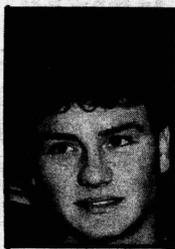


SPORT

FA steps into Cup row



● Tony Guard

THE Football Association is to sort out the Middlesex Senior Cup wrangle between Harrow Borough and Hendon.

A committee will sit to decide whether the quarter final tie between the sides — won 2-1 by Boro — should be replayed following an appeal by the Earlsmead club.

Hendon claim that new signings Tony Guard and John Kerr were ineligible for the Cup replay, while Boro insist they received clearance for the duo to play from the County association before the match.

A Middlesex competitions committee later endorsed its officials' earlier decision that the players were eligible, but recommended that the case should go to an appeals committee.

The appeals committee then overturned the competition's committee decision and ordered the tie to be replayed.

"As far as we are concerned that is the end of the story," said Hendon chairman Charles Gearey. "There is no animosity towards Harrow Borough. They were simply wrongly advised."

"The Middlesex FA made a

mistake and we are just waiting to hear when the game is going to be replayed."

But Harrow Borough football secretary Steve Williams says his club has been caught up in a "spider's web" of rules.

"The thing we need to stress is that we have done everything by the book," he said. "We were given clearance to play the players and that decision was later endorsed by the competitions committee."

FA rules say that the association will not rule on county competition disputes. But County

rules say that clubs can appeal to the Football Association.

"We have now heard from the FA that because the mess that has arisen is so complicated their appeals committee is going to sit to try and sort the matter out," said Mr Williams.

"We will do nothing until that committee has met and made its decision."

He added: "What concerns me is that some people may think that Harrow Borough are trying to cheat the system. But we have nothing to hide. We would not have taken the matter this far if we had."

New deadline

DUE to a change in The Observer's production deadlines, all sports copy must reach our offices no later than first post on Tuesday.

Rendall's return

WASPS' England prop Paul Rendall has resumed training and should be fit to face Leicester in the semi final of the John Player Cup at Sudbury on Saturday next week.

Meanwhile, Wasps guaranteed their place in rugby's top flight next season with a crushing win over Sale on Saturday.

See page 20.

Rooks' flyer

ROOKS HEATH'S girls under 15 team rattled off two fine wins in the Brent five-a-side soccer league.

They beat Earis Court 3-0 with goals from Parool Darbar, Sam Peacock and Sarah Chapman and St Joseph's 4-2, thanks to two more Darbar goals and one piece from Peacock and Chapman.

Supermac

WEMBLEY'S Carianne McIntosh had another sparkling run for Shetisbury Harriers in the Brunel relays at Uxbridge on Sunday.

Taking over well back on the last leg, she overtook four runners to finish with the second best time overall.

Andy beats it

MIDFIELD man Andy Wallace has joined the player draft from Wembley and Yeovil Town.

Wallace, a South London policeman, has rejoined former Stones' boss Brian Hall at Huisl after walking out of Lower Mead two weeks ago.

He will also team up with Gary Donnellan and Steve Rutter, of his former Wealdstone team mates.

Snapped up LEYTON Wingates have snapped up midfielder Russell Townsend, released by Harrow Borough three weeks ago.

More sport pages 20-22

Johnson's early walk

Wycombe 0 Harrow Borough 0

DEFIANT Harrow Borough battled to a draw at runaway league leaders Wycombe on Saturday — despite having full back Robbie Johnson sent off in the 27th minute.

Johnson was dismissed in controversial circumstances after he appeared to clash with home striker Declan Link, who escaped unpunished.

Manager Keith Chamberlin was clearly angry at the decision but would only say: "I am making no comment on the sending off until I see the referee's report."

Instead he preferred to talk about his team's never say die display against a powerful Wycombe side.

"The ten men remaining battled away well and really we should have won," he said. "It was a tremendous game I am not singling anyone out because all the players did well."

Boro also had Paul Morris, Steve Bateman and Bobby Dell booked in a full blooded encounter watched by almost 1,500 fans.

The match only really came to live near the end, when both sides had glorious chances to snatch maximum points.

In the 85th minute, Link's shot hit the inside of Stuart MacKenzie's post, while at the other end, Holmes headed onto the roof of the net and John Kerr broke clear in the dying seconds, only to see his shot well saved by Gary Lester.

Harrow Borough: MacKenzie, Duffy, Johnson, How, Bateman, Dell, Emmanuel, Holmes, Kerr, Morris, Adams. Subs: Lusty, Goad.

Brave Bateman battles on

CROYDON 1, Harrow Borough 1 STEVE BATEMAN turned out for Harrow Borough in Monday night's draw at Croydon, despite suffering a head injury during a representative game on Sunday.

He fell awkwardly while appearing in the Vauxhall-Opel League's 2-2 draw with the Multipart League, at Hendon, and was taken to Edgware General with concussion.

"Steve was in a bad way on Sunday and a lot of players would not have even thought about playing on Monday. But it sums him up as a person that he was prepared to play at Croydon."

"I could have not asked for any more," said Boro boss Keith Chamberlin.

Boro extended their unbeaten run to 15 games in a dour encounter, with Lawrence Holmes putting Boro ahead from a well rehearsed free kick in the 25th minute after Steve Emmanuel had been brought down on the edge of the area.

Mark Adams then went close to increasing the lead before Boro were forced to weather a Croydon onslaught in the second half.

Robbie Johnson cleared off the line and Stuart MacKenzie's sound handling kept them at bay until the 77th minute when Milton equalised with a superb individual effort.

Harrow Borough: MacKenzie, Duffy, Bateman, How, Johnson, Emmanuel, Dell, Morris, Holmes, Kerr, Adams.

HARROW Borough reserves' Suburban League hopes were all but ended when they drew 1-1 on Feltham's artificial pitch on Saturday.

Boro went a goal down inside the first minute as they struggled to get to grips with the surface.

But they hit back to force a draw when Matt Coates beat a defender and Paul Ripley headed his cross home.

A 20th minute penalty from Mark Bridges had given the reserves a 1-0 win at Staines the previous week.

Wembley survive as Pete's goal hope goes for a Burton

BILLERICAY 0 Wembley 0 WEMBLEY dropped two more vital promotion points in a dull encounter at Billericay on Saturday.

There was little in the way of entertainment to keep the spectators awake in the warm sunshine, as play became

stifled in midfield, with continuous back passing.

Home winger Stewart Ingielewicz hooked an easy chance wide in the opening minute, while centre back Spud Murphy was the first Wembley

player to get a shot on target.

Wembley's greatest let-off came two minutes before half-time when Billericay's new manager Peter Burton overtopped the Lions defence to find Ingielewicz in front of an empty net.

But the winger's shot hit fellow forward Lol Stapleton — already celebrating the 'goal' — and flew behind for a goal kick.

Eammon O'Connor raised Wembley's hopes after 58 minutes with a great drive which brought a stunning save from Dave Cass.

In the later stages, Tony Waugh put Billericay under the hammer and created Lions' best chance, which saw Bryan Kearns' fierce drive kicked off the line by Steve Mosely.

Player-manager Burton had some explaining to do afterwards when he squandered a golden chance to give his side the points — scooping wildly over the bar when well placed.

Wembley: Fanner, Kearns, S Lucas, Murphy, Janeway, Smith, Simpson, Bhatia, D Lucas, Waugh, O'Connor.



● Crunch! Wembley's Paul Bhatia (right) slides in to halt the progress of a Billericay opponent.

Lane survive Hansen blow

ABINGDON Utd 0, Rayners Lane 0 RAYNERS LANE boss Nobby Hansen needed 13 stitches put in a leg wound following a challenge in Saturday's goalless draw at Abingdon United.

Hansen faces a long lay-off after picking up the injury 10 minutes before the break. He was taken to hospital and Lane were left to battle on with just 10 fit players, with Phil Lynn a passenger for the second half after pulling a hamstring.

Despite their problems, Lane showed tremendous character and could have beaten a strong United side with a bit more composure in front of goal.

Steve Card, replacing the missing Gary Woolsey, Darren Colwill and Roland Matthews all went close with first half efforts, while Matthews, Tony Vemi and Colwill all had opportunities to earn Lane full points after the break.

"Considering the changes we had to make to injuries and our over physical opponents, we battled well and showed tremendous spirit," said Lane boss Don Durkin.

"We could easily have won with the chances we had, but I was well satisfied with the result and proud of the lads."

Lane: Russell, Hansen (Morris), Lynn, Robson, Abell, Vemi, Heaney, Colwill, Clements, Card, Matthews.

Edgware miss the target

OFF TARGET Edgware's chances of taking runners up spot in the London Spartan League virtually disappeared at the White Lion ground on Saturday.

They missed a hat full of chances and then allowed Chipping Casuals to steal a

Casuals keeper to slot home.

But he was also one of the guilty parties as Wares let their visitors off the hook by squandering a series of other chances.

Edgware: Whelan, Smith, Mangan, Finnelly, Appleby, Duffin, Charalambous, Walsh, Tully, Singly (Milton 15), Murphy.

Bumpy ride for St Mary's

HANTHORTH VILLA 0 Harrow St Mary's 0 HARROW ST MARY'S played out a scoreless Middlesex County League draw on a bumpy Hanthorpe Villa pitch on Saturday.

Gary Lilley was the first to experience the bad state of the pitch as a Cecil James cross took a wicked bounce to fall behind him, with the striker set to score.

Alan Day and James were denied by fine

saves by the home keeper, with Paul Strachan going closest for the Saints with a rasping drive which bounced off the bar.

Saints: Dunn, Foran, Nugent, Daly, Haseman, McKenna, Strachan, O'Shea (Fy 65), Ulmer, James Day.

● Saints Reserves beat Division Two leaders Troy Albion 5-0, with goals from Trevor Abbott, Roger Livingstone, Richard Urpeth, Malcolm Lay and Tony Pells, who also missed a penalty. It was Albion's heaviest defeat of the season.

Durkin prepares for the Viking invasion

RAYNERS Lane boss Don Durkin faces an injury crisis for Saturday's local derby with Viking Sports at Lucas Avenue.

Nobby Hansen and Phil Lynn are both out with injuries received at Abingdon, while Gary Johns has not yet recovered from an Achilles tendon injury.

Gary Woolsey, who has back problems again, may return, though. He is receiving acupuncture treatment this week.

"Viking are bang in form at the moment but we have been getting better lately and will go into the game full of confidence," said Durkin.

Harrow St Mary's face their most important match of the season on Saturday when they face Constantine in the Middlesex County League Cup semi final.

It is their last hope of a trophy this season and manager Steve Stanley is hoping to have strikers Rex Carayod and Russell John back in his squad.

Edgware take on strengthening Beaconsfield at the White Lion

PREVIEW

race in the Vauxhall Opel League.

And he will be looking for maximum points in their matches against Boreham Wood at home on Saturday and away to Staines on Tuesday.

Edgware take on strengthening Beaconsfield at the White Lion

Saturday, March 21

Stafford Rangers v Wembley

Opel League — Premier Division: Harrow Borough v Barking (Estimated, 2); Division One: (Kingsbury Town v Denham Wood; Wembley v Leyton)

London Spartan League — Premier Division: Edgware v Beaconsfield (White Lion, 3)

Hells Brewery National League: Boreham Wood v Viking Sports (Lucas Avenue, 3)

Middlesex County League Cup — semi final: Constantine United v Harrow St Mary's (King Edward Park, 2.30)

League: Harrow Borough v Staines Town v Epsom

Stafford Rangers v Wembley (Stafford, 7.45)

Vauxhall Opel League — Division One: Boreham Wood v Kingsbury Town; Middlesex Senior Cup — semi final: Enfield v Wembley

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