

# SPORT

## Defiant message to rivals as Wasps go four points clear

# 'Take the title if you can'

'If anyone else wants the championship they will have to come and take it off us,' was the defiant message from Wasps skipper, Lawrence Dallaglio, on Sunday after his side had beaten West Hartlepool by 36-12 at Sudbury to go four points clear at the top of the Courage League Division One table.

It may be that Dallaglio is over optimistic to think he already has one hand on the trophy but he does have a good case though. His side have the points in the bag and their main challengers are not without problems.

Holders Bath, beset with internal strife, have seen the departure of two very influential figures John Hall, and Brian Ashton and vulnerability is starting to show itself at the once invincible Recreation Ground.

Leicester probably see themselves as top dogs but they have had a punishing season.

They appear to have overcome the psychological blow of a heavy defeat at the hands of Brive in the European Cup final but as favourites for the Pilkington Cup they could find themselves dragging exhausted

bodies through two or even three fixtures a week in April.

Harlequins have probably given up on the league and will be concentrating on the Pilkington, while Sale are the dark horses but Wasps have the distinct advantage of playing them at home.

There are also hints that the Wasps squad will be strengthened for the run in and Scottish international winger, Kenny Logan, was an interested spectator at Sudbury on Sunday.



Andy Gomarsall gets stuck at the bottom of the pile in Wasps' 36-12 win over West Hartlepool at Sudbury. Picture: Gareth Beard.

## Jet set stand in the way of 7 UP Trophy glory for the Towers

LONDON Towers bid to retain the 7 UP Trophy at the Birmingham NEC on Sunday when they meet Chester Jets in the final, tip off 6.45pm.

The pairing would have been unthinkable 12 months ago but this season the Jets, for so long the also runs in British basketball, have emerged as genuine contenders for honours and are currently riding high in the Budweiser League in what is easily the most successful season in the club's history.

Standing in the way of their celebrations are reigning trophy holders, Towers, who were treble winners last season and are threatening to have just as big a say in the destiny of this year's honours.

Towers are loaded with talent. Veterans of last season's glory, Americans Danny Lewis and Tony Windless are the dynamic duo of the side, alongside England international Karl Brown and Neville Austin.

At the helm is charismatic coach, Kevin Cadle, uncompromising and easily the most successful coach in the history of UK basketball.

Cadle's men came to this final last year on the verge of their first major prize and will know just how hungry Jets are. And, after two encounters decided on the final buzzer earlier this season, they will know just how tough they are - a feeling that is entirely mutual.

Towers go into the final on the back of League vic-

tories over Newcastle Eagles and Thames Valley Tigers last weekend.

At Newcastle on Friday they put the Manchester horror story behind them by leading from tip off to win 78-73. Windless (20), Lewis (18) and Brown (17) were the top scorers.

Sunday's 93-85 win at Wembley against the Tigers flattered to deceive as the visitors came perilously close to causing an upset.

Leading by 18 points with only a quarter remaining, Towers relaxed and were punished by a 25-9 burst from Thames Valley which closed the gap to just two points.

After Windless missed on Towers' next possession, Tigers let a golden opportunity slip away, failing to get the ball out of the backcourt in the mandatory 10 seconds. Windless (20pts) and Keith Robinson (21pts) then nailed a basket each to finally kill them off.

The win double puts Towers joint top of the league alongside Birmingham and Sheffield but they have two games in hand over Bullets and one over the Sharks.

Towers' next home game is on Wednesday March 5 against Crystal Palace at Wembley Hall 2, tip off 8pm. For tickets, £6 for adults, £4 for children in advance, £1 more on the door, call the Towers Hotline on 0171 722 6677 or the Wembley Hotline on 900 1234.



Hair we go! Wembley skipper Ian Bates in the thick of the action against Bedford at Vale Farm on Saturday. Report and more pictures, page 111.

## Wembley under strength for Leatherhead clash

WEMBLEY are likely to have a less than full strength line up for their visit to Fetcham Grove tonight (Thursday) when they will face Second Division promotion rivals, Leatherhead, in a third round Associate Members Trophy match.

Paul Shields, Ashley Cumberbatch and Carlton Mitchell are all struggling with injuries and unlikely to be fit to play, and with manager Glen Charles wisely placing more importance on the accumulation of league points, he could well decide that this match is

one to offer the chance to a number of fringe first team players.

On Saturday the Lions will be looking to consolidate their lead at the top of the ICIS League table when they visit local rivals, Wembley's Middlesex Charity Cup tie with Cockfosters at Edgware on Monday was called off because the White Lion ground pitch was unfit. A new date has yet to be fixed.

