

SPORT

Hopley set for return bout with Carling in derby clash

AFTER playing on the wing against Hartlepool, Damian Hopley returns to his favoured centre position for Wasps' League match with Harlequins at the Stoop on Saturday, writes Alan Bodenham.

The move sets up an intriguing clash with England skipper Will Carling. Two seasons ago Hopley sprang to national prominence after comprehensively outplaying Carling in a League match at the Stoop.

The move also means that speedy youngster John Abdom, a star of the Sudbury colts outfit in recent seasons, takes his place on the wing. He will be hoping to emulate Hopley who was just one season out of the colts when he appeared at the Stoop.

Last season in the two meetings between the clubs, honours were shared, Wasps defeating Harlequins in the league but going down to them in the cup.

The Wasps pack is unchanged with Dean Ryan continuing at lock. No 8 Matt Greenwood, who made an impressive debut at Hartlepool, said on Tuesday that in his opinion the Wasps pack would be a match for anybody this season.

"We've got some very busy customers who know how to look after themselves and nobody is going to relish an encounter."

Euphoria over Saturday's victory was tempered by centre Fran Clough who said "We must go on to improve and not follow the usual Wasps trait of one good performance followed by a bad one."

He added "Our aim must be more than just survival in division one but to try and be up there amongst it."

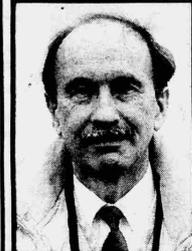
Stones axe Hall, Braxton

But club's survival is still under threat despite cost cutting move

By John Comfort



● Brian Hall.



● Peter Braxton.

MANAGER Brian Hall and long serving administration director and former club vice-chairman Peter Braxton, have been axed in the quest to keep Wealdstone FC alive.

The dramatic cost cutting move was made by the club's administrators David Buchler and Peter Phillips but the resultant reduction in expenditure could still be insufficient to keep Stones going.

In a bleak warning to club members, the administrators said that problems with Watford FC over the jointly owned ground mean that it is by no means certain that the club will even be able to see out the season at Vicarage Road and that if necessary they will suspend its activities and quit the Beazer Homes League.

In a statement issued on Monday, the administrators said that they had now had the opportunity of establishing the financial position of the club and it has become apparent that it could not continue in its present form. The club is failing to match income with expenditure and they had therefore made the decision to make Brian Hall redundant, with immediate effect, and to dismiss Peter Braxton, with effect from October 31.

Hall's popular assistant Dennis Byatt, who has been with the club for 12 years, and was a member of the club's double winning side, has been offered and has accepted the manager's job. Recently appointed club commercial manager, Ian Crossley, will take over Peter Braxton's administrative role when he departs.

Other proposals by the administrators include advertising the club for sale and taking all necessary steps to realise the club's half share in the Vicarage Road ground.

Gipp released by Borough

STRIKER David Gipp is the first victim of Harrow Borough boss George Borg's ultimatum to his players to "play or pay."

He added: "I've never known a team to be so inconsistent. But if they're not doing the job they'll go - even if they have been playing for me for three or four years."

Borg is hoping to strengthen his squad this week with three new signings in time for Saturday's League game with Marlow.

Shodeinde sent off as Lions crash

Thame Utd 3 Wembley 1
REDUCED to ten men, Wembley's interest in the Diadora League Cup was ended at the first hurdle on Tuesday by Third Division Thame, writes Richard Markiewicz.

Already weakened by the absence of Adrian Smith, Paul Shields, Tony Headlam and Gary Morse, Wembley's problems were further increased when they had Peter Shodeinde sent off in the 36th minute. Booked for an earlier foul, he was dismissed following an off the ball incident after Charlie Flaherty had been axed by Julian Dark's late tackle. The score was 1-1 at that stage.

The visitors took the lead in the 14th minute, Bobby Hutchinson knocking the ball into the net from close range after Mark Witter's shot had cannoned off a defender.

