

SPORT



A Borough striker shields the ball from a Wokingham defender

Borough open season in promising style

Harrow Borough 1, Wokingham Town 1
THE stay-away fans who missed Saturday's opening Division fixture at Earlsmead did themselves no favours. Only fine goalkeeping from both custodians and an astonishing miss kept the scores down, while the game was graced by a woman linesman, writes Tony Booth.

Harry Manoe bolstered his experienced team with defender Graham Pearce and, on loan from Aylesbury, striker Graham Westley. The visitors began the stronger, with Stuart Walton holding Hyatt's header, then doing very well to dive and save Elliott Pearce's close range shot. Boro responded, with Shaw's shot being saved, then efforts from Fraser and Westley going close before the hosts took a 32nd minute lead.

Jason Court's header gave

Neil Fraser the chance to run with the ball from the centre circle. He outpaced three defenders before shooting in off a post for a good finish. Only a fine save by Scrivens stopped Boro doubling their lead, when defender Mackenzie headed powerfully at his own goal.

Wokingham were on the rack in the early part of the second half too. Westley shot narrowly wide, forced a fine save from a shot, then saw his header parried away.

However, an astonishing 57th minute miss was later to cost Boro dear. Skipper Jason Shaw had put Fraser clear of the defence. Fraser then rounded the 'keeper outside the penalty area. But running at the open goal from an acute angle, and with Leather hurtling towards him, the Boro striker shot wide of the far post. Fraser, his confidence smashed, later left the pitch with a twisted knee. He departed

from the ground on crutches.

The visitors could hardly believe their luck and having gone close through Hyatt and Pickford, equalised after 74 minutes. Pickford was felled by Bensted as he ran toward goal and Hyatt clinically slotted away the penalty. From looking like a good win for Borough, the result was now in the balance. Westley went close with a header and shot, and Shaw shot over, while the visitors saw Devereux shoot just over and Elliott Pearce force another fine save from Walton.

In the end, a frustrating result for Boro - for the spectator with no allegiance - a good start to the season.

HBFC: Walton, Emmanuel, Pearce, Court, Bensted, Jackman, Benning, Shaw, Westley, Fraser (Hurlock), Prutton, other sub. Knight.

Hayes 1 Harrow Borough 1

IN A reverse of the way their first league match had gone, Boro salvaged a point at Church road on Tuesday night.

The match had an unusual start, with Hayes hurriedly replacing floodlight bulbs in the moonlight before kick-off. But the match later lived up to the expectations of a local derby.

Hayes had the better of the first half, with the speedy Thompson a consistent threat. He twice shot wide when clear and Kelly headed wide before the hosts took a 28 minute lead. Parker's pass gave Thompson the opening and he shot past the advancing Walton. The keeper later did well to tip over Smith's shot. Boro had their chances too but Westley shot over, Shaw's header was saved and Prutton was pulled down when running clear, Bennett being lucky only to be booked.

The interval saw roles reversed, as a revitalised Boro set out to correct the score. Shaw's snap shot flew over, Hurlock shot over and Prutton's shot was blocked. With Graham Pearce showing his teammates the way, Boro pressed forward and were rewarded with ten minutes left. Emmanuel's through ball to Prutton caused Stevens to trip the latter and Graham Westley confidently netted the penalty. In the closing minutes, Emmanuel's cross-shot flew just wide, as did Prutton's curling drive, while Walton confidently dealt with his namesake's injury time effort that was the home side's only shot of the half.

Harrow Borough: Walton, Emmanuel, Pearce, Court, Bensted, Jackman, Benning, Shaw (Forrester), Westley, Hurlock, Prutton; other sub. Knight.

Premier cricket final

THE final of the Middlesex Premier Cricket League's own cup is to take place on Sunday. Checkers Cricket Club and United

Sports Club will battle for the John Cumming Cup in a 40-over match at West Harrow Recreation Ground, Wilson Gardens, West Harrow, from noon.

Checkers reached the final at the expense of Twilight East, Minsterlets and Mukhtajvan, while United knocked out SKLP, Anson and Suraje Victor.

SOCCER

Stones in two-year strip deal

WEALDSTONE have signed a sponsorship deal for the first time since their ill-fated venture with developers Harrovian.

The new agreement with sportswear manufacturers Vandanel could mean up to £5,000 a year for two years for the club, depending on how well it is placed at the end of the season.

And it will herald a return to old-style kit, copying the blue and white quarters shirt last used by the club in the 1940s and 1950s.

The club will hope the nostalgic design will also bring back the success of those years, when Stones won the Middlesex Senior Cup five times and the Athenian League, the South's second best amateur league, in 1951-2 against the likes of Barnet, Hendon, Sutton United and Bromley.

All the players' kit, costing more than £40 per strip, will be paid for by Vandanel. And there are financial incentives for league placements.

Club vice-chairman Nick Du Gard: "It is a

very good deal for the club, our first for up to three years. We are delighted to come to this agreement and also with our association with this company. We are the first club in the Beazer Homes Southern Division to have such a deal. It is a first step in making sure we are on a sound commercial footing from now on. And the firm will, I am sure, be hoping that by Stones having the firm's name on their kit will gain access to kit deals with other clubs."

