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DEFENDER joins Dagenham after rejecting deal



Sam Howes tips over during his second loan spell with Wealdstone last season

Picture: Jon Taffel

Howes returns to Stones in permanent switch

By Anthony Matthews

WEALDSTONE are set to have a familiar face between the posts next season following the return of Sam Howes on a permanent deal, but defender Nikola Tavares has left the club to join Dagenham & Redbridge after his contract expired.

The 24-year-old goalkeeper has signed a one-year contract with the option of another 12 months and moves to Grosvenor Vale after leaving Horsham last week.

Howes played two games for Stones last season over the May bank holiday weekend after joining on emergency loan, having made his debut for the club back in 2015 during a previous loan spell from West Ham United.

Following that loan move, the former England youth international made another temporary switch to Hampton & Richmond Borough, before leaving the Hammers for Watford. He then joined Eastbourne Borough on loan, leaving Vicarage Road in 2019 to join Woking on a permanent basis.

Howes' career subsequently took him to Chelmsford City, Dorking Wanderers and Horsham last season where he won the Players Player of the Season award.

However, the club have suffered a blow after Tavares chose to move on, despite being offered a new deal on improved terms at his former club.

Stones chairman Rory Fitzgerald told the club website: "We are very sad and disappointed Nik has chosen to leave the football club.

"We have been in negotiations with Nik since October and the board did all it could to keep a player we know is so popular with the fans and in the dressing room.

"Nik turned down the new deal on significantly improved terms and has instead chosen to take up the offer of full-time

football elsewhere. We wish him well."

The 23-year-old moved to the Vale from Crystal Palace in March 2021, making his senior debut that season before signing a contract with Stones last summer.

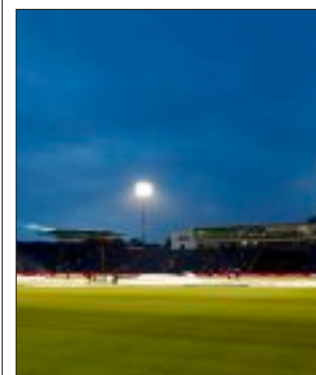
The South African-born player made 27 appearances for the Stones in the 2021/22 campaign.

Meanwhile, the club have confirmed their pre-season friendly at home to Queens Park Rangers will be played on Wednesday, July 20 with a 7.45pm kick-off.

New boss Michael Beale will be bringing his Championship outfit to face Wealdstone after a pre-season trip to Germany.

Middlesex blasted by openers

RECORD STAND SENDS GLAMORGAN TO EASY WIN



Middlesex were blown away at Sophia Gardens

MIDDLESEX were on the receiving end of a crushing defeat in the Vitality Blast as David Lloyd and Sam Northeast put on a record-breaking opening stand of 150, the highest for any wicket for the county in T20 cricket, to fire Glamorgan to victory inside 15 overs on Tuesday. Middlesex batted first at Sophia Gardens and a stop-start innings started and finished strongly with a steady half-century from Max Holden and late order hitting from Martin Andersson help them set 171-7.

This looked to be a total that was defensible despite a small boundary on the pavilion side of the ground, but Lloyd and Northeast chased it down with complete ease.

Lloyd made 67 and Northeast 89 as Glamorgan won by eight wickets with 35 balls to spare.

A sprightly stand of 66 between Joe Cracknell and Max Holden set a solid foundation on which to build.

A quick-fire 15 from John Simpson took Middlesex past the 100 mark but when both he and Jack Davies fell on the same score some rebuilding was needed. Holden and Luke Hollman looked to power through to the death overs and both were looking well set before they fell from successive balls when the score was on 141.

It was Andersson who gave Middlesex a score that gave them some hope of victory, smashing 17 from just five balls to take his team to 171-7.

The Glamorgan innings got off to a flying start as they took the Middlesex bowlers apart in the opening overs, reaching 84-0 at the end of the first six overs.

Both Lloyd and Northeast passed 50 from just 23 balls and by the time Lloyd was dismissed by Hollman the required rate was under three an over.

Colin Ingram and Kiran Carlson knocked off the few remaining runs needed.