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Chairman points the finger after shock move announcement

## Why Stones are £1m in the red



BY JOHN COMFORT

WEALDSTONE FC chairman Alan Clifton has laid the blame fairly and squarely on the shoulders of past administrations for the acute financial plight which led to the club's decision this week to sell their Lower Mead ground for an estimated £7m and

take up temporary residence at Willesden Stadium. Stones are over £1m in debt and the move to Willesden, while the search for a new permanent ground goes on, is seen as the salvation of the club and the very key to their continued existence. Said Mr Clifton: "In my

search of the archives, the start of the club's basic financial problems can be traced back to 1972 when the club turned professional and joined the Southern League. "Coupled with this expense and the start of the national drop in spectator attendances, the club's financial resources were acutely overstretched. "From then on with a succession of different chairmen and directors over the years, they only succeeded in compounding the issue until today we now ultimately have this terrible price to pay."

He added: "It also became patently obvious that the majority of my predecessors had little or no commercial experience. I believe that this lack of experience encouraged most to allow their hearts to rule their heads and regrettably some, who shall remain nameless, showed a blatant disregard for whatever reasons in relation to the long term financial stability of the club." Clifton's plans to quit Lower Mead were given the go-ahead on Saturday at a three hour meeting of club members and shareholders in Wealdstone FC Ltd.

"I have no doubt that the debate will continue for many months to come as to the reasons why it is necessary for us to leave Lower Mead. I most categorically assure everybody that the decision was not taken lightly but was inevitable to ensure the club's continued existence and viability." He added: "Naturally our ardent supporters are just as emotionally disappointed as myself with this sad news but their loyalty has not gone un-

noticed. I can assure all our supporters that every endeavour will be made in a totally committed effort from myself, my fellow directors, our manager Tony Jennings and our players to compensate for this upheaval by providing true professionalism on the field of play with of course committed resolve to regain our GM Vauxhall Conference status."

Alan Clifton took over as chairman of Wealdstone 18 months ago following a bitter power struggle with David Morris. He firmly stamped his seal of authority on the club and quickly gained respect from members and the grass root support with his unbounding energy and no nonsense approach to what at one stage appeared insurmountable problems with the threat of liquidation hanging over the club.

"My major task now is to build on the groundwork that has been established, continue with my negotiations and secure and build a new stadium as a permanent home for our team and supporters," he said.

Wealdstone's move to Willesden came as a surprise to many. Most observers expected the club to ground-share while awaiting re-location, with Harrow Borough always the likely favourite to accommodate their neighbours.

But Stones plumped for the less costly option at Willesden where they will play on astro-turf and be the only team in the Beazer Homes League with an artificial pitch. Only two other senior non-league clubs have similar facilities - Feltham in the Vauxhall League and Hyde in the Northern Premier.

## Gayts equal Cup best

OLD Gaytonians AC equalled their best ever GRE Gold Cup performance when placing fourth in the semi-final at endfield on Sunday, just two point behind Newham but well adrift of Haringey and Enfield.

Pinner's Harvey Griffiths equalled the club record of 2.05 metres for second in the high jump behind British record holder Dalton Grant while the sprint relay team of Uche Wodu, Steve McKay, Mark Phillips and Rohan Samuel set a new Gayts record of 41.20 behind UK club champions Haringey.

Sam Nchinda just missed out on victory in the 100m, finishing one hundredth of a second behind British international Clarence Callender, and Alan Tapp set his fastest time of the year for fourth in the sprint hurdles, his 14.97 being a fraction slower than the 11 year club record of 14.92.

Dave Knox recorded a fast 1.52.6 in the 800m and there were good performances from Ian Harkness and Phillip O'Brien in the two longest track events.

Gary McCullough recorded his best leap of the season in the long jump while Ian White's pole vault clearance of 4m was his best for almost two years.

**Gayts results**  
100m 4 Sam Nchinda 10.68; 200m 4 Mark Phillips 21.78; 400m 7 Jim Moseley 50.99; 800m 5 Dave Knox 1:52.6; 1500m 5 Hamish McInnes 4:02.4; 5000m 2 Ian Harkness 14.55.3; 10000m 3 Phillip O'Brien 32.04; 110m hurd 2 Alan Tapp 14.97; 400m hurd 3 Mark Littlejohns 54.44; 3000m stc 4 Mark Cursons 2:45.1; high jump 2 Harvey Griffiths 2.05 (record); pole vault 5 Ian White 4.00; long jump 3 Gary McCullough 6.88; shot 2 Ray Smith 15.05; shot 5 Guy Perryman 14.84; discus 5 Guy Perryman 28.50; javelin 5 Philip Perry 54.06; hammer 6 Ian Steers 43.82; 4 x 100m relay 2 (Uche Wodu, Steve McKay, Mark Phillips, Rohan Samuel) 41.20 (record); 4 x 400m relay 4 (Jim Moseley 51.8, Dave Knox 48.4, Keith White 48.7, Mark Littlejohns 51.8) 3:21.5  
Team result: 1 Haringey 158, 2 Enfield 123, 3 Newham 104, 4 Old Gayts 102, 5 Luton 76, 6 Leeds 69, 7 Warrington 53, 8 Colwyn Bay 47.

