

SPORT

Pilgrim back to face French

WASPS field a strong team for their prestigious fixture against Racing Club of France at Southbury on Sunday, kick off 2pm. In the pack only Jeff Probyn is missing from the eight that lined up against Saracens last Saturday and in the backs Damian Hooley returns after playing for Cambridge Uni-

versity before Christmas. The biggest cause for rejoicing though is the return of Steve Pilgrim to resume goal-keeping duties. Alan Buzza had a well publicised nightmare in that department on Saturday so Pilgrim's return will be greeted with relief in many quarters of the club.

See Wasps FREE with the Observer See page 90

Surprise move as Stones vote to end ground share

Watford make a new offer

WEALDSTONE FC members have voted overwhelmingly to end the club's ground sharing agreement with Watford at Vicarage Road - at a cost to the club in excess of £2m.

But in a surprise move at the club's extraordinary meeting on Tuesday, Watford offered Stones the chance of another year at the ground if they are unable to find a ground share deal elsewhere.

With Wealdstone unable to meet the heavy costs at Watford, it was generally agreed by the meeting that there was little alternative other than to accept the resolution to end the ground share deal. Of the 66 members present, only one voted against, while four abstained.

Supporting the agreement, which had been wanted out by club administrator David Buchler and Watford chairman Jack Petchey, Stones chairman David Pollock said: "I think it is the very best deal we could hope for in very bad circumstances. With the limited options open to us I think we are

By **John Comfort**

doing the right thing."

The deal gives Wealdstone's half share of the ground back to Watford, for which £2m of an agreed price of £2.5m was paid 18 months ago. Watford keep the £2m and will also receive £175,000 in full and final settlement of all previous claims against Wealdstone in respect of ground maintenance and interest. This sum however will only be recoverable if Wealdstone are successful with their pending litigation against former club solicitors Minet Paring, who negotiated the ground sharing agreement with Watford, and against Tesco Stores, who bought the club's Lower Mead ground in Sander Road, Harrow.

Members heard that a date for the case against Minet Paring, who are being sued for £5m, had been set for March 1994, the long delay being due to the lack of court time required to fit in a case expected to last two weeks. The Tesco case could be heard with-

in the next two to three months. With the ground share agreement ended, the prime concern of Wealdstone members was where the club go next, and they heard that two firm ground offers had been received for next season.

Said club director Nick Dugard: "Talks have been taking place over the last six months. A deal will be reached but it must be one that we can afford. We're working for a deal to a maximum of £20,000, otherwise we're in serious trouble."

Then came Watford's surprise move. Following a hastily arranged telephone call to Jack Petchey in America, a solicitor representing Watford told the meeting of the decision to offer Wealdstone the option of another year at Vicarage Road, with Wealdstone's share of ground expenses reduced from 50% to 25%.

Watford want notice by April 17 and if the option is exercised they want a down payment of £20,000, and the rest if the club's litigation is successful.

But he warned: "That is not for negotiation. That is the bottom line." The of-

fer was greeted enthusiastically by members.

A resolution that a sum not exceeding £30,000 from the net proceeds of litigation should be paid to Timmus Saines and Webb in full settlement of their outstanding bill to the club trustees was less than enthusiastically accepted by members with a majority of 25. Former Wealdstone manager Brian Hall was particularly critical of the trustees for incurring the debt.

Mr Hall said he is to make a claim for breach of contract by the club, following his sacking, along with club secretary Peter Brauxton, back in October.

After the meeting, Supporters Club spokesman Dominic Whyte said: "Although it is difficult for everyone at Wealdstone to accept the loss of such a vast investment, I believe that in leaving Vicarage Road we may finally see some light at the end of the tunnel."

"There is much hard work ahead but if a sensible and acceptable ground sharing deal can be negotiated then perhaps we can look forward to a much brighter future for Wealdstone Football Club."

Cup stalemate for Wembley

Uxbridge 0 Wembley 0 WEMBLEY'S visit to Honeycroft on Tuesday for a Middlesex Senior Cup, 1st round tie was their twelfth meeting with Uxbridge in four seasons, writes Richard Markiewicz.

