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## Old Gaytonians get a baptism of fire with the elite

OLD Gaytonians AC found out just how tough it is at the top when they finished 9th in the opening fixture of the British Athletics League Division One held in atrocious weather conditions on Saturday at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium.

In a match dominated by 'super' clubs Haringey and Belgrave Harriers, the Harrow based outfit found it almost impossible to score heavily enough to get within striking distance of the other teams despite being competitive in every event.

The standard of competition was frighteningly good and included a 100m line up that would not have been out of place if it had been a European final.

Although Gayts were never outclassed, unlike other teams, there were no stars to place high enough

in any event to earn big points. Man to man, for example, they were more than a match for Caledon Park, the Edinburgh based club, beating them in 19 out of 32 events and yet finished some 50 points behind them.

"Our strategy has always been to maintain our level of performance across both A and B strings," said team manager Trevor Male "and yet

on the day we did not manage to place higher than 4th in the B string despite always being in contention."

The result is a serious setback to the club's ambition to maintain their place in the country's premier division and it will require a Herculean effort in the remaining three matches to avoid immediate relegation.

Nevertheless, the club is still optimistic about their chances of survival as it feels that the other clubs will find it difficult to maintain the high standards of the opening match throughout a season that lasts until the end of August and takes in the Olympics on the way.

Male feels that the attention of many of the top athletes will soon turn to Olympic selection at the expense of their club. "We have already demonstrated in the first

match that we have the athletes capable of performing at this level and will not be significantly weakened by international calls. With some of their stars missing, the clubs that beat us on Saturday become very vulnerable indeed. Relegation does not become a real threat until after the third round match in July."

Match report on page 106.

# Axe over World League?

REVELATIONS of continued heavy financial losses have again put the future of the World League of American Football in serious doubt.

Only a three year survival plan, launched on the eve of the 1992 season, saved the League from going under four months ago.

But with the all important American tv ratings still poor, despite US teams dominating this season, it seems certain that the National Football League owners, who have already ploughed some £30m into the competition, will have to make another significant cash injection if it is to continue into 1993.

The World League's board reports on the situation to the NFL this week knowing that they need the support of at least 21 of the 28 owners to ensure their survival. Last season the decision went their way by just a single vote.

Meanwhile, the demise of the World League

Champions, the London Monarchs, continued in Florida on Sunday when they lost 9-0 to the Orlando Thunder - their sixth defeat in eight games.

Fred McNair started at quarterback but was unable to get the offense moving as the Monarchs suffered another shutout.

Thunder scored with a 1 yard first quarter touchdown from quarterback Scott Mitchell. A fumbled snap prevented kicker Tracy Bennett adding the extra point but right on half time he kicked a 21 yard field goal.

This week the Monarchs look to end their miserable run when they visit the Montreal Machine.

Other World League results: Barcelona 0, San Antonio 17; Ohio 33, New York 38 (OT); Birmingham 23, Montreal 16 (OT); Sacramento 51, Frankfurt 7.

This week's other games: New York v Barcelona; Birmingham v Orlando; Sacramento v Ohio; Frankfurt v San Antonio.

## Wasps start Middx Sevens

WASPS completed their season on Saturday with a good showing in the Middlesex Sevens at Twickenham.

In their first round match they defeated qualifiers Eton Manor 46-0 scoring 8 tries in the process and looking very sharp.

However, they came up against sevens experts London Scottish in the second round and were narrowly defeated by 12-6. They fell behind to two early tries but pulled back just before half-time with a try from Laurence Scarce.

In the second half the weather conspired against them because play took place in a down-pour which made handling difficult. There was no further score and Wasps went out.

## Russell launches new ko cup

ASTROLOGER Russell Grant has founded a new knockout cup competition for Middlesex cricket clubs, with first elevens playing for the benefit of their colts sides.

The competition, called the Middlesex Federation Knockout Cup, has as its patron the Minister for Sport, Robert Atkins, and its president is Middlesex captain Mike Gatting.

Eight clubs have been selected and accepted into the inaugural 45 overs per side competition and the draw is as follows:

North London Muslims v Hendon/Edgware; Sunlight v Harrow St Marys; Old Meadonians v Sudbury Court; Harrow Town v Wycombe House.

## Wembley line up battle of Super Bowl Champs



Charles Mann (centre left) and Harris Barton, with the Super Bowl Trophy, are welcomed to Wembley by four of the London Monarchs cheerleaders, the Crown Jewels. Picture by Edmond Terakopian.

WEMBLEY'S annual battle of the National Football League's gridiron giants features a 'dream pairing' for American Bowl 92 on August 16 with the Washington Redskins taking on the San Francisco 49ers.

