

# SPORT

Merry Christmas  
to all readers of  
Observer Sport

## A bleak blank for Lions

Wembley 0 Whyteleafs 0

THERE was little Christmas cheer on a bitterly cold night at Vale Farm on Tuesday as Wembley somehow managed to salvage a point despite a less than impressive performance, writes John Comfort.

The Lions had the better of the first half but lacked punch in attack. Their best efforts saw a firmly struck shot from Mark Witter, which was bound for the top corner, well saved by Dugdale, and the visitors' keeper also did well to block Kenny Page's effort after Ian Bates had sent him clear.

However, it was Whyteleafs who came closest to a goal when Hynes headed against the Wembley crossbar right on half time.

Lifeless Lions were little short of abysmal after the break, yet, in the closing 10 minutes they twice came close to snatching victory.

Jon Conway's fine effort from 25 yards beat Dugdale and cannoned back off the bar with the bemused Witter amazingly failing to put away the rebound in front of an open goal. Then Egbe put Bates clear but Dugdale blocked his first shot and a covering defender kept out his follow up effort.

Wembley: Fanner, Flaherty, Clark, O'Brien, Shields, Headlam, Conway, Bates, Page, Egbe, Witter. Subs: Velga, Hollingsdale.

WEALDSTONE FC  
BLUE RIBBON LOTTERY  
Week 26 winners  
£150 A-12 338 £75 M-07  
979 £65 A-14 589 £40 Z-07  
070 £50 member 139

# Stones set to move out

## £2m could be lost in deal to quit Vicarage Road

WEALDSTONE seem certain to move out of Vicarage Road at the end of this season, probably losing the £2m that they paid to Watford two years ago for a half share of the ground's 127 year lease.

An agreement has been finalised between the club's administrators, Buchler-Phillips, and Watford FC, by which the Football League club will take back Wealdstone's share of the ground, which due to falling property prices is now valued at between £1m and £1.5m. Stones paid Watford only £2m of the £2.5m originally agreed for the lease and it is proposed Watford will re-

tain that. Watford will also receive £175,000 in full and final settlement of all previous claims against Wealdstone in respect of ground maintenance, interest and maintenance to the end of the season.

That sum however will only be recovered from proceeds of pending litigation by Wealdstone against their former solicitors Minet Perring, and Tesco Stores, relating to the sale of the club's Lower Mead ground to the supermarket

chain. If insufficient money is recovered from the litigation then Watford will receive no further payment.

The agreement means that Wealdstone will be able to remain at Vicarage Road until the end of the season and will have the option of negotiating a further year at the ground for an agreed sum.

But the club clearly wants away at the end of this campaign and is now actively seeking a ground share deal with a non-league club in the hope of

being in a new home for the start of the 93-94 season.

Sharing with old rivals Harrow Borough is thought unlikely, but nearby Wembley is regarded as a possibility.

Other clubs currently being linked with Stones are Yeading and Harefield United.

Wealdstone's agreement with Watford is to be put before Wealdstone members for their approval at a special meeting, provisionally set for January 12.

## £500,000 takeover bid is rejected

WEALDSTONE FC's board of directors have turned down a £500,000 bid to take over the stricken club.

The move, made by a consortium headed by businessman Morris Nixon of Countrywide Markets, was put to the board at a hastily convened meeting last week following an approach to Wealdstone chairman David Pollock by club trustee Les Hobbs.

Funds were to be made available to Wealdstone over a period of time in return for which a controlling interest in the club was required. Although Mr Pollock offered to stand down and relinquish his shares if required, the board decided to re-

ject the offer.

Said club vice-chairman Paul Rumens: "For the first time in many years Wealdstone FC now have eight hard working directors who are genuine supporters of the club. Throughout all of our problems they are for once a source of stability emanating from the top of the tree. At this delicate time in the history of our club, caution must be one of our objectives."

"Therefore in the interests of Wealdstone FC the chairman and his directors felt it would be inappropriate at this time to hand over sole controlling interests to outsiders. We have not rejected the offer out of sight, but in view of the complica-

ties of the club, it would therefore be more prudent for both parties to get to know one another better.

"We offered a seat on the board as a show of good faith on our part in return for some sponsorship as a sign of confidence on his part. The gentleman concerned unfortunately declined our offer."