Edgware Town still have Karl Thomas and Joe Lyons on the injury list and they are both unlikely to figure in Saturday's home game against Bracknell.

## Edgware get back in groove



Steve Hurd - scored Edgware's opener.

Seamus Finnerty is also carrying an injury but should play.

On Tuesday the Wares will be bidding for a place in the Middlesex Senior Cup Final when they face Staines Town at their Wheatsheaf Lane ground. Kick off is at 7.45pm.

Waldstone have an awkward looking match at Aveley on Saturday. Apart from long term injury victims, Lee Walker and Chris Walton, Stones expect to be at full strength.

Stones' Associate Members Trophy match at Egham, called off late on Tuesday following torrential rain, is now set to be played on March 18.

Danny Mills is still injured and will miss Rayners Lane's home game with Pithshanger.

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## The latest soccer league tables

Premier Division										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
Enfield	26	19	5	2	63	20	62			
Enfield T	25	19	3	3	42	19	60			
Sutton Utd	24	12	8	4	54	40	44			
Dulwich Ham	27	12	7	8	44	34	43			
Dagenham	24	11	8	5	34	17	41			
Yeading	25	11	8	6	39	27	41			
Oxford	27	11	7	9	50	47	40			
Aylesbury U	25	11	7	7	31	28	40			
Heybridge	27	11	7	9	40	48	40			
Purfleet	28	11	7	10	41	39	38			
Hitchin T	29	10	5	14	40	48	35			
Carshalton	28	9	12	37	40	34	34			
Kingstonian	29	10	4	15	54	61	34			
St Albans C	24	9	5	10	42	42	32			
Bishops St	26	9	5	12	27	38	32			
Sorham Wid	24	9	4	11	32	35	31			
Harrow B	27	7	9	11	38	43	30			
Bromley	28	8	5	12	40	41	29			
Staines	27	7	6	14	31	42	27			

  

Division Two										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
Wembley	27	16	6	5	68	32	54			
Leatherhead	25	16	5	4	67	30	53			
Hornham	24	14	6	4	45	26	48			
Wivenhoe T	28	13	6	9	49	39	45			
Windsor & E	26	11	8	8	44	44	45			
Edgware T	26	11	10	7	47	31	43			
Bedford T	27	13	4	10	47	31	43			
Barking	24	12	7	9	36	26	43			
Legherton T	28	11	9	8	44	34	42			
Collier Row	20	11	8	1	42	20	41			
Met Police	25	11	4	10	45	37	37			
Hungersford	29	9	10	10	50	53	37			
Chalfont St	27	9	10	8	36	35	37			
Bracknell T	26	10	6	10	52	44	36			
Tilbury	27	10	4	13	51	54	34			
Banstead Ath	20	2	8	9	31	32	32			
Waltham	27	9	5	15	43	44	31			
Ware	25	5	6	14	28	45	21			

  

Division Three										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
Wealdstone	20	18	0	2	54	12	54			
Brantree T	19	14	2	3	60	20	44			
Northwood	19	10	8	1	41	20	38			
Harlow T	19	12	2	5	40	28	38			
Aveley	20	11	3	6	41	28	36			
Wingate & F	20	11	3	6	41	31	34			
Hertford T	21	8	4	9	42	43	28			
Wingate & F	20	7	4	9	25	37	25			
Kingsbury T	20	7	2	11	27	35	23			
Lewes	21	6	4	11	25	40	22			
Epsom & E	18	6	2	9	39	30	21			
Clapton	18	5	5	9	14	20	20			
Honchurch	20	2	12	15	35	20	12			
Flackwell Hth	20	4	5	11	16	44	17			
Tring T	19	5	1	13	19	45	16			
Southall	22	2	17	17	11	51	11			

## Jones goes on list

HARROW Borough has put midfielder Brian Jones on the transfer list.

21 year old Jones, who was signed by former Borough boss, Harry Manoe, from Combined Counties League club, Bedford, at the start of last season, has not regularly featured in the plans of new manager, Bob Dowie, and has asked to be given the chance to find regular first team football elsewhere.

His availability has been circulated to other clubs and Borough are awaiting enquiries. They will be seeking a transfer fee. Jones has made over 80 appearances for Borough, scoring 15 times.

Borough will be boosted by the return of John Hurlock after suspension, Nko Ekoku after a bout of flu and Jason Court, who has recovered from a neck injury, for their visit to Dulwich Hamlet on Saturday.

They will however be without defender Sean James who has a torn muscle injury and will be sidelined for 2-3 weeks.

Darren Keown has returned to Millwall after his loan spell at Earsmead.



Brian Jones - looking for first team football.

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