

# SPORT

## Crucial test in Boro's bid to beat drop

**HARROW Borough** face two crucial home games against sides, like themselves, close to the relegation reckoning when they meet Hitchin on Saturday and Bishops Stortford next Wednesday.

They have Nko Ekoku back after suspension but John Hurlock will be missing to start a two match ban although he would have been doubtful anyway, after breaking his nose against Bromley.

Chris Metcalfe and Darren Keown remain sidelined through injury, as does

keeper David Hook.

Borough's game at Dulwich, cancelled due to a waterlogged pitch on Tuesday night, has been rearranged for Saturday March 1.

Karl Thomas is doubtful for Edgware's home game with Chalfont St Peter after he aggravated a hamstring injury against Wembley. Wares still have John Shanahan suspended but John Coleman is back off holiday and in contention for a place.

Hurracia Willock and Carlton Mitchell remain sidelined through injury and miss Wembley's home game with Wivenhoe Town.

Nelson Kumah is out for the rest of the season and Andy Smith could also be after collapsing before the cup game against Edgware.

Steve Bircham and Ian Waugh have both completed their suspensions and will be available for selection for Wealdstone's visit to East Thurrock United on Saturday.

Chris Walton is back in training and is hopeful of being fit.

On Tuesday Stones face Braintree at home in a game which will go a long way to deciding the outcome of the League championship.

### This week's soccer fixtures

<b>Saturday February 15</b>	<b>Tuesday February 18</b>
ICIS League Premier Div: Harrow Borough v Hitchin Town (Earlsmead, 3pm).	Associate Members Trophy: Leatherhead v Wembley.
ICIS League Div Two: Wembley v Wivenhoe Town (Vale Farm, 3pm); Edgware Town v Chalfont St Peter (White Lion ground, 3pm).	ICIS League Div Three: Wealdstone v Braintree Town (White Lion ground, 7.45pm).
ICIS League Div Three: East Thurrock Utd v Wealdstone; Clapton v Kingsbury.	<b>Wednesday February 19</b>
Middlesex County League: Northfield CAV v Rayners Lane.	ICIS League Premier Div: Harrow Borough v Bishops Stortford (Earlsmead, 7.30pm).

## Stones - "We won't be shutting down"

THE Wealdstone board say they have no intention of ceasing the club's playing activities at any time in the future.

Said Stones director and press officer, Graham Sharpe: "Although the recent agm voted in favour of an egm in six months time to review the club's situation, the suggestion of temporarily shutting the club down came from the floor and there was no indication of any widespread support for such a move.

"The board is determined to bring the search for a permanent home for the club to a successful conclusion sooner rather than later and with a number of options now being vigorously pursued can envisage no scenario which would persuade it to cease playing activities."



Wealdstone's Tony Smith gets a bear-hug tackle from Tring's Tony Marsh.

# Late strike puts Towers on a high

A THREE pointer from Keith Robinson, with just 12 seconds left on the clock, gave London Towers a crucial 76-75 victory over Chester Jets at Wembley on Sunday which consolidated their position as Budweiser League title favourites.

Not only did it take Towers back to the top of the table, but it also gave them a 2-1 series lead against the Jets - and that could prove vital if the clubs finish level on points when the season ends.

When the final buzzer sounded on Sunday, Chester star Russ Saunders, the league's all-time leading scorer, collapsed in a heap. It was his pass which

was intercepted by Tony Windless who found Robinson outside the arc to calmly nail the match winning basket.

Robinson finished top scorer with 22 points, closely followed by Windless with 21.

The success completed a winning double for Towers at the weekend, having won 81-69 at Crystal Palace on Saturday. Palace might have had thoughts of an upset as they led 22-15 after a quarter and 40-39 at half time, but Towers asserted themselves in the second half for a comfortable win, Windless (18) leading the scoring.

Towers will be looking to book their

place in the 7 UP Trophy final tonight (Thursday) when they meet Sheffield Sharks in the second leg of their semi-final at Wembley tip off 8pm.

The tie is finely poised after Sheffield's 75-74 win in the first leg last Thursday but on home court, where Towers have never lost to Sharks, they will be favourites to go through.

Towers are away to Manchester Giants in the league on Saturday, tip off 7.30pm. Their next home league game is on Sunday February 23 when they take on Thames Valley Tigers, tip off 5pm.

Admission is £6 for adults and £4 for children when booking in advance, but

£1 more on the door.

For tickets call the Towers Hotline on 0171 722 6677 or the Wembley Hotline on 900 1234.

	P	W	L	T	A	Pts
London Towers	21	17	4	1853	1642	34
Sheffield Sharks	22	17	5	1954	1695	34
Chester Jets	23	16	7	1962	1843	32
Birmingham Bulls	22	15	7	1901	1790	30
Leopards	22	15	7	2039	1934	30
Manchester Giants	23	13	10	1782	1726	26
Newcastle Eagles	23	13	10	2055	2013	26
Derby Storm	24	11	13	2097	2109	22
Leicester Riders	21	11	10	1785	1735	22
Thames Valley Tigers	22	7	15	2018	2051	14
Worthing Bears	24	7	17	1998	2176	14
Crystal Palace	24	4	19	1722	1959	8
Hemel & Watford Roy	24	1	23	2008	2541	2

## Mini-Marathon set for the off

ENTRIES have been pouring in for Sunday's 12th annual Harrow Mini Marathon in Harrow Recreation ground, which is the Harrow borough trial for the Flora London Mini Marathon, to be held in conjunction with the London Marathon in April.

