SPORT

On song Wembley take their revenge

Wembley 3 Abingdon 2

WITH both Wembley and Abingdon reaching their respective County Cup Finals, one expected a low-key affair when they met on Tuesday night, writes Richard Markiewicz.

In the event it was a very entertaining encounter which the Lions won by the odd goal in five, avenging their defeat by Abingdon earlier in the season.

Wembley opened the scoring in the 19th minute. Mark Witter's persistence in chasing a loose pass was suitably rewarded when he shrugged off his marker to latch onto the ball and proceeded to skilfully sidestep advancing keeper Paul Richardson before slotting into the net via a post.

Abingdon equalised on 31 minutes when Liam Herbert flicked Keith Appleton's long pass across the face of the Wembley goal for Howard Kemp to knock home.

Wembley regained the lead in the 40th minute. Charlie Flaherty rose and superbly intercepted a defensive clearance with a powerful header which was placed perfectly into the path of Kenny Page who deftly lobbed the ball beyond the advancing keeper.

A minute after the break it was 3-1. Witter won the ball on halfway and fed it square to Morse whose through pass was latched onto by Adrian Smith. He slipped it wide to Endersby who side footed it past Richardson to complete an excellent move.

Abingdon hit back and reduced the arrears in the 59th minute when John Harvey-Lynch headed home but Wembley replied and almost scored again with a header from Morse that struck a post.

Wembley: Fanner, Flaherty, Clark, O'Brien, Morse, Headiam, Bennett (Shirt), Adrian Smith, Page, Witter, Endersby. Sub: Shodeinde.

Wasps keep cup team a guarded secret

WASPS are keeping their cards close to their chest and have yet to name their side for Saturday's crucial Pilkington Cup semi final with Harlequins, writes Alan Bodenham.

Coach Rob Smith is preferrring not to reveal his hand until later in the week.

Harlequins, on the other hand, have already named their XV and the major omission is England captain Will Carling.

He sustained a shoulder injury and was withdrawn at half time in last week's Courage League game against Rugby. His place in the centre goes to Gavin Thompson.

Quins have been boosted however by the receipt of a clean bill of health for their skipper, Peter Winterbottom.

The veteran flanker lines up in the pack alongside England forwards Brian Moore and Jason Leonard, with former Wasp, Alex Snow, in the second row.

The match, which will take place in front of a packed Sudbury crowd, is Wasps' most important game since they last played the Quins in the semi final of the Cup in 1988. On that occasion Wasps were beaten in extra time.

In fact Wasps have never beaten Harlequins in the Cup and will be hoping to lay the ghost of several defeats on Saturday.

Discipline will be the order of the day said coach Smith. "We will need to keep our heads in the opening minutes when things are sure to be a little hot," he said.

If recent crucial League matches are anything to go by, Smith is certainly right.

Borough and Wembley go for glory in County Cup Final

Up for the Cup

By John Comfort

LOCAL soccer has its big day on Monday when Harrow Borough and Wembley clash at Enfield's Southbury Road ground, with the prize at stake being the coveted Middlesex Senior Cup.

It is the first time the near neighbours have met in the competition since 1988 when the Lions put Borough out by 5-2 in a semi-final replay at Vale Farm after the sides had drawn 0-0 at Earlsmead.

Wembley are no strangers to Middlesex Senior Cup Finals, having appeared in eight of them, including last season's when they were controversially beaten 2-1 by Yeading. They have won the trophy twice, in 1986 when they made it a double by also winning the Middlesex Charity Cup, and again in 1987.

Borough, by contrast, are novices in the competition. They have only made one previous final, back in 1983, when they beat arch rivals Wealdstone 2-0 at Hillingdon.

However, Borough's current fine form will make them firm favourites to maintain their 100 per cent County Final record on Monday, a viewpoint not disputed by manager George Borg.

"If we perform on the day I don't think Wembley will be good enough to stop us," he said. "But it's a cup final, anything can happen, and we've lost to many sides before that we should have beaten.

"Wembley have done well and have had some good results against Enfield and Yeading, but if we play well we've got a decent chance."