As well as the cash, the consortium claimed to have a ground, a clubhouse and a place to train for the club.

Said a spokesman: "Wealdstone is going to die unless something is done. I can't understand why they've turned this down."

## Borg banished from touchline

HARROW Borough manager George Borg has been banished from the touchline by his club chairman before he lands in hot water with officials.

Borg has been warned by referees on a number of occasions this season for his vociferous comments from the dugout and now Borough chairman Martin Murphy has told him to spend some time watching matches from the 'safety' of the club's boardroom, overlooking the Earlsmead ground, for his own good.

Borg's banishment began with Saturday's home game against Wokingham.

"I felt that George was

putting himself under a lot of pressure," said Mr Murphy. "He puts so much into the job and he just wasn't helping himself out there."

"I had a word with him and told him I thought it might be better if he stood back and looked at things from a distance for a while. He agreed and it seems to have worked. He talked to the players as usual as half time and they came out and scored straight away."

Borough went on to win the game 4-1. But will Borg's ban stay? "We'll just play it by ear," said Mr Murphy. "It's not just for the one game. I'll be talking again with George about it."

## Wembley wait on sponsorship okay

WEMBLEY FC's planned three year sponsorship deal with the Mizuno sportswear company, worth about £16,000 to the club, has been put on ice.

The Diadora League, who claim it threatens the League's own sponsorship, were due to discuss the matter at a management committee meeting on Monday but it was deferred until a meeting in the New Year.

Wembley say there is no League rule to prevent their deal with Mizuno, who are Diadora's chief competitor. But they believe the League will now attempt to block the sponsorship by forcing through some form of legislation at a committee meeting in January.

## Dafforn out of hospital

WEMBLEY manager Alan Dafforn has been released from hospital following treatment for thrombosis of the leg.

He is now convalescing at

home but is not expected to return to duty at Vale Farm before mid-January. In the meantime Tony Simpson and Glen Charles are running the team.

## Pye is back to boost Borough after ban

WITH his suspension completed, Mark Pye is available for selection for Harrow Borough's derby clash with Hendon at Earlsmead on Saturday.

John Ridout is struggling with a back injury sustained at Yeading but Andy Prutton is expected to fit following an ankle injury.

Kenny Gayle should have recovered from a bout of flu to take his place in Wealdstone's line up for their home game with Dunstable on Saturday.

Wembley go to Maidenhead on Monday hoping to have both Bobby Hutchinson and Andy Smith back after injury.

Edgware will be short of full strength for their Christmas holiday matches. Joe Sheridan, Lee Harvey and Colin Chance will miss Saturday's derby game at Ruislip Manor while Sheridan, Chance and John Coleman are unavailable for the visit of Rainham on Monday.

Steve Newing can expect to start against Manor, while Scott McGleish and Mark Dyson will also be brought into the reckoning for places.

Kingsbury have no injury problems for their derby clash at Northwood on Saturday which kicks off at 12 noon.

Rayners Lane play on Bank Holiday Monday against Kintbury Rangers and will be without skipper Gerry Hynes and Simon Lane, who are both on holiday. Tony Verni (unavailable), Neil Owen and Danny Haigh all come into contention for places.

### Fixtures

Saturday December 26  
Diadora League Premier Division: Harrow Borough v Hendon (Earlsmead, 3pm).

Diadora League Division Two: Ruislip Manor v Edgware Town (3pm).

Diadora League Division Three: Northwood v Kingsbury Town (12 noon).

Beazer Homes League Southern Division: Wealdstone v Dunstable Town (Vicarage Road, 11.30am).

Monday December 28  
Diadora League Premier Division: Chesham v Harrow Borough (3pm).

Diadora League Division One: Maidenhead United v Wembley (3pm).

Diadora League Division Two: Edgware Town v Rainham (White Lion ground, 3pm).

Beazer Homes League Southern Division: Buckingham v Wealdstone (11.30am).

Hellenic League: Rayners Lane v Kintbury Rangers (Lucas Ave, 2.15pm).

Tuesday December 29  
Diadora League Division Three: Kingsbury Town v Flackwell Heath (Silver Jubilee Park, 7.30pm).

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