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## FOOTBALL: Maynard men blunt Daggers rivals



Wealdstone boss Stuart Maynard. Pic: Gavin Ellis/TGS Photo

# Wealdstone raise hopes in strong start to month

WEALDSTONE sit three places outside the National League play-off places following their 1-0 win over promotion rivals Dagenham & Redbridge last Saturday.

Ashley Charles scored the only goal of the game to leave the Stones level on points with Southend United, who currently occupy the final play-off spot.

Having already played 28 League games this season, the play-offs are starting to look like a reality for Stuart Maynard's overachieving side and a strong set of results in February could give them sturdy foundations for a late promotion push going into the final months of the season.

Wealdstone begin the month with a tough fixture at high-flying Wrexham, with the previous meeting between the

By Will Beaman

sides seeing them hold out for a 0-0 draw with the Hollywood-owned side at Grosvenor Vale.

With Wrexham playing an FA Cup replay against second-placed Championship side Sheffield United on Tuesday, and the Stones getting a week's rest, an opportunity could present itself to come away with points from North Wales.

A Valentine's Day date with Brentford B, at home in the Middlesex Cup then awaits the Stones as they look to progress to the semi-finals of the competition.

A penalty shoot-out victory against Edgware & Kingsbury, in which back-up

goalkeeper Dante Baptiste saved three penalties, sent Stones through to last eight and they will be looking to brush past the side that recently acquired Romeo Beckham, son of Manchester United and England legend David, as they hope to lift a trophy in their only remaining cup competition this season.

A home game against 17th-placed York on Saturday week (February 18) is followed up by tricky fixtures at Chesterfield and Woking.

The Stones are yet to face third-placed Chesterfield this season due to postponements, but visit on Tuesday February 21, and a trip to fourth-placed Woking means another two tough fixtures. But if this season is anything to go by, seeing the Stones come away with points would be no surprise.

The month is then rounded off on Tuesday February 28 when Wealdstone face another away fixture at Halifax Town. The previous meeting between the two sides came earlier in the season when Rhys Browne, now of Woking, scored the only goal to see Stones take three points.

Tickets for the home matches against Brentford B and York will be available to buy online and at the turnstiles.

Wealdstone's recently introduced 'Tickets for Schools' initiative saw over 200 pupils and parents from Sacred Heart Catholic school attend last Saturday's fixture for free and the club continue the initiative in the coming weeks with more schools set to be offered the chance to watch elite sport for free to engage youngsters in the sport.

## Harrow earn vital points in the battle against drop

HARROW beat Beaconsfield 1-0 for a first Southern League Premier win in nearly two months and three vital points in their survival struggle on Saturday.

Tuesday's FA Trophy struggle with FC Halifax Town had left a nasty injury list, with James Taylor, Shaun Preddie and Isiah Noel-Williams ruled out - Taylor probably for the rest of the season.

Keegan Bloom, Jaden Sharman and, new work experience signing Sonny Hart, 16, from Swindon Town came in, with Anointed Chukwu back from being cup-tied and Montel Brown on the bench. Chukwu had the first effort on goal, robbing a visiting defender and letting fly, with Plumley saving comfortably, while Nathan Minhas, a past thorn in Harrow's side, turned and shot wide. Samuel Adenola drove wide after a one-two with Chukwu, before Beaconsfield had a period of ascendancy and Bradshaw stretched to poke a shot that Jacob Knightbridge held.

The young Harrow keeper made a superb save when Granville and Bradshaw broke through on goal in a two-on-one situation, while Webb found Minhas who shot across goal.

But Harrow began to get on top as half-time approached and Billy Leonard won the ball to set up Kai Omoko Brosnan whose shot was saved at the near post. The hosts scored the game's only goal on 44 minutes when a good interchange between Brosnan and Ahmet Biler ended with the former delivering the ball to Chukwu, who chested it down, turned sharply to his left and slid the ball past Plumley's left hand.

Harrow gained confidence from their interval lead and dominated the early exchanges in the second half, as Biler picked out captain George Moore his angled shot was saved.

Adenola fired over from long range and Brosnan was foiled by Plumley after an exchange between him, Moore and Biler, but Beaconsfield should have levelled when a sharp left-wing break ended with Granville sliding in to meet a low cross, but missing the target.

Debutant Hart impressed at the back and his long free-kick found Chukwu, whose header was saved, before Leonard's shot was blocked from a deep Biler cross.

As the game entered its closing 15 minutes, a nervous Harrow began to sit deeper and the visiting pressure increased. Ezra Ikebuasi and Hart combined to repel a number of attacks, but Aaron Minhas headed over at the near post, and Knightbridge saved a Reid free-kick in Beaconsfield's late attempt to get a point.

Harrow moved out of the drop zone ahead of a midweek trip to Winchester City and visit North Leigh on Saturday.