

A weekend of waiting as announcement is imminent



● **LOOKING for Mr Right** — Wealdstone director Alan Clifton (left), and Chairman David Morrilt.

Manager to be named by Monday

WEALDSTONE will announce the name of their new manager by Monday at the latest. And caretaker boss Barry Neville has emerged as a strong contender for the job — even though a dozen or so hopefuls are said to have been interviewed by Chairman David Morrilt. Neville, who took charge with club captain Dennis Byatt after Brian Hall quit to join Yeovil Town, is understood to have formally applied for the position. If Morrilt does give him the nod, it is likely that Neville would want ex-Spurs and West Ham winger Jimmy Neighbour as his assistant.

By **Simon O'Neill**

Neighbour was spotted at Telford on Saturday and is believed to have travelled back to London on the Wealdstone team coach after their stunning 3-1 win. He and Neville are good friends and would form one of the youngest managerial pairings in the GM Vauxhall Conference if they linked up. But all parties concerned refused to comment on the matter this week. Wealdstone director Alan Clifton would only say: "We have said from the word go that we would not be panicked into making a hasty decision.

"There is enough professionalism in the club to keep us going. We had a fantastic win on Saturday which gave the whole club a lift so we don't feel under any pressure to rush things." Neville said: "We have a game at Frickley on Saturday which I believe will be tougher than at Telford, and I want to concentrate on that." The Lower Mead board's approach has been backed by Wealdstone Supporters Club. "We are keen to see the right man in the job," said secretary Nick Dugard. "The right appointment has to be made and if that means waiting a few weeks then so be it."

New column

HARROW Gym Club's Phil Smith starts a new gymnastics column in this week's Observer. See page 28 for the first of his regular articles.

Off to Notts

WASPS moved a step closer to their second successive John Player Cup Final with a crushing victory over Rugby on Saturday. They now meet Nottingham in the next round. See Page 26.

Water Marks

HARROW and Wealdstone swimmers Paul Shackley and Geoff Stewart are in England's Yorkshire Bank squad for the Arena Festival in Bonn, West Germany, which takes place from February 6 to 8.

Miller's light

SUBSTITUTE Paul Miller scored Wealdstone's consolation goal as they went down 4-1 at Orient in the Capital League on Tuesday night. Caretaker manager Barry Neville rested most of his squad, and played only two of the side that won at Telford on Saturday.

Sri-mendous

FORMER Bessborough batsman Mark Ramprakash cracked a fine 84 off only 131 balls for Young England against a Sri Lanka Schools President's XI in Colombo last week. The 17-year-old Middlesex starlet's innings included five sixes and seven fours before he was finally caught by Weerakkody off de-Mel. His opening stand helped England to a second innings total of 185 for 6 declared. Ramprakash had earlier scored 38 out of a first innings total of 175 for 4 declared.

Knock knock

PROMOTION chasing Wembley had full-back Charlie Flaherty carried off with badly torn knee ligaments during their 2-0 friendly win over Rayners Lane on Tuesday. Flaherty, who had only just come back from an identical injury, will be out for several weeks at least.

More sport, Pages 26, 27, 28

The taming of Telford

Telford United 1
Wealdstone 3

CARETAKER manager Barry Neville could have used Wealdstone's marvellous win at mighty Telford on Saturday to press his claims for the vacant post at Lower Mead. Instead he modestly deflected praise onto his players after they had become only the second side to beat Stan Storton's men at the Bucks Head ground this season. "I didn't have to do anything," said Neville. "The players were motivated enough to do the job." Motivated they certainly were. It is hard to believe that this is virtually the same Wealdstone squad which was languishing three from bottom of the GM Vauxhall Conference just before Christmas. Since then, and despite the departure two weeks ago of manager Brian Hall, they have set off on a five-match unbeaten run with a draw at Welling and wins over Ket-

tering (twice), Frickley and now Telford. Stones were two goals ahead before their bewildered hosts could muster any sort of comeback. And although Mark Hancock gave Telford hope with a 72nd minute goal, substitute Mark Graves came on to put the result beyond doubt four minutes from time. Even then, there was still time for keeper Bob Iles to cap an impressive performance by beating away an 88th minute spot kick from John McGinty, awarded for Doug McCuire's rash challenge on Eddie Hogan. Midfielders Andy Wallace and Neil Cordice also caught the eye. But Neville was keen to spread the credit around the whole team. The rejuvenated Cordice started the 30th minute move which led to Stones' opener, a scrambled effort with Brian Greenaway heading past two defenders on the line after a Wallace shot had spun to him off-

Paul Miller's back. Miller's perfectly struck volley seven minutes later silenced the 1,300 strong home crowd still further. And they had little to shout about in the second half, even though Stones were back pedalling for long periods. Hancock needed two stabs at a 72nd minute chance to set up what could have been a grandstand finish by Telford. But Graves spoiled the celebrations when he ran 40 yards to coolly beat Kevin Charlton after a dreadful mis-kick by Harry Wiggins had sent him clear. By the time McGinty stepped up for his ill-fated penalty attempt, many of the Bucks Head faithful were heading home, leaving Wealdstone to savour a win that could well be the turning point of a so far depressing season. WEALDSTONE: Iles, Madison, Dowsett, Tapley, McCuire, Spangwyn, Wainwright, Cortice, Wallace, Miller (Graves), Iles (Hogan) and Iles (not used).



