it into the play-offs.

Although Wealdstone suffered

heartbreak at the hands of Woking, Okimo played a key role as the Stones won the National League South title in the following 2019/20 season under Dean Brennan. He helped keep 11 clean sheets and was rewarded with a place in the league team of the season.

The defender's importance to the club was further underlined as he played all but five minutes of the club's first season in non-league's top division for 32 years, hitting the back of the net in the 5-1 victory over Barnet.

Okimo remained a mainstay of the team in the 2021/22 campaign, making 38 appearances as the club secured their highest league finish in 35 years.

Meanwhile, two Stones players have been on international duty for Grenada and Montserrat in the CONCACAF Nations League.

Ashley Charles won the first of his three caps in Grenada's 3-1 defeat to El Salvador, before featuring in the reverse fixture which ended in a 2-2 draw.

The midfielder, who signed a new deal with Stones before flying out for international duty, then played in a 5-0 defeat to the USA in Austin, Texas.

Meanwhile, Alex Dyer featured in Montserrat's 2-1 and 3-2 defeats to Guyana and Haiti respectively, before playing in the 3-2 victory over Bermuda to take his tally of international caps to 21.

## Father's Day T20 at Lord's

**SPECIAL TICKET OFFER FOR SUNDAY MIDDLESEX MATCH**



Middlesex in Twenty20 action at Lord's. Picture: Action Images

THE first-ever T20 Vitality Blast Father's Day clash takes place at Lord's this Sunday when current champions Kent Spitfires visit the home of cricket to take on Middlesex for what promises to be an action-packed afternoon. Families across the capital are being encouraged to experience the action at one of the world's most famous sporting venues by taking advantage of a special 'Dads go free' Father's Day offer for the match, with a free adult ticket for every adult and under-16 ticket bought together.

With the T20 season coming up to the half-way point, Middlesex will be looking to avenge their defeat to the Spitfires earlier this month at Canterbury when former Middlesex and England star Joe Denly scored a dramatic 110 off just 58 balls.

Off the pitch, the Lord's food village will be open with a wide range of outlets offering everything from fish and chips to Mexican street food.

Families can also bring their own picnic and enjoy the designated picnic area at the ground's Coronation gardens.

The T20 format sees each team face 20 overs with bowlers allowed a maximum of four overs each. In the Vitality T20 Blast, the 18 first class counties are split into two leagues north and south. The top four teams from each league progress to the quarter-finals, with the four winning teams taking part in a semi-finals and finals day at Edgbaston on July 16.

The Vitality Blast Father's Day match between Middlesex and Kent takes place at Lord's on Sunday, June 21, and starts at 2.30pm.

The special 'Dads go free' ticket means one that one adult goes free when an adult and an under 16 ticket are bought together. Adult tickets start from £20 with under 16's tickets priced at £10.