The three-year sponsorship agreement with Harrovian, who were involved with the sale of the club's old ground at Lower Mead to Tesco's supermarket, folded when the developer collapsed amid fraud allegations. The club had hoped to reap tens of thousands of pounds from the deal. But it never saw the full amount.

● A courtesy coach service for fans travelling to Stones' second league home match, against Margate, will be laid on from Harrow Civic Centre, Station Road, on Saturday. It will leave for Yeading's ground at 1.45pm, and will also run supporters back after the game.

Day at the seaside proved miserable

Poole Town 5 Wealdstone 1

WEALDSTONE were sent crashing 5-1 in their first match of the season at Poole on Saturday, writes Graham Smith.

Without the injured Jim Hicks, Jon Pettifer, Roy Johnson, Sean Adamson and Lee Randall, the Stones found themselves 1-0 down in the first five minutes, when Grace's shot was touched in by Wilson.

Liam Barham nearly equalised 10 minutes later as his shot went inches wide. But Stones keeper Rob Tenkorang had to make a superb save from Wilson.

Spirits lifted in the 18th minute when a Dermot Drummy cross was headed home by Paul Sweales for the equaliser.

Then Sweales was unlucky minutes later as his shot was excellently saved by Jones.

And just before half-time Paul Sweales beat two defensively goalkeepers. But there was no one to push the ball over as Stones seemed to be getting on top.

The second half was a completely different story. The unmarked Bown put Poole ahead two minutes into the new half. Then in the 57th minute everything went wrong for Stones.

They should have been awarded a penalty when Paul Sweales was brought down in the area. But the referee waved play on, the ball came out to Richardson, John Shanahan mistimed his tackle and

Richardson dramatically fell over.

Shanahan, who had been booked earlier for a tackle, was given his marching orders.

Wealdstone then fell apart as Poole's Wilson scored three more times in the 61st, 65th and 85th minute to bring his tally to four goals.

A bad day all round for Wealdstone which started by the team coach leaving late and arriving in Poole 10 minutes before the kick-off.

WFC: Tankorang, Perry, Cordio, Shanahan, Richards, Gayle (Lovegrove), Drummy, Hedge, Barham, Tate, Sweales, Sub. not used: O'Connor.

Let down by weak defence

Edgware Town 3 Witham Town 4

THIS game's seven-goal tally could have been doubled by Edgware who ran Witham ragged, especially in the last 20 minutes. But the home side's poor defensive display gave Witham five chances of which they capitalised on all but one.

Witham took the lead after 15 minutes when Salsman got the wrong side of his man. The attacker's cross eluded the central defenders and allowed Micky White to take advantage of defensive confusion.

The second goal five minutes later was a ball knocked through the middle of the Edgware defence, again not picked up by the central defenders. This allowed Chris Pritchard to strike from just six yards.

It was then Witham goalkeeper Kingsley Banks who denied Edgware goals. A quick free-kick from Martyn Kidd was hit on the run by Hammid Harrak but Banks tipped the ball over the bar. He then saved at the feet of Ronnie Nelson when put through by McGleish. McGleish was himself later twice thwarted by Banks' saves.

Witham took the game to Edgware from the interval but were caught cold. Ferry allowed White to latch onto a ball he should have intercepted. The Witham striker then turned past him and knocked the ball past Griffiths.

The fourth goal came when a cross was headed home without the Edgware defenders or keeper Griffiths going for the cross, allowing a simple header from a Witham defender into the empty goal.

With 30 minutes left, Edgware made attack after attack and pulled one goal back when Thompson left three defenders in his wake and planted his shot past Banks. Thompson then made a fine run and cross from the left. This was met by Ronnie Nelson who netted at the far post.

After three strong attempts by Edgware Flynn added Edgware's third with a looping header from Dyson's cross but further score was denied by Banks saving repeatedly on the line.

The home side, who have lost five first team defenders, are obviously going to have problems in this area until it is rectified. But the first plus sign is the skill they have on mid-field and in attack.

ETFC: Griffiths, Evans, Mangan, Ferry, Salsman, Kidd Flynn, Harrak, Dyson, McGleish, Nelson, subs. Thompson for Salsman, Crawford not used.

Soccer fixtures

Saturday August 28	Monday August 30
FA Cup preliminary round: Edgware Town v Falham & Hounslow (White Lion ground, 3pm).	Beazer Homes League v Wealdstone.
Diodora League Premier Div: Enfield v Harrow Borough.	Diodora League Div Two: Tilbury v Edgware Town.
Diodora League Div One: Wembley v Maldenhead Utd (Vale Farm, 3pm).	Tuesday August 31
Diodora League Div Three: Kingsbury Town v Harlow (Silver Jubilee Park, 3pm).	Diodora League Div Three: Horsham v Kingsbury Town.
Beazer Home League Southern Div: Wealdstone v Margate (The Warren, 3pm).	Middx County League Div One: Rayners Lane Res v Hounslow Town 91 (Lucas Ave, 6.15pm).
Middx County League Premier Div: Neasden v Osterley.	Middx County League Div One: Willesden (Constantine) v Brook House Res.
Wednesday September 1	Diodora League Premier Div: Harrow Borough v Chessham Utd (Earlsmead, 7.30pm).

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