

SPORT

New home site 'not dead and buried'

WEALDSTONE FC say that their hopes of securing the Prince Edward Playing Fields site in Edgware for their new home are 'dead and buried,' despite issuing a statement this week that appeared to be preparing club members for the possibility of a disappointment.

Stones have drawn up plans to turn the site into a multi-sports complex which will include a new stadium for the club but Camden Council, the owners of the land, have yet to make a decision over its sale, although one was expected this month.

Said Stones chairman Paul Rumens: "The Prince Edward Playing Field site situation is coming to a head."

"Political manoeuvring, which is out of our hands, has been influencing discussions but we understand that the potential development is still very much on the agenda being considered by the Sports Council and London Playing

Fields Society, who are likely to have the final say.

"Meanwhile the club is actively pursuing other potential options and ideas.

"As ever at Wealdstone, nothing is straightforward and the board is realistic enough to guard against putting all its eggs in one basket in case of disappointment.

"The board will keep supporters informed as developments occur and it is likely that the club will be in a position to make some decisions at the next agm."

It is proving a frustrating time for Wealdstone general manager Kip Hewitt, the man charged with finding the club a new home. He said: "We're waiting to hear from the Sports Council, who are now the regulatory body regarding building on sports fields so in the meantime we are in limbo.

"We are looking at other options, but we haven't given up on Prince Edward. It isn't dead and buried."

All set for the big kick off 'We will win the league' says McGleish

'WE'RE going to win the League, no two ways about it.'

That is the confident prediction of boss Jock McGleish as Edgware Town embark on the new ICIS Division Two campaign in confident - and winning - mood.

"If we don't do it this season, we'll never do it," he added. "It's the strongest squad we've ever had, we've got strength in depth and that's excluding the youngsters we can call on.

"Usually there is a surprise package in the division, but this year the league looks wide open for winning - no one

stands out."

With McGleish so confident, it's no wonder then that club chairman Michael Flynn has been hastily checking out Edgware's title odds with bookmakers William Hill and is anxious to get a bet on.

The Wares already have one trophy in the cabinet, having won the Harrow Senior Cup, and will be looking to several useful new signings to help them secure more honours.

Most notable is goalscoring midfielder Carl Thomas from Hitchin, who has already proved to be a hot find. McGleish

has also snapped up former Ruislip Manor midfielder.

But McGleish sees centre back Paul McCluskey, signed from Uxbridge, as the potential key to their success. "Hopefully he will tighten things up at the back," he said. "Scoring goals has never been a problem for us - it's letting them in that's the problem."

An successful run in pre-season friendlies has put Edgware in good heart for the new season which starts at Chalfont St Peter on Saturday. "Hopefully we can keep the winning vein going," said McGleish - all the way to the title!

Improvement is the Borough aim

HARROW Borough were on the fringe of the ICIS Championship chase last season and although they fell away in the latter stages, their final placing of 9th was one of their best for some years.

Manager Harry Manoe believes that if he can get the players he wants and manages to keep stars Lee Enderby and Dave Clarke, who are both attracting continued interest from pro clubs, they could fig-

ure in the title hunt this season.

"We're looking to improve on last season," he said. "Unless you're in it to win, there's no point entering. A lot of clubs are investing heavily to win the title and although we probably can't compete with that, we're as strong as we've ever been and we've got a good chance."

However, any Borough success is likely to depend on an

improvement to their consistency and a disciplinary record which last season had key players sidelined for lengthy spells.

Such indiscipline costs Borough the services of Enderby, who has a four match ban, for Saturday's opener at Dagenham and Redbridge. Also out is skipper Bob Dowie, who is unavailable, while Nko Ekoku is injured and new signing John Byrne, the former Irish international striker, is doubtful with a groin problem. Mark Xavier, injured at Walton, is expected to be fit.

Manoe's other new signings are ex-Hayes midfielder, Colin Day, Watford centre back Mark Weedon and ex Aylesbury centre back Paul Bening.

Midfielder Paul McKay has also returned to Earlsmead after a spell with Chesham.

Borough are 40/1 for title

HARROW Borough are priced at 40/1 for the ICIS Premier Division title with bookmakers, William Hill. Enfield are the 2/1 favourites, with Yeovil second favourite at 3/1.

Wembley get an 8/1 quote from Hills for the Second Division title. Edgware Town are a generous 16/1.

In Division Three, Wealdstone are 5/2 second favourites for the title, behind Brentree, who are 2/1. Kingsbury Town are 14/1.

Kingsbury pay the penalty

AN 86th minute penalty, needlessly conceded by Kingsbury's Niall O'Rourke when he handled a Lee Enderby corner, gave Bob Dowie the opportunity to win Harrow Borough's friendly on Tuesday from the spot - and he duly obliged.

Kingsbury: Hinton (Clark), Elliott (Loughlin), Zazera, Gower (Tyan), Stewart, Morris (D'O'Rourke), N.O'Rourke, Ash, Hughes, Blasi (Gillespie).

Harrow Borough: Hook, Robinson (Begg), Solomon, Court, Appiah (Dowie), McKay (James), Cunningham, Isott, Weedon, Hurlock (Prosper), Day (Enderby).

Wealdstone repeated the score of last season's friendly with Maidenhead on Tuesday, beating them 1-0 with a 37th minute goal from David Ross, set up by good work from Rudi Hall and Terry Hibbert.

