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Harrow's Kai Omoko-Brosnan and Billy Leonard celebrate a goal.

Borough boss bidding for FA Trophy success

HARROW Borough boss Steve Baker has revenge on his mind as his side prepare to do battle with Swindon Supermarine in the FA Trophy third round on Saturday.

Boro were beaten 2-1 in the Pitching In Southern Premier South meeting between the sides in October but were at their best in the last round of the Trophy, winning 4-2 at National League South outfit Concord Rangers.

Harrow reached the semi-finals of the competition in 1983 and Baker is looking forward to the next step in this season's journey as his side head to Wiltshire, having seen last weekend's clash with Tiverton Town postponed as temperatures dropped across the UK.

"Swindon will be just as excited and

optimistic as we are, it's a winnable tie for both sides," he said.

"We lost there and it was one of the best performances we've delivered all season, so we know it's going to be a really tough game. But if we're at it, we'll have a chance."

This is already Harrow's best performance in this competition for over two decades and anticipation around the club is at fever pitch, with a match against the likes of Southend United or Wrexham within touching distance.

But the Boro boss, who has been in the hot seat at Earlsmead for seven years, is in two minds over his dream tie should Harrow progress.

"Cup competitions are funny because if you get through, a part of you

wants to play as lower-ranked side as possible to give you the best chance of getting through," he said.

"On the flip side, there's nothing worse than getting a draw that isn't so great and going out – you almost feel like you've missed a trick."

"If we do get through, I think we'd love to get a home draw firstly, and then if not, the bigger team, the better."

Harrow are one of more than 200 Trident League clubs financially supported by Southern League partners Pitching In, who recently launched a Volunteer Hub to advertise opportunities for members of the community to help out their local club.

And Baker hopes the Reds can reward all their dedicated volunteers

who help the club thrive on and off the field with another memorable day out this weekend.

"We were knocked out early in the FA Cup but we've picked up some form and we're looking stronger now," he said.

"It's great for the club and it's good to repay the people who support us. Financially it's been great and we've earned a decent amount in prize money, so it's an exciting time."

*Ladbroke's, with the support of its owner Entain, has launched a multi-million-pound investment programme, Pitching In, designed to support and promote grassroots sports. For more details see: <https://entain-group.com/sustainability/pitching-in>.

Wealdstone wary of Chelmsford



Wealdstone celebrate Alex Dyer's goal at Bromley. Pic: Jon Taffel

WEALDSTONE aim to banish their recent FA Trophy hoodoo as they visit high-flying National League South side Chelmsford City on Saturday, writes Will Bewsey. Stones go into the game with confidence after a thrilling 3-3 draw at play-off chasing Bromley and just one loss in six National League games.

But Stuart Maynard is cautious the Clarets will be tough to crack after watching their FA Cup tie with Barnet last month.

"When you play a team lower than you it's always a banana skin," said Maynard.

"Cup competitions are always for the underdog. It's a game we'll be going into as the favourite, which doesn't happen very often in the league where we're usually the underdog and the lads will have to deal with a different type of pressure to be expected to win the game. "We watched Chelmsford against Barnet in the FA Cup. It went right down to the wire, Barnet scored a goal out of nothing, and Chelmsford were really competitive, Robbie Simpson's doing a great job there."

Wealdstone won the FA Trophy at Wembley in May 1985 but haven't made the final since and Maynard is well aware of the expectation around the club.

"When you go into the FA Cup, it's a competition realistically you can't win due to the level you're at, but in the FA Trophy, we're in the highest ranked division and we've got an opportunity to go as far as we can and try and win the competition," he added.

"Teams trying to get promoted might not want to go that far if their squads aren't very big, but for us at Wealdstone, it's a competition we go into and believe we can go as far as we can, and it would be a proud moment if I could lead us out at Wembley."

Stones were dumped out by step three Needham Market last season and Maynard said: "Cups are one of those things you need luck in, and I don't feel I've had that luck in recent years. It's something we're hoping to turn around, but it's going to be a tough game."