Wembley manager Alan Dafforn ran the rule over Borough on Saturday in their 3-0 win against Yeading and said afterwards: "Overall I was quite impressed with them. They are a sound side and obviously like to play a bit."

But he was quietly confident that his side could go one better than last year. "We've beaten Enfield and Yeading to get here, so we've got nothing to be frightened of - but that would have applied to whoever we met in the final. We're going to go there and enjoy it, and enjoy it even more if we win."

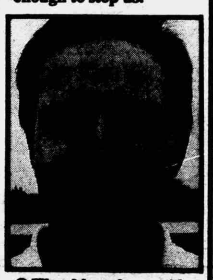
Team news from Wembley is that Andy Smith has recovered from injury and Dafforn expects to have a full squad to select from, providing Wembley come through Saturday's league game with Leyton unscatched, a match that Dafforn said "I could have done without." Paul Shirt and Lee Endersby are both cup tied, and miss the final.

Six of the Wembley squad will particularly want to do well on Monday. Jeff Fanner, Charlie Flaherty, Kenny Page, Bobby Hutchinson, Adrian Smith and Andy Smith are all former Borough players.

George Borg has an injury doubt in Paul Ripley, whose season could already be over with a troublesome groin injury. Borg's only real problem is who to leave out with six players in contention for three midfield places.

Borg, who last week had his fine and touchline ban both reduced with a successful appeal to the FA last week, could get round the ban by naming himself as one of the five subs, a move which he does not rule out.

● Borough boss George Borg - "They're not good enough to stop us."



● Wembley boss Alan Dafforn - "Nothing to be frightened of."

Previous meetings

HARROW Borough and Wembley have met on 42 previous occasions, 25 of them cup games, 14 league games and 3 friendlies. Of those, Harrow have won 17, Wembley 18 and 7 were drawn, writes Tony Booth.

Since their first match in 1947, the two clubs have only been in the same division of the same league for seven seasons. In their last league meeting in 1979, Borough clinched promotion, winning 3-0 at Vale Farm.

Their first clash between the clubs was a 1947 Amateur Cup match which Harrow, then Harrow Town, won 9-0 with J. Drinkwater scoring six. Their most recent meeting was in 1990 when Wembley won a mid-season friendly by 4-0.

In the Middlesex Senior Cup the clubs have met 9 times, Harrow winning 3 times, Wembley 5 with one draw. Their most recent meeting in the competition was in the 1988 semi-final when, after a 0-0 draw at Earlsmead, Wembley scored all seven goals in their 5-2 replay victory at Vale Farm.

The two clubs have not met at a neutral venue before, but in games played between the sides at Earlsmead, Wembley have an enviable record, not having lost there since 1965.

On the other hand, Harrow have won 8 of the last 11 meetings at Vale Farm and Wembley have failed to score in 7 of the last 13 meetings.

Kingsbury crushed

Kingsbury Town 0
East Thurrock 4

KINGSBURY suffered their heaviest defeat of the season against a lively East Thurrock side on Tuesday night and it was no less than they deserved for a very poor performance, writes John Comfort.

Town struggled from the start and after the unmarked Bruce Sewell headed Thurrock in front from an 18th minute cross by Chris Bulgen, the only thing in doubt was the size of the defeat.

The visitors stretched their lead seven minutes into the second half when Danny Wallace slotted home following a scramble in the Kingsbury area and after 77 minutes it was 3-0, Sewell finding the net again after Chris Simpson failed to clear a low cross.

Four minutes later Dave Spittle scored Thurrock's fourth from the spot after Ray Mangan had fouled Wallace in the area.

Kingsbury's lone first half chance saw keeper Dempsey tip over a well struck shot from Lawrence Holmes after a good one-two with Mark Ivers. Their only other scoring opportunity came in the dying minutes of the game when Ian Brown-Peterside headed over an open goal from a Simpson cross.

Kingsbury: Small, White (Walsh), Simpson, Hide, Mangan, Theodorou (Browne), Sunridge, Smyth, Holmes, Ivers, Brown-Peterside.

