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MAYNARD grateful to generous Wealdstone fans



Lewis Kinsella in action in Tuesday night's friendly at Beaconsfield. Picture: Jon Taffel

Friendly scare for Stones

EIGHT GOALS SHARED IN BEACONSFIELD FRIENDLY



Dom Hutchinson scored Stones' first goal. Picture: Jon Taffel

WEALDSTONE'S unbeaten pre-season record survived following a rollercoaster 4-4 draw at Beaconsfield Town on Tuesday night.

New signing Sam Habergham was pitched straight into the starting XI, but Stuart Maynard's men started nervously and went behind early on to a Nathan Minhas goal. The Stones then found themselves 2-0 down inside ten minutes when Minhas doubled his tally after breaking through the defence and rounding goalkeeper Sam Howes. However, the visitors were able to halve the deficit when Dom Hutchinson was presented with a close-range header from a Tarryn Allarakhia cross.

Following a host of changes at the break, Allarakhia scored the equaliser after being played in by Trialist B.

But the Stones were to be level for barely a minute as Andrei Chiriac beat Solomon Balogun to the ball and got the better of Eric Negraru to make it 3-2.

Wealdstone suffered a further blow when a back injury to Lewis Kinsella left them with ten men, but they pulled level again when Trialist E beat two defenders for pace before rounding the Beaconsfield keeper.

The visitors were to take the lead for the first time three minutes later as Trialist B tapped in from close range following good work from Trialist F.

But Wealdstone were unable to hold on for the victory, as Trialist C brought down Shaun McAuley in the box and he got up to just beat Negraru from 12 yards, the keeper palming the penalty in off the post.

Impressive signings bolster Stones' squad

WEALDSTONE have strengthened their squad for the National League season with three impressive-looking signings in the past week.

Defenders Sam Habergham and Lewis Kinsella, and midfielder Max Kretschmar are all experienced, boasting a strong pedigree as the Stones continue to build a squad as they aim to put up a strong challenge in the league during the forthcoming campaign.

Habergham was most recently playing for Peninsula Power in Australia, but he arrives at Grosvenor Vale with more than 200 National League appearances to his name and boss Stuart Maynard is delighted to have signed the 30-year-old.

The Stones boss told the club website: "We're over the moon to get Sam on

by Anthony Matthews

board as it's a vital piece to the jigsaw that we're missing.

"He's got that experience that we lack as a young group, and having won this division and the division above, he knows what it takes and will be huge for the younger players in the group."

The signing of long-term target Kretschmar owed much to the generosity of fans, who helped raise a five-figure sum which enabled chairman Rory Fitzgerald, the board and Maynard to sign the 28-year-old.

The supporters got involved after long-term fan became aware of the availability of the former Woking man

and asked around 100 fans if they could contribute to the deal.

Maynard said he was "blown away" by the fans' generosity and explained: "Max is an unbelievable coup for us as a football club, as he had a lot of options in this division.

"He's someone who had his best season last season, so is coming to us right in his prime. He gets double figures from midfield every season, and we believe we can get even more out of him by playing him off the front.

"We've had so many conversations over the years and the way we played last season, the vision we have for him as a second striker and our belief in how the game should be played, is what has got Max to choose us.

"We've had to stay incredibly pa-

tient in this window as we didn't want to stand still, but that required us to be brave and wait for the right opportunities to come up, rather than sign players for the sake of it. This signing, along with the others we've made have been part of an extensive recruitment plan, and we're delighted it's paid dividends."

Aston Villa academy graduate Kinsella also joins the Stones with a strong pedigree, having played for Colchester United and Luton Town and made more than 140 appearances for Luton Town.

Maynard said: "Lewis is a player we've admired for a while, so we're really excited to finally have him on board.

"He's someone who believes wholeheartedly in how we play and manage, which is why he's chosen us over a lot of more high-profile clubs in the division."