Wealdstone: Bonfield, Smart, Smith, Moore, Jones, Marshall, Walton (Teskell), Hibbert (Wise), Airben (Ross), Sheldrick, Bircham (Hall).

Substitute Marco Leite's 59th minute volleyed goal secured a 1-1 draw for Wealdstone in a friendly at Bedford on Monday.

Wealdstone: Bush, Massey, Wise, Hibbert, Jones, Smith (Hawkins), Ross, Hall, Sheldrick (Lester), Airben, Tekell.

Edgware lost their unbeaten pre-season record on Tuesday in a 1-0 defeat to a physical Harlow Town side.

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Steve Bircham on the ball in Wealdstone's friendly with Wimbledon on Saturday.

Kingsbury prepare for season of struggle

THE loss of key players Darren Bonfield and Nelson Kumah, and the continued lack of finance to fund replacements, have proved a body blow for Kingsbury Town boss, Peter Blain as he contemplates the new season, which begins with an away match against Southall at Tring on Saturday.

Strikers Lorenzo Blasi and Tyrone Jones have been signed from Barnet College to fill the 32 goal void left by Kumah, while Eugene Dwaah has been recruited from local soccer to boost the midfield, but a new keeper remains a problem as reserve custodian, Steve Hilton, who was expected to slip into the breach, starts the campaign with a 10 week suspension incurred for two sendings off last season.

Kingsbury finished a good 8th last season but Blain is only hopeful of a repeat. "That was our first year without money and I feel we were quite successful, but this time I think we'll struggle. If we get a keeper I'd like to think we can equal what we did last season."

Soccer fixtures

Saturday August 17	Harlow v Villa (Lucas Ave, 3pm)
ICIS League Premier Div: Dagenham & Redbridge v Harrow Borough	Tuesday August 20
ICIS League Div Two: Chalfont St Peter v Edgware Town; Wivenhoe Town v Wembley	ICIS League Div Two: Edgware Town v Barking (White Lion ground, 7.30pm); Wembley v Hungerford Town (Vale Farm, 7.30pm)
ICIS League Div Three: Wealdstone v Camberley Town (White Lion ground, 3pm); Southall v Kingsbury Town (at Tring FC)	Wednesday August 21
Middx County League: Rayners Lane v	ICIS League Premier Div: Harrow Borough v Carshalton Ath (Earlsmead, 7.30pm)

Lions bid for a quick return

FOR Wembley boss, Glen Charles, the bitter memory of relegation last season will not be easily erased - but a return to Division One at the first attempt will certainly help, and Charles is confident that it can be achieved.

He has strengthened his squad with the signing of two prolific strikers in Nelson Kumah from Kingsbury and Keith Boreham from Windsor, plus centre back Dave Sue from Edgware, along with midfielder Chris Haigh, whose previous experience has been in Northern league soccer.

An added bonus for Wembley is the loan signing

from Conference new boys Hayes of striker Eddie Mee for an undetermined period.

Of his squad, the manager said: "It's been strengthened in all key areas and I'm totally happy with it. We're recruiting players long term, not just for a quick fix. Only time will tell if they're good enough."

On the chances of a swift return to Division One, Charles said: "Yes, it is our prime aim to get back first time but it's going to be difficult. We're looking at it realistically, and we know we're going to be shot at. It's going to be a scrap early on and it will not be easy but I'm confident we can mount a challenge. I'd like to think we'll be there or thereabouts."

A top six place by Christmas is his immediate aim as they look to establish themselves and they will then look to push on for promotion in the New Year.

The Lions start the new campaign at Wivenhoe on Saturday but Charles has big time selection problems.

Kumah and Jon-Barrie Bates are both suspended. Sue had eight stitches in a head wound sustained against Boreham Wood and will be missing for a month, while Sofiane Sardi is due in hospital for a hernia operation.

Stones start at home to Camberley on Saturday and will be without Tony Knight and Steve Fraser, who are injured, Chris Walton, who is unavailable, and Jones, who is suspended. Airben will also be missing until he gets international clearance from the FA.

Of their title chances, Bartlett says: "I'm not a betting man but we've got to be looking to be there or thereabouts. We hope to be in the final shake up."

Bartlett's new signings include keeper Darren, Bonfield from Kingsbury, full back John Massey from Essex League football, centre half Stuart Jones from Hertford, and forwards David Ross from Chesham, Brian Hammatt from Wembley and Nicko Airben, a Yugoslav who recently played in Greece. Attacking midfielder Rudi Hall, from Enfield, could also be signed.

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All quiet on Wealdstone front

HAVING seen the promotion he 'guaranteed' last season fail to materialise, it is perhaps no great surprise that Wealdstone chairman, Paul Rumens is tight lipped and making no predictions for the new campaign.

Stones, hot favourites to go up, missed out by a single place, and history suggests that they won't do it this time either! In the past four years, Horsham, Leighton, Harlow and Northwood have all failed to get promoted the season after finishing in 4th spot.

Last season expectations were high for Stones, but manager Gordon Bartlett said: "This has been a more realistic build up and people haven't been getting carried away. I'm happy with the way things have gone. We're not the finished article, we're a couple short of what we need, but we'll keep looking to strengthen the side."

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