

# SPORT

Read the latest sports news at  
harrowtimes.co.uk/sport

## FOOTBALL



Wealdstone in action against York City. Image: Jon Taffel

# Stones boss slams poor defending in big defeat

SAM Cox says he 'can't accept' the poor defending exhibited by his Wealdstone side in the 4-0 National League defeat to York City on Saturday.

Despite a valiant physical performance both in and out of possession, the Stones failed to ever gain a foothold in the match and found themselves two goals behind at half-time after Malachi Walcott and Ollie Pearce both struck to give the Minstermen a comfortable lead.

The latter then added a third on the hour mark before Alex Newby put the seal on an impressive win for the hosts, leaving Wealdstone boss Cox with plenty to ponder.

The Stones manager said: "What we can't accept is the sloppy goals that we've given away. We understand that

By Tom Norton  
londoncommunity@newsquest.co.uk

ultimately, we've asked them to play a certain way away from home at York, and I think in the big moments I think you probably saw the difference in quality, the difference in fitness and physicality.

"The moments that they had to capitalise on us, they punished us. They've got killers in their team; they're a good outfit. Stuart [Maynard] is doing a great job with these boys. It's a massive club for this division.

"So, I think in those big moments, they capitalised, and unfortunately, we didn't – we got punished. I'm really disappointed with a 4-0 loss, but in terms of

effort and heart, the boys didn't stop for 90 minutes, so I have to give them credit for that."

Prior to the match, Wealdstone announced on their website that full-back Terrell Agyemang had joined the club on an initial one-month loan deal from fellow National League outfit Morecambe, who started in the defeat to York.

An untimely double injury to Anthony Georgiou and Alfie Massey earlier in the week accelerated plans for a deal for Agyemang, according to Cox.

"We've lost Anthony Georgiou in the last week through an Achilles problem, and also we lost Alfie Massey, who's out for a long period of time, so I think the fans saw what we saw, that we're patching a few up at the moment," he said.

"That's the game, and we're up

against York, who've got a fantastic budget and a full-time professional outfit, and we're patching up bodies, doing our work in a part-time capacity.

"But the boys are trying so hard. We've brought T [Agyemang] in to help the group. We know he comes in with a pedigree with his academy background. He wasn't going to get the game time that he wanted at Morecambe.

"I've known T for a long time, and he's come in today having only trained for a week. T came in, and he's done a job in there."

After losing 2-0 at home to Nottingham Forest U21s in the National League Cup on Tuesday night, the Stones are back on home soil once again this weekend as Cox's side welcome Sutton United to Grosvenor Vale (3pm).

## Bordeaux deal rules out Willis

RUGBY

Tom Willis will leave Saracens at the end of the season after signing a contract with Bordeaux that will make him ineligible for England selection.

In a major blow to head coach Steve Borthwick, Willis has rejected a new deal from Saracens in order to return to the club where he spent a chunk of the 2022-23 campaign once Wasps had entered administration.

Since heading to north London in 2023, he has established himself as England's first choice number eight and was awarded an enhanced contract by the Rugby Football Union in recognition of the impact he has made.

However, RFU rules state that only players competing in the Gallagher Premiership are eligible for Test selection and Borthwick must now decide whether to pick Willis for the Six Nations knowing that he will not be available for the 2027 World Cup.

Borthwick on Sunday named his first training squad ahead of Australia's visit to Twickenham on November 1, leaving out Willis.

"Tom and I had a great conversation during the week," Saracens boss Mark McCall said after Saturday's 65-14 victory over Sale.

"Tom had put a lot of thought into the decision and he feels like it's the right decision for him and his family.

"He explained a few things to me and we completely respect his decision.

"He's 24 years old and it's up to him what he wants to do and where he thinks he'll be happiest. "Given the decision he had made, how well did he play for us against Sale?"

"He's committed to playing well for us for the rest of the season. "We all respect the decision he has taken."

A number of Saracens players were named in Borthwick's squad for the three-day training camp. Forwards Theo Dan, Ben Earl and Jamie George were all included, along with Saracens colleagues Maro Itoje and Nick Isiekwe.

In addition, as part of a development agreement with Saracens, Noah Caluori joined the squad for training. Teenage winger Caluori scored five tries against Sale.