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FOOTBALL: Opening day success delights boss



Enzio Boldewijn retrieves the ball from the net after putting Wealdstone ahead against Truro City

Image: Jon Taffel

Cox hails fantastic start by Wealdstone

SAM Cox described Wealdstone's performance in the 2-0 win over Truro City as "fantastic" after they secured a deserved victory on the opening day of the National League season.

Having dominated the opening stages of the match, veteran Enzio Boldewijn opened the scoring on the stroke of half-time after Sean Adarkwa had struck the upright with a curling effort from outside the box.

Substitute Dominic Hutchinson then added a late second to seal the win, leaving Cox ecstatic with his side's display.

He told the club website: "I thought the boys were fantastic. I think from minute one, the effort and the application they took on board was top.

"I've just said to them there in a huddle I'm mega proud of them.

By TOM NORTON
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"The information they've taken on board from the start of pre-season and then applying it in-game – this was the exam today.

"Practice had gone; today was the exam, and I think they were outstanding to a man."

The first half saw the Stones probe for an opener with patience before Netherlands-born winger Boldewijn nodded home from a scrappy corner routine.

When asked if the goal came at the perfect time, Cox responded: "Yeah, it did. We were probing before that, and I think the boys had created plenty of opportunities in the final third.

"I thought Sean Adarkwa, by the way, was absolutely outstanding. All the good stuff we had, he was a massive part of, and if we can keep him fit, he's shown in terms of performance what he can bring to this team, not only as a player but as a character and an all-round human being.

"The goal came at a great time for us. It's a set-piece that we worked on. From set-pieces, you look at some of those giants attacking the ball, and you've got people coming on like Phillip Chinede, who's six foot six.

"That's what we have to galvanise – the spirit within this club we know is there, and we have to take that going forward and keep running the train."

Hutchinson's late goal put some gloss on a successful opening day victory for

the Stones, and Cox was keen to emphasise the importance of a deep squad ahead of another gruelling season.

He added: "Each man has got a role to play. It's going to be a long season, and we've been very fortunate with the signings we've made.

"We've been very particular with the profile and type of character we wanted in the building. It's a little different to what's gone on in terms of recruitment in the past, but each and every player is going to play their part.

"We want competition in the group, you're not successful unless you build that. We're in a good place, I feel."

After a 2-1 win over Wolves U21s in the National League Cup in midweek, Stones host Halifax Town on Saturday and visit Woking on Tuesday.

Middlesex duo set up speedy win

BLISTERING STAND SEES OFF SUSSEX IN ONE-DAY CUP AT LORD'S

SAM Robson and Joe Cracknell shared a blistering stand of 144 in 111 balls as Middlesex sped to victory over Sussex in the Metro Bank One-Day Cup at Lord's. Robson, in his benefit year, struck a run-a-ball 89 (14 fours and a six) while Cracknell also cleared the ropes and hit 12 boundaries in his 78 as the hosts chased down a target of 256 with 25 balls to spare, despite 3-48 for Henry Crocombe. Earlier, Sussex's total of 255-9 was built around half-centuries from Jack Carson (73 from 58) and Fynn Hudson-Prentice (58 in 73).

Noah Cornwell returned 3-50 as 18-year-old Jamie Feldman, making his List-A debut, took a wicket with his second ball on route to figures of 2-36.

Feldman said: "I've watched games here before but never been in the dressing room. So it has been really cool to be here – a great day.

"Over the winter I've been training with Middlesex, got a bit faster and then everything has been happening really quickly. I'm riding the wave and trying not to get injured. It's completely surreal.

"It still feels weird other people actually come to watch you play cricket and it is something other people care about.

"It helps the ground here creates the drama. You feel like you are playing in the atmosphere when you are here and I wasn't too nervous which was good." Middlesex seized the initiative early thanks to Toby Roland-Jones' double strike.

Feldman then made a dramatic entrance, having Tom Clark caught by skipper Ben Geddes, and he cut short Sussex skipper John Simpson's breezy 22.

The fact they batted out their overs was down almost entirely to Carson.

The all-rounder exploited the short boundary, endangering occupants of the Mound Stand on four occasions, as he sprinted to 50 before finding cover in the penultimate over.

By then Feldman had unfurled another party piece, brilliantly running out Danny Lamb with a direct hit.

Middlesex lost Josh De Caires early in the chase, but Robson and Cracknell responded with a boundary blitz as 93 came from the powerplay.

Cracknell's ninth four took him to 50 in 33 balls, Robson's half-century only three more, and the Durham University graduate took a liking to spinner Archie Lennon too, cutting successive balls behind square.

It needed Lamb to end his revelry, but Geddes picked up the baton, reaching 30 before losing his off stump.

When Robson followed seven balls later to a magnificent diving catch by Lamb at mid-on there were home jitters.

But Luke Hollman's mature unbeaten 30 saw the hosts over the line.