## Bessborough shock Harrow in KO final



● BESSBOROUGH CC captain Graham Sainsbury receives the Mayor of Harrow's Knockout Trophy from Mayor of Harrow, Cllr Phyllis Harkett, after the club's surprise win over favourites Harrow in the final at Stanmore CC. Full match report and more pictures, page 70.

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## Wembley away to Lane in FA Cup

WEMBLEY have been given a local derby tie away to Federated Homes League near neighbours Rayners Lane in the preliminary round of the FA Cup on September 2.

In the same round Edgware Town have been drawn at home to Beazer Homes League club Burnham.

Wealdstone join the action in the first qualifying round on September 16 when they visit St Albans City while Harrow Borough are at home to Gravesend and Northfleet and Kingsbury Town visit Bromley.

The winner of the Rayners Lane/Wembley clash will face either Hounslow or Horsham YMCA at home and if Edgware beat Burnham they will be away to either Darenth Heathside or Hertford.

In the first qualifying round of the FA Challenge Trophy on September 23 Wembley are at home to St Albans City while Harrow Borough visit Vauxhall League rivals Bishops Cleeve and Kingsbury are away to Boreham Wood.

Rayners Lane have an away tie at Sandridge Rovers in the FA Vase and if successful will meet either East Ham or Biggleswade at home in the preliminary round on October 7 when Edgware are at home to Aveley.

## Four goal Gurney destroys Bedfont

MARTYN James and Ray Pennock, both signed from Swansea City on free transfers, will be making their debuts for Harrow Borough at Viking Sports on Saturday, kick off 3pm, and at CAV on Sunday, kick off 11am.

Jimmy Bolton and Steve Bateman have returned from holiday and will also be playing. Goalkeeper Mark Poulney has broken

## Bedfont 0 Harrow Borough 7

A BORO' side that bore little resemblance to that which finished last season, impressed with the quality of their finishing against Dan Air League outfit Bedfont on Saturday, with new signing Martin Gurney leading the way with four goals.

Francis Cassidy, who skipped the side in the absence of Steve Bateman, gave Boro' a 10th minute lead with a fine chip and then Gurney got off the mark with two goals in five minutes. Carl Zachau soon opened his account and Sean Priddle netted the fifth with a good shot from outside the area.

Goalkeeper Tom McAllister's action was confined to claiming a few crosses but his organisation of the Boro' rearguard impressed while defender Ian Rogers was in dominant mood.

Bedfont came more into the match after the break but two more goals from Gurney soon set them back.

Only black spot for Boro' was an injury to full back Andy Goodchild who had to come off at half time.

Harrow Boro': McAllister, Dicker, Goodchild, Gleeson, Rogers, Priddle, Cassidy, Waddock, Gurney, Zachau, Loddy. Subs: Payne, Humphries, Scott, Flynn.

## Welsh duo to make Borough debuts

Wembley goalkeeper Jeff Fanner got married on Saturday and misses the Lions' opening friendly at Brunel University, Uxbridge, against Yeading, kick off 3pm. Derek Clark is expected

to deputise. On Tuesday Lions play Brook House away, kick off 6.30pm. Wealdstone are involved in the Luton five-a-sides on Saturday. On Tuesday big money signings Tony Kelly, Sean Norman and Steve Tapley will be on parade in a friendly at Windsor.

Former Edgware Town sweeper Vince Deritis has returned to the club from Vauxhall League Boreham Wood

## Hazel is selected

15 YEAR old Harrow and Wealdstone swimmer Hazel Alder has been selected to swim for Great Britain in the European Junior Championship in Leeds this week.

Hazel is the only British girl selected to swim the 100m and 200m breaststroke events and also in the 4 x 100m medley team. Hazel's form throughout the year has ensured her selection, being the fastest under-16 girl in both breaststroke events.

As soon as she finishes her international duty Hazel, of Morely Crescent, Stanmore, will rush to Crystal Palace to join clubmates taking part in the Esso National Age Group Championships.

Rayners Lane commence their pre-season friendlies on Tuesday with a home match against neighbours Northwood, kick off 7pm.

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