SPORT

Passport to the last eight

Cup draw is kind to Wasps

By Alan Bodenham

WASPS were presented with what should be a fairly easy passage into the quarter finals of the Tetley's Bitter Cup when drawn at home to Fylde in the fifth round. The match will be played on either January 24 or 25.

The Lancashire side are currently bottom of the Allied Dunbar Second Division, but Wasps supremo, Nigel Melville, warned that nothing should be taken for granted. He was, however, quietly confident that his side would progress.

Meanwhile Melville was busily preparing for the crucial Premiership clash with Gloucester at Loftus Road on Sunday, kick off 3pm. "This is a massive game for us" he said "and even though we are very happy that all our hard work is starting to pay off, Gloucester are going to be a tough side to play.

"They have their usual traditional forward strength and coach Richard Hill has worked them into a formidable unit. But in Mark Mapletoft and Scott Benton at half back they have men who can use the possession very well."

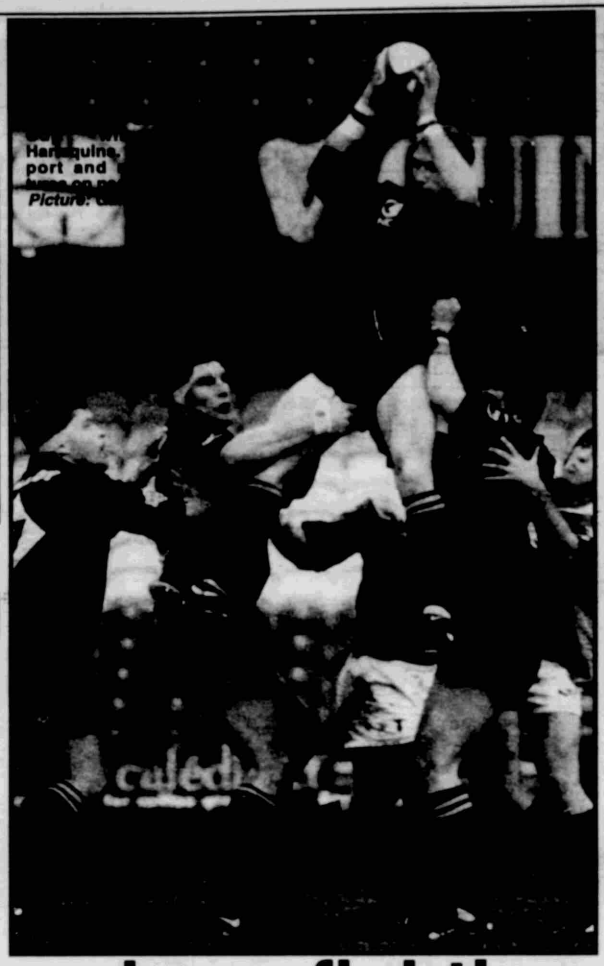
Melville was delighted to report no injury problems after Sunday's magnificent cup win over Harlequins. No selection decisions have been made but it is unlikely that there will be any changes for this weekend.

Speculation linking former England captain, Will Carling, with Wasps has been dismissed by both Melville and Quins boss, Andy Keast.

Melville, with an injury crisis in the centre, rang several First Division sides to enquire about loan deals, Harlquins included, but Carling was never mentioned.

The centre problem has since been resolved with the signing of former Bristol and Cambridge University centre Mark Denny. Also, Kiwi, Doc Murray, the former Wigan centre is currently having trials with Wasps.

There is good news on the Champions' injury list. Scrum half Andy Gomarsall is in full training and should play in the second team this week. Nick Greenstock is also back in harness and should be available before the end of the month.



Wembley 0 Hampton 3

WITH new signings ineligible and several first team regulars unavailable, there was an opportunity for the remainder of Wembley's squad to show off their talents against Hampton in the Middlesex Senior Cup on Tuesday night, **writes Richard Markiewicz.**

They did their best but, showing little creativity in midfield, coupled by a noticable lack of firepower up front, the Lions never really looked like winning this second round tie.

Having hit the post early on and seeing several other efforts cleared off the line, the visitors were the more dangerous outfit and eventually opened the scoring in the 27th minute. Robin Lewis's crossfield pass found Peter Wood free on the left and his low drive skidded across the face of the Wembley goal, landing in the far corner of the net, beyond the reach of the diving Lee Ward.

Francis Vines, unmarked at the far post, nodded in Hampton's second in the 74th minute, ironically seconds after Bradley Scott almost equalised for the home side with a blockbusting close range strike that was bravely smothered by keeper Mark Russell.

The contest was effectively over after that and, capitalising on some sloppy defending, Barry Moore notched Hampton's third goal in the final minute to end Wembley's interest in the competition.

Wembley: Ward, Dee, Levane, Sakhraoui, Scott, Elliott, Hall, Bates, Vincent, Thompson (Mee), Jenkins (Fleming). Other sub: Dockwray.

Brave Edgware go down fighting

Hayes 5 Edgware Town 3

DESPITE a brave, battling performance, Edgware bowed out of the Middlesex Senior Cup to Conference rivals Hayes on Tuesday night, **writes John Comfort.**

Defensive errors ultimately proved to be Wares' downfall, the first coming in the 21st minute when John Lyons and Lee Smart collided attempting to clear a cross, leaving Alfredo Domingos to fire past James Goodman to put Hayes ahead.