The Redskins are the current Super Bowl Champions

while the 49ers have won four Super Bowl titles since 1981. Together the two teams have won a remarkable seven of the last 11 Super Bowls.

The 49ers have appeared in American Bowl before, but getting the Redskins over is a real coup for Wembley. It will be the first time that they have

played outside of America. American Bowl 92 will also herald the return of 49ers star quarterback Joe Montana. He missed all of last season with an arm injury.

At Wembley on Tuesday to publicise the big game were 49ers offensive tackle Harris Barton and Washington's de-

fensive end Charles Mann, who brought with him the Super Bowl Trophy won by the Redskins with their 37-24 defeat of Buffalo in January.

Tickets for American Bowl 92, priced £35, £25, £20 and £15, are now available at the Wembley Box Office, telephone 900-1234.

## O'Brien is tops with the Lions

ANDY O'Brien's outstanding debut season for Wembley FC was suitably rewarded on Friday when he received the Player of the Year Trophy at the club's presentation evening.

The centre back, who was signed from neighbours Hendon, was a popular choice for the award. He played a big part in the Lions storming finish to the campaign which saw them end up in fifth place in the Diadora League table.

Fellow defender Charlie Flaherty took the Players' Player of the Year award, while the Supporters Club Personality of

the Year award went to assistant manager Fred Smart.

A special award was presented to Jeff Fanner to mark his 250 appearances - a club record for a goalkeeper.

Anthony T.C. Collins swept the honours board for the reserves, who finished fourth in the Suburban League. He won both the Player of the Year and the Players' Player of the Year trophies.

The Wembley under-18 team, which finished runners up to Brentford in the Allied Counties League, named captain Frank Omer as their Player of the Year.

Graham Ash was the Players' Player of the Year while Eric Ossard took the Clubman of the Year award.

Camiliano Grazzoli, who scored over 50 goals in the season, won the Players' Player of the Year award for the under-17s, who finished runners-up in the Harrow Youth League. Player of the Year was Anthony Wright and the Most Improved Player award went to Kieran Quinn.

Wembley chairman Brian Gumm and his wife Jean, the club secretary, received special awards from the players in recognition of their hard work for the club.

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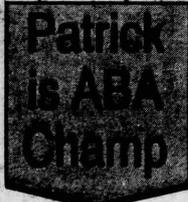
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HARROW boxer Patrick Mullings was crowned ABA Bantamweight Champion at the George Wimpey National Championships at the Albert Hall on Wednesday.

Patrick, an ABA Junior Champion in 1984 and runner-up in the Senior Championships in 1990, finally landed a Senior title when he won a unanimous points decision in his bout with Crawley's Michael Aldis, the Southern Counties Champion.

A member of the St Patricks club, which is based at Ealing Northern Sports Centre in Sudbury, Patrick, who lives in Stuart Road, Harrow, was one of four London ABA Champions who were bidding for National titles.

But he was the only one who was successful.



Patrick Mullings with his ABA Championship Trophy.

## Stones wait to hear their fate

WEALDSTONE'S destiny will be determined at a meeting of the Beazer Homes League's management committee this week, but club officials are not expecting them to avoid the drop.

Their hopes of survival through the demise of Dartford were dashed when the Kent club's shareholders met and decided to continue, and although the fate of Midland Division runners up Hednesford could provide a lifeline, Stones are not too hopeful.

Hednesford have indicated they want to be promoted, but their facilities are reported not to be up to Premier Division standard as they should have been by May 1. If the League gives them extra time, Wealdstone, who would benefit if the midlanders are kept down, are likely to lead the protests.

In the meantime boss Brian Hall has begun the task of re-seasoning his squad for next season with the release of midfielder Martin McGuire.

Others are certain to follow. Colchester United have equalled Wealdstone's non-lea-

gue double achievement. The GM Vauxhall Conference title last week and on Sunday beat Witton Albion 3-1 in the FA Trophy Final at Wembley, despite having a player sent off.

Members of the Stones' double side, including Dennis Byatt, Steve Perkins, Paul Bowgett and Vinnie Jones, attended a successful club Sportsman's Dinner in Watford on Friday at which the guest speaker was Sheffield United manager Dave Bassett.

The event raised a significant sum for the club. Vinnie Jones' FA Trophy Final shirt and that of Stones' other famous old boy, Stuart Pearce, from the Kumbelovs Cup Final, were auctioned, along with autographed footballs from Wembleton and Sheffield United.

In the Wirral annual programme awards, Wealdstone finished 19th overall. They were voted 3rd best in the Beazer Homes League and 2nd best in the Premier Division. Stones' programme is edited by Steve Marshall.