But this was cancelled out when Thame equalised with a harshly awarded penalty in the 20th minute. Andy O'Brien was penalised for his challenge on Gary Sealey even though the Thame striker had skipped over the tackle and shot for goal. Kelly Lonergan converted the spot kick.

Matters were made graver by Shodeinde's dismissal and although Wembley battled bravely, Thame eventually made use of their extra man advantage to take the lead in the 75th minute through Dark.

Wembley thought they had equalised six minutes from time when Thame keeper Steve Mayhew appeared to carry a Witter strike over the line. But while Wembley debated the decision to play on, Thame broke clear. Jeff Fanner superbly saved Sealey's goal-bound shot but the rebound fell to Russell who thumped home Thame's third goal.

Wembley: Fanner, Flaherty, Cline, O'Brien, Charles, Lawrence, Shodeinde, Bates (Omara), Page (Andy Smith), Witter, Hutchinson.

Cup mountain faces Lane at St Albans

AFTER their shock win over Uxbridge in the previous round, Rayners Lane could not have a more difficult FA Cup 2nd qualifying round tie on Saturday than away to St Albans City.

St Albans are currently leading the Diadora League Premier Division, and they are unbeaten in all competitions. Even Lane's ever optimistic manager Don Durkin must have some doubts about his side's ability to survive this one.

However, Lane will be boosted by the return of keeper Alex Tsitsis after injury, along with Clements and Owen, but they will still be without the injured Harewood.

If you fancy a bet on their chances, bookmakers William Hill are offering 1/7 St Albans, 9/2 the draw and 16/1 a Lane win. Predicting the score, you can get 25/1 on a Lane win of 1-0, 80/1 on 2-0 and 66/1 on 2/1. More appealing however seems to be the 80/1 for a St Albans win of 9-0 and 66/1 for an 8-1 score-line.

Adrian Smith (virus) and Paul Shields (ankle injury)

should have recovered in time for Wembley's home clash with Kent League club Slade Green. The fit again Steve Lawrence is also likely to be considered for a place.

Wealdstone, who play their tie against Wivenhoe on Sunday, have Grant Gallacher doubtful with an achilles tendon injury. Dermot Drummy has a thigh strain but is expected to be fit.

Keeper Sean Hourihan starts a five week ban for

being sent off in a reserve team game last season and misses Edgware's game at Leathhead on Saturday. That gives Kevin Beckles gets the chance to make the spot his again after losing it to Hourihan in the run in to the championship last season.

Paul Bhatia is struggling with a groin injury and could miss Kingsbury's visit to East Thurrock. Definitely out still are both Ray Mangan and Des O'Connell.

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Antony Quilter Furnishings are keen to make sure that you not only buy a bed that will give you a good night's sleep but one that safeguards your health as well. The good news from Antony Quilter Furnishings is that every bed in the Slumberland range can be made with INTERVENT fabric.

To explain the idea in more detail, a video with Maggie Philbin will also be running in the shop with more information on allergies and how to combat them. Antony Quilter Furnishings also stocks Health Seal pillows incorporating INTERVENT material.



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Saturday September 26
FA Cup 2nd qualifying round: St Albans v Rayners Lane; Wembley v Slade Green (Vale Farm, 3pm).
Diadora League Premier Division: Harrow Borough v Marlow (Earlsmead, 3pm).
Diadora League Division Two: Leathhead v Edgware Town.
Diadora League Division Three: East Thurrock Utd v Kingsbury Town.
Sunday September 27
FA Cup 2nd qualifying round: Wealdstone v Wivenhoe Town (Vicarage Road, 3pm).
Tuesday September 29
Diadora League Premier Division: Harrow Borough v Aylesbury Utd (Earlsmead, 7.30pm).
Diadora League Division One: Wembley v Leam (Vale Farm, 7.30pm).
Diadora League Division Three: Petersfield Utd v Kingsbury Town.
Wednesday September 30
Diadora League Division Two: Edgware Town v Harfield Utd (White Lion ground, 7.30pm).
Capital League: Brentford v Wealdstone.

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