A superbly struck shot by Russell Warrrington gave the home side a second goal two minutes later but Edgware hit back and on 34 minutes good work by Andy Murray and Steve Fraser set up Lyons for a shot that keeper Ben Davey could only parry and Smart followed up to net.

Chris Boothe cut in from the right four minutes later to make it 3-1 and it looked all over for Edgware after Hayes had been gifted a fourth goal nine minutes into the second half.

Goodman raced out of his area to clear a Joe Francis through pass, but he totally missed the ball, leaving Martin Randall to shoot into an unguarded net.

When Davey's clearance cannoned off the lurking Murray and into the net after 56 minutes to reduce the arrears, the visitors were give some hope, and three minutes later they were right back in the hunt after Fabio Valenti's left wing cross was steered home by Fraser.

With Hayes reduced to 10 men by injuries, Edgware pressed hard for an equaliser and they thought they had got it when Graham Ash netted from Fraser's cross - but he was ruled offside.

Then with 14 minutes to go Hayes broke, Goodman parried Boothe's shot and Domingos netted the loose ball to cruelly, and finally, kill off Edgware's brave challenge.

Edgware: Goodman, Smart (Murphy), Sheridan (Ash), Hurd, Finnerty, McCluskey, Lyons, Murray, Fraser, Newing (Whytock), Valenti.

Kingsbury set to name new boss

KINGSBURY Town are expected to name their new manager by the weekend.

They were interviewing candidates last night (Wednesday) and chairman Allen Davies said: "Afterwards we will go through them and hopefully be in a position to name the new man soon after."

The vacancy has occured following the resignation of Peter Blain.

New Stones dates

WEALDSTONE'S league match with Tilbury, postponed on Saturday, has been rearranged for March 24. Tuesday night's cancelled game with Windsor will now take place on February 17.

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Gavin [illegible] enough to slip two goal lead

Staines Town 2 Harrow Borough 2

BOROUGH'S recovery from a trough of poor form began in the unlikely surroundings of Alwyns Lane, Chertsey, on Tuesday as they took Staines to a replay in the Middlesex Senior Cup, **writes Tony Booth.**

They looked set to loosen the grip of the holders on the trophy when they held a two goal lead at the break, but they had striker Pat Gavin sent off in the second half as Staines got back on terms, and then extra time failed to break the deadlock.

After early headers from Gavin and Steve Butler had narrowly missed the target, Borough opened the scoring in the 17th minute. David Clarke intercepted a pass in midfield and made progress down the left before crossing for Gavin to guide a 10 yard header inside the far post.

It took an excellent double save from David Hook in the 31st minute to keep the visitors in front, blocking Mitchell's angled shot and his close range effort from the rebound.

But a minute later Borough doubled their lead, Gary Issott putting Xavier through to round a defender before driving home an angled 20 yard shot.

After the break Butler and Xavier went close to further increasing Borough's advantage before Staines began to make a game of it and in the 58th minute they pulled a goal back, O'Shea putting Mitchell clear to score.

Arguably, the game turned five minutes later when referee Keegan somewhat harshly deemed that Gavin's challenge on Battams merited a red card and Staines took advantage, levelling with nine minutes remaining as Driscoll dived in to head home an Ellis corner.

Extra time failed to seperate the two teams who will now replay at Earlsmead this Tuesday.

Harrow Borough: Hook, Clarke, James, Court, Paris, Webster, Issott (Metcalfe), Butler (Bates), Gavin, Xavier, Ekoku (Denny).

Beckles is back at Wembley

KEEPER Kevin Beckles has returned to Wembley on loan from Hayes and will be in the side to face title chasing Leatherhead away on Saturday.

Other new signings include Carl Levane, formerly with Northwood, and ex-Chertsey player Alan Mills.

Edgware Town reserve team boss, Scott Cousins, has joined Wembley as assistant to caretaker manager Peter Grant. Members of Paul Shields' coaching staff, John Smith and Henry Clark have both departed.

Ian Rutherford is doubtful with an ankle injury for Harrow Borough's visit to Carshalton, while Darren Coleman is expected to be suspended for an accumulation of cautions.

With Andy Carter having his broken nose reset, James Goodman continues to deputise in goal for Edgware for their home game with Barking. Graham Ash is back after injury and Chris Glynn is fast regaining fitness, but Gerry Brennan is now sidelined with pneumonia.

Brian Jones is suspended and misses Wealdstone's visit to Banstead. Noel Imber is expected to return in goal after injury.

Soccer fixtures

Saturday January 10

Ryman League Premier Div: Carshalton Ath v Harrow Borough.

Ryman League Div One: Leatherhead v Wembley.

Ryman League Div Two: Edgware Town v Barking (White Lion, 3pm); Banstead Ath v Wealdstone.

Ryman League Div Three: Dorking v Kingsbury Town.

Middx County League: Rayners Lane v Northfield CAV (Lucas Ave, 2pm).

Tuesday January 13

Middx Senior Cup replay: Harrow Borough v Staines Town (Earlsmead, 7.30pm).

Associate Members Trophy: Edgware Town v Wealdstone (White Lion, 7.30pm).

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