

SPORT

Read the latest sports news at
harrowtimes.co.uk/sport

WEALDSTONE seal 2-1 win over Brackley Town



Wealdstone's Enzo Boldewijn did not comment on the departure