Former London Mini-Marathon winner, Gareth Noble, is one of the leading entries for the under-18 race but will face stiff opposition from Sean Hunt and Matthew Nicholls.

Robert Fisher misses the under-16 race because of a school trip, leaving a close race likely between Mark McIntosh and Abbas Noor.

Simeon Taylor is favourite for the under-14 race but could face tough opposition from Peter Norris and Shameer Patel.

Entries will be taken on the day. Entry fees are £2.50 for under-18s and £3.50 for seniors and veterans.

**Race times are:** under-12 (2700m) 2.15pm; under-14 (3500m) 2.45pm; under-16 (5000m) 3.20pm; under-18 (5000m) 3.20pm; seniors (5000m) 4pm; veterans (5000m) 4pm.

## Pre-match drama as Smith collapses

WEMBLEY midfielder, Andy Smith, was rushed by ambulance to Northwick Park Hospital on Tuesday evening in a semi-conscious state after collapsing and hitting his head on a wall during the warm up spell prior to the club's Middlesex Senior Cup game against Edgware Town.

He was later released after being seen by doctors but will have to return at a later date to see a specialist.

He is believed to have suffered two other similar blackouts in recent years.



Andy Smith.

## Who's the ..... in the black?

OBSERVER sports editor, John Comfort, got a bit closer to the action than he intended when he went to Vale Farm on Tuesday night for the Middlesex Senior Cup quarter final between Wembley and Edgware Town.

One of the assistant referees failed to turn up and John, a qualified referee, was hastily drafted in to run the line.

"It was very enjoyable," he said later "particularly as I was running the line on the side where Edgware manager, Jock McGeish, was standing. His customary helpful advice was greatly appreciated."

It was disappointed though that Wembley chairman, Brian Gumm, that other

fond appreciator of match officials, chose to sit in the stand on the other side of the ground. I wasn't quite able to hear his words of encouragement."

An apologetic and very embarrassed missing assistant referee, Graeme Thorley, finally arrived at the ground midway through the first half claiming a bout of amnesia - he had totally forgotten about the game! He took over from John at half time.

It is not the first time that John has come to Wembley's rescue in such circumstances. Two seasons ago he ran the line in a League game against Abingdon after a linesman called to say he couldn't get there in time.



Stand in assistant-referee, John Comfort.

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## Lindo double sinks Lions to put Edgware in Cup semis

**Wembley 0 Edgware Town 2**

CARL Lindo's double strike saw Edgware to victory over neighbours Wembley on Tuesday and into the semi-finals of the Middlesex Senior Cup, where they will be away to Staines.

The Lions must be sick of the sight of the Wares in this competition. This was their fourth successive defeat in it at the hands of their rivals.

The kick off was delayed almost half an hour after the high drama of Wembley's Andy Smith collapsing in the warm-up and the non arrival of an assistant referee.

A fiercely contested first half saw Wembley producing some pretty football but lacking the penetration to trouble the

visitors' defence.

Edgware comfortably absorbed their attacks and although they created fewer chances themselves, they certainly made them count and took the lead after 38 minutes. A fierce Steve Newing free kick bounced off the chest of Kevin Beckles and was cleared for a corner and from Newing's kick, Lindo dived in at the far post to head home.

Edgware's second goal was scored in similar fashion on 59 minutes after Beckles had done well to palm another Newing strike over his crossbar.

Newing again took the corner and Lindo was on hand to scramble the ball home after it had cannoned off two despairing defenders.

Wembley did their best to try and retrieve the situation. Andy Carter made a brilliant save to deny Steve Jones when he got clear, then a Jon-Barrie Bates effort from the ensuing corner was headed off the line by Danny Kirby.

Carter also made a fine save to foil Dwayne Ackerman and twice rushed from his line to make vital clearances as Wares held out in a manner which at times was not pretty, but was certainly what was called for in the circumstances.

**Wembley:** Beckles, Cumberbatch, Jones (Ackerman), Walters, Shields, J.B. Bates, Sardi, I. Bates, Boreham, Thompson (McLeod), Fleming. Other subs: Walsh.

**Edgware:** Carter, Lyons, Mangan, Finnerty, Hurd, McCuskey, Flynn, Newing, Lindo, Thomas (Kirby), Ivers. Other subs: Valenti, Pett.

## Cup draw is good to Stones

IN the quarter finals of the ICIS League's Associate Members' Trophy, Wealdstone have been drawn away to Second Division strugglers, Egham Town.

It is a game Stones will be favourites to win to book a place in the semi finals of the competition.

If Wembley beat Leatherhead on Tuesday night, they will be at home to Hungerford Town in the last eight.

## Award for Hammatt

STRIKER Bryan Hammatt won Wealdstone's Carlton Player of the Month award for January.

In second place was Paul McKay with Fergus Moore in third place.

**Yaku leads the way for Stones**

**Bedfont 0 Wealdstone 4**

TWO goals from Lawrence Yaku helped Stones towards an easy win at Bedfont in this friendly on Monday night. Paddy McDaid, after a great 40 yard run, and Peter Green were also on target in a match which also saw assistant manager Leo Morris get in on the action.

**Wealdstone:** Bush, McDaid, Jones, Weedon, Kelly, Shaldrick, Devenney, Green, Dell, Yaku. Subs: Williams, Morris.

**World Cup ace comes to dinner**

1996 England World Cup hero, Nobby Stiles, is the guest speaker at Wealdstone FC's Sportsman's Dinner which takes place at the Cloisters Wood Country Club, Stanmore, on Thursday March 6.

Tickets for the evening, which will also feature a top comedian and a four course dinner, are £30 and can be obtained by calling Layne Patterson on 381 1671.

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