● **The clincher** — striker Mark Graves, who got off the bench to score Stones' third goal at Telford.

SOCCER PREVIEW

Stones go for six

BUOYANT Wealdstone travel to Frickley Athletic on Saturday aiming to stretch their unbeaten run to six games. They will do so with renewed confidence after last week's 3-1 win at fifth placed Telford — but also with some words of warning from caretaker manager Barry Neville ringing in their ears. Frickley are having a torrid season and lie 20th in the GM Conference. Despite this, Neville predicts that his team could be in for a tough match. "They are desperate for points and it will be a lot harder than the Telford match," he said. On Tuesday, Stones meet neighbours Wembley in what could be a tricky Middlesex Senior Cup tie at Vale Farm. Lions, who have lost full back Charlie Flaherty with badly damaged knee ligaments, travel to promotion chasers

FIXTURES	
Saturday, January 31	GM Vauxhall Conference: Frickley Athletic v Wealdstone; Vauxhall Open League — Premier Division: Wokingham Town v Harrow Borough; Division One: Lutterhead v Kingsbury Town; Leyton Wingate v Wembley; Halls Brewery Middlesex League: Vale Town v Rayners Lane; London Spartan League: Becton v Edgware; Middlesex County League Division One: Royal Oak v Harrow St Mary's; Suburban League: Edgware v Ruellie Manor; Suburban League Cup, 3rd round: Tarnborough Town v Harrow Borough; Wembley v Mill, Police.
Tuesday, February 3	Middlesex Senior Cup: Wembley v Wealdstone (Vale Farm, 7.30); Harrow v Harrow Borough (Clarendon Road, 7.30); Kingsbury Open League — Division One: Kingsbury Town v Leyton Wingate (Silver Jubilee Park, 7.30).

Leyton Wingate on Saturday. Wingate have faltered lately after a flying start to their season, losing 3-2 to Bracknell last Saturday and crashing 5-1 to Kingstonian in the London Senior Cup on Tuesday.

Harrow Borough will be without Russell Townsend as they try to recapture their lost form at Wokingham on Saturday. Winger Mark Adams hopes to play despite having had six stitches in a head wound last Saturday, while centre half Steve Bateman is trying to shake off a bout of flu. Boro visit Hendon on Tuesday in the Middlesex Senior Cup. Kingsbury Town go to eighth placed Leatherhead on Saturday and then face Leyton Wingate at home on Tuesday. Edgware will be looking for a win at Becton to stay in contention at the top of the London Spartan League and Rayners Lane attempt to end their dismal recent run at Yate Town in the Hellenic League. Striker Gary Woolsey is back for them after a long injury lay-off.

PRATTS MOTOR INSURANCE

CAN WE SAVE YOU MONEY?

ASK US TO QUOTE

Open 9 am-9 pm Mon.-Fri.
Open 9 am-5 pm Sat.
Established over 50 years

IMMEDIATE COVER FROM OUR OFFICE AT

40 LONG LANE HILLINGDON

Telephone: **UXBRIDGE 32212**
(STD code 0885 from London)

GREAT BATHROOM Sale!

Late Night Monday 11 8pm

<p>CORNER SUITE £229</p> <p>Available in all Fashion Colours</p> <p>GLORI SUITE £295</p> <p>Pressed steel bath</p> <p>BRITISH COPPER TUBE & CYLINDERS £23.95</p> <p>36" x 18" Indirect</p> <p>15mm tube 55p 22mm tube 61p</p>	<p>FLORENCE SUITE £558</p> <p>with Shell Bath</p> <p>cast iron suites £245</p> <p>Shower Cubicle Corner fitting enclosure £69.00</p> <p>SHOWER TRAYS Pressed Steel</p> <p>White £16.50 Cobalt £22.50 Freemacy White £48.00 Cobalt £58.00</p>
---	--

LONDON BUILDING CENTRE

SOUTHWARK 01-232 1260 EBFORD 01-653 2650 FINCHLEY 01-546 4443
Unit 7/8, Ferry Lane, Brentford, Middx. Telex: 01-568 7672J3