THE PATH TO THE FINAL

HARROW BOROUGH

Preliminary round two: Wealdstone 0, Harrow Borough 3 (St Hilaire, Ripley, Sewell).
First round: Ruislip Manor 1, Harrow Borough 2 (Cooper, Ripley).
Second round: Harrow Borough 2 (Conroy 2), Hayes 2.
Second round replay: Hayes 1, Harrow Borough 3 (Ripley, Conroy, Shaw).
Semi-final: Harrow Borough 5 (Conroy, Ridout 3, Solomon), Northwood 0.

WEMBLEY

First round: Uxbridge 0, Wembley 0
First round replay: Wembley 3 (Page, Shodeinde, Witter), Uxbridge 1.
Second round: Wembley 2 (Hutchinson, Page), Enfield 0.
Semi-final: Wembley 2 (Shields, Shodeinde), Yeading 2.
Semi-final replay: Yeading 0, Wembley 0.
Semi-final second replay: Wembley 2 (Hutchinson, Page) Yeading 1.

Soccer fixtures

Thursday April 8
Football Combination: QPR v Tottenham (Earlsmead, 7pm).
Saturday April 10
Diadora League Division One: Wembley v Leyton (Vale Farm, 3pm).
Diadora League Division Two: Hungerford v Edgware Town.
Diadora League Division Three: Clapton v Kingsbury Town.
Beazer Homes League Southern Division: Dunstable v Wealdstone.
Hellenic League: Shortwood Utd v Rayners Lane.
Monday April 12
Middx Senior Cup Final: Harrow Borough v Wembley (Enfield FC, 3pm).
Diadora League Division Two: Edgware Town v Ruislip Manor (White Lion ground, 3pm).
Beazer Homes League Southern Division: Wealdstone v Buckingham (Vicarage Road, 3pm).
Tuesday April 13
Diadora League Division Three: Kingsbury Town v Northwood (Silver Jubilee Park, 7.30pm).
Hellenic League: Abingdon Utd v Rayners Lane.
Wednesday April 14
Middlesex Premier Cup Final: Edgware Town Res v Hampton Res (Yeading FC, 7.30pm).

North Harrow Snooker Centre
539/545 Pinner Road, North Harrow
Tel: 081-863 0705
Open Hours 11am till late 7 days a week
★ Snooker ★ Darts ★ Pool
★ Separate Bar ★ Satellite TV Lounge
★ Showing all major sporting events
★ Hot and Cold Snacks
AND MUCH MORE
- SPECIAL OFFER £12 Membership for 1 year
- REDUCED RATES on tables between 11am-4pm Mon-Fri
- Play from 11am for a minimum of 2 hours and get your first hour FREE
- HAPPY HOUR 5-7pm every day, Sunday 12pm-3pm. £1.40 pint lager, £1.30 pint bitter etc.
- FREE MEMBERSHIP for Ladies, OAP's Membership £5.
- JUNIOR HANDICAPPED COMPETITIONS under 18's.

MD

AT LAST - HOW TO GET STARTED AT GOLF
Small group lessons for beginners £39.95
All aspect of the game covered
Sudbury Golf Club
Ladies and gents
Weekends & Evenings
081-902 7910
Book now

PRATTS MOTOR INSURANCE
Established 60 Years
ASK US TO QUOTE OUR LOWEST RATE FOR YOUR CAR
OPEN EVENINGS AND SATURDAYS
Open: 9.00am-9.00pm Monday-Friday
9.00am-5.00pm Saturday
IMMEDIATE COVER FROM OUR OFFICE AT
40 LONG LANE HILLINGDON
TEL: UXBRIDGE (0895) 232212
HE

Typesetting & Origination: Imadie Print & Design Limited, 357 Uxbridge Road, Mill End, Rickmansworth. Tel: 0923 772275. Printed by Waterside Press, Harlow. Published by Middlesex County Press Ltd. Registered at the Post Office as a newspaper.

Image © Reach PLC. Image created courtesy of THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD.