



JOHN KERR — In at Oxford?

A whole new Ball game

Harrow Borough 2 Portsmouth 3
STRIKER John Kerr was pulled out of Portsmouth's friendly at Earlsmead on Tuesday night — in readiness for a sensational First Division debut at Oxford this Saturday.

Portsmouth manager Alan Ball, who snapped Kerr up from Harrow Borough in the summer, could be forced to plunge the 21-year-old American in at the deep end because first choice forward Ian Baird is suspended.

Kerr watched from the stands on Tuesday as Baird took his place in a match arranged as part of the deal that took him to Fratton Park.

He saw his former Boro team mates give a good account of themselves against a Portsmouth side fielding five first team regulars. Boro even led 2-0 at half time, only to be pegged back in the second half and finally beaten by a Baird goal.

Lawrence Holmes put them ahead in the 15th minute from an

Adams corner and Richard Evans made it 2-0 five minutes before the break.

Collins reduced the arrears from the penalty spot and Vince Hilaire brought Portsmouth level before Baird popped up in the 84th minute.

Boro boss Keith Chamberlin said he was happy with his team's display. But he was even more delighted with the news of Kerr's possible debut.

"It would be a fairy tale to go straight from Harrow Borough to the First Division," he said.

SIX pages this week

INSIDE

Here we go again!

THE new soccer season is just around the corner and local clubs are putting the finishing touches to their preparations.

But how well are they equipped for the forthcoming campaign?

This week, The Observer concludes its two part preview to the new season. See Page 24.

A master Butcher



ENGLAND stalwart Terry Butcher knows all about the art of defending.

Now, in this week's Observer, he passes on some of that knowledge to you. Turn to page 25.

PLUS

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More sport on 22-26

Stones fall to Charlton

Wealdstone 0 Charlton 2
WEALDSTONE entertained their fourth league side in two weeks at Lower Mead on Tuesday night, going down 2-0 to Charlton Athletic.

Stones boss Colin Meldrum, missing a number of regulars because of holidays, said he was generally satisfied with the performance but blamed both Charlton goals on mistakes by his players.

Defender Hughie Dowe, a squad member during Wealdstone's double era, has re-joined the club to provide added cover.

Wembley 1 Arsenal 2
IT WAS Wembley's guns that were blazing on Tuesday night as they pinned Arsenal back.

Sylvester Williams eclipsed Arsenal's five first team stars with a series of teasing and direct runs.

He almost gave Wembley the lead after five minutes.

But Arsenal took the lead in the 28th minute, when Dave Hillier glided in at the far post.

Wembley drew level after 63 minutes, when the irrepressible Williams calmly slotted the ball home.

Arsenal stole the victory with a Lee Francis goal ten minutes from time, although Williams almost levelled matters with an overhead kick

Thursday August 13
 Friendly: Wembley v Leytonstone-Ilford (Vale Farm, 7.30).

Saturday August 15
 Heliole League: Shortwood v Rayners Lane. Spartan League: Edgeware Town v Southwark (White Lion Ground, 3).

Friendly: Harrow Borough v Sutton United (Earlsmead, 3); **Frickwell Heath v Wembley**; **Hendon v Wealdstone**; **Ruislip Manor v Kingsbury Town**.

Tuesday August 18
 Friendly: Harrow Borough v Fisher Athletic (Earlsmead, 7.30).

Wednesday August 19
 Heliole League: Viking Sports v Rayners Lane. Spartan League: Edgeware Town v Barkingside (White Lion Ground, 7.30).

Bates' challenge as ex-captain returns

Nigel's back for Wasps

FORMER England Captain Nigel Melville is back at Wasps — ready to mount a challenge to the man who succeeded him.

Melville, whose career has been blighted by injury, is moving back to London after two years spent working in Yorkshire.

And his return will bring him into direct competition with Steve Bates, Wasps' current scrum half.

Bates, 24, has blossomed into a potential England International since stepping out of Melville's shadow two years ago.

He was one of Wasps' outstanding performers in their John Player Cup final defeat by Bath in May.

Melville, whose job took him up north, has spent almost two seasons with Headingley.

But despite his experience, and the fact that he captained both Wasps and England while at Sudbury, current skipper David Pegler says.

"At the moment Steve Bates is the man in possession of the scrum half's spot and it is up to any new player who come to the club to take that off him."

Since Melville was last there, Wasps have confirmed their status as one of the top three sides in the country.

They have reached the John Player Cup final two years in a row, where they lost to Bath on both occasions, and have one of the finest back rows in the game.



HOLDER — Wasps' current scrum half Steve Bates.



CHALLENGER — Wasps and England scrum half Nigel Melville

Contrary to reports elsewhere, Pegler says Wasps have made no other major signings during the close season.

Wasps start their season with a home fixture

against Maesteg on Saturday September 5 and play Metropolitan Police the next day.

They are away to Richmond the following Saturday.

Sarah's trip

MIDDLESEX Ladies finished a creditable third of five clubs at the Southern League Division One fixture at Reading, despite missing ten regular athletes.

The junior squad did particularly well, with many of its members in their first meeting.

Sarah Herbert put in three excellent performances in the javelin, discus and shot, winning all three. Suzanne Robinson won the long jump and finished second in the 100m, while Dionne Spence won the high jump and was second in the B string 200m.

Charlotte Harris produced a new personal best to come second in the B string shot, and Michelle Watts was second in the B string high jump.

Club captain Evette Finikin won the shot in a new personal best, while Claudette Pottinger did the same in the B string. Sophia Thorpe and Paulette Hughes both had new personal bests in the 400m hurdles, while Helen Nix ran bravely in the 4x400m relay after a year-long struggle against injury.

ATHLETICS

RESULTS, A AND B STRINGS: JUNIORS
 100m: 4th Y. Tamara Akbar 13.0 2nd Suzanne Robinson 13.6;
 200m: 4th Y. Akbar 28.4 2nd Dionne Spence 28.7;
 800m: 2nd Sarah Duncanson 2.28.0 5th Elaine Murray 3.15;
 1500m: 2nd Sarah Sayed 5.23.7;
 75m: 5th Charlotte Harris 16.0 5th S. Sayed 16.5;
 W.F.: 1st D. Spence 1.40 2nd Michelle Watts 1.30;
 L.L.: 1st S. Robinson 4.97 4th D. Spence 4.17;
 Discus: 1st S. Herbert 23.88 3rd C. Harris 14.10;
 Javelin: 1st S. Herbert 27.45 4th Lynne Bennett 11.04;
 Shot: 1st S. Herbert 9.04 (P.B.) 2nd C. Harris 6.38 (P.B.);
 Relay: 4x100 3rd S. Herbert, S. Robinson, T. Akbar, D. Spence 53.9;
 N/5 100 Semona Nash 14.2 Sherrine Worrell 14.5 M. Henry 15.4 L. Bennett 16.0 M. Murray 16.8;
SENIORS: 100m 2nd E. Finikin 12.5 4th Althea Bailey 13.0 200m 2nd A. Bailey 26.0 2nd A. Thorpe 400m: 5th M. Kellar 63.8 5th H. Nix 67.3 800m 4th M. Kellar 2.27.2 3rd S. Lago 2.46.5
 1500m: 4th E. Murray 4.49.8 4th Y. Clements 5.13 300m 2nd Y. Clements 10.53.0
 100mH: 3rd S. Thorpe 16.4 5th L. Harris 21.1 400mH 2nd S. Thorpe 67.4 4th P. Hughes 71.3
 H.L.: 2nd E. Finikin 1.70 3rd C. Stead 1.45 L.F. 1st A. Thorpe 5.78 5th M. Griffin 4.18
 Discus: 1st V. Hunt 38.38 2nd C. Pottinger 26.24 Javelin 3rd C. Pottinger 35.86 2nd E. Finikin 31.84
 Shot: 1st C. Pottinger 10.73 1st E. Finikin 12.05
 Relay: 4x100 2nd C. Stead, A. Thorpe, A. Bailey, E. Finikin 49.9
 Relay: 4x400 4th M. Kellar, H. Nix, S. Thorpe, E. Murphy 4.16.7

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SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL TEAM

FREE!

If you're under 14, you can now watch Wealdstone F.C. play at home - free of charge!

All you have to do is join the Junior Stones Club and that's free as well!

Support the Stones at any of this season's G.M.V.C. league matches and, as a Junior Stone, you'll be entitled to a host of free gifts, including free supporters' scarves and badges.

Interested? Come along to Lower Mead between 2pm-6pm on Sunday 16th August and find out more about your local club.

Further details from Richard Waters at Wealdstone F.C., Station Road, Harrow.