Such familiarity had the obvious makings of a stalemate and coupled with the fact that Wembley had drawn their previous four matches, a goalless conclusion was almost inevitable.

A much changed Wembley side had most of the possession but did not look like scoring particularly after missing the best chance of the match in the 15th minute. An excellent through ball from Gary Morse, which was followed by Uche Egbu's clever dummy, allowed Bobby Hutchinson a free run at goal. But the Wembley striker completely botched his attempt at rounding keeper Sean Dawson who gathered the ball easily.

15 minutes later the visitors felt they should have had a penalty when Egbu, chasing Charlie Flaherty's pass, was sandwiched off the ball by a couple of defenders. Mark Wither fired the loose ball inches over the bar.

Uxbridge's best period followed but a resolute Wembley defence prevented any clear cut chances and the visitors took control of the game after the interval.

The Uxbridge rearguard however was just as solid, limiting the Lions to long range shooting. Adrian Smith came closest to breaking the deadlock with a neat hat on the turn which the agile Dawson did well to push clear. Sadly however the game had deteriorated by this stage, mainly due to some poor refereeing which contributed to the development of several minor feuds towards the end.

Wembley: Fenner, Flaherty (Cates), Morse, O'Brien, Shields, Charles, Ashley Smith, Hutchinson, Andy Smith, Egbu, Wether.

Borough to play host to Rangers

HARROW Borough will stage an FA Youth Cup match between Queens Park Rangers and Coventry City at their borrowed ground on Tuesday, kick off 7pm.

The venture is the first in a new link up between Borough and Rangers which is likely to see a number of the Premier League club's Football Combination matches played at Earlsmead this season.

Stones face long Trophy trip north

IF Wealdstone win their rearranged first round FA Trophy clash with Bashley at Vicarage Road last night (Wednesday), they face a 230 mile trip to North Yorkshire in the second round to play Northallerton.

The Northern League club easily beat previously undefeated Whitley Town 3-0 in their first round tie.

Wealdstone's match against Bashley was in grave doubt yesterday afternoon after heavy rain. A pitch inspection had been arranged for 2pm.

If called off the game was being rescheduled for Monday evening at Vicarage Road, kick off 7.30pm.

Byatt puts seven on transfer list

- Saturday January 10
 - Stokeham League: Shelton
 - Chase Valley: Wootton Bassett
 - Stokeham League: Shelton
 - Team: Newbury Town v Egham Town
 - Senior Women League: Southdown Shelton: Salisbury v Wootton Bassett
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
- Sunday January 10
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
- Monday January 10
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
- Tuesday January 11
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
- Wednesday January 11
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
- Thursday January 11
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
- Friday January 11
 - Stokeham League: Chiswick v Wootton Bassett
 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)
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 - Flintshire: Wootton Bassett v Tottonham (Goalless, 2nd)

WEALDSTONE boss Dennis Byatt has transfer listed the club's seven contract players after being told he must reduce his squad to cut the club's wage bill.

Jim Watson, Martin Blackler, Dave Venables, Sean Pearson, Johnson Hippolyte, Colin Tate and Neil Cordes are all available for transfer.

Trowbridge Town have already expressed interest in Blackler and will probably take the opportunity to watch him on Saturday when Stones go west for a rearranged league game with Salisbury.

Without a league game on Saturday, Harrow Borough have an attractive identity at home to a Tottenham XI which is likely to make up of reserve and youth team players. On Monday Borough visit

Ruislip Manor for their Middlesex Senior Cup first round tie which was called off this week.

Pat Ryan returns after missing the cup game with Hayes, and Ian Stewart could get a run out after injury. But the injured Micky Engwell will be out for two more weeks.

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Latest league tables

League	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Chesham Utd.	21	14	8	11	10	10	10	10	10	10
Chesham	21	14	8	11	10	10	10	10	10	10
St Albans City	21	14	8	11	10	10	10	10	10	10
Chesham Utd.	21	14	8	11	10	10	10	10	10	10
Chesham	21	14	8	11	10	10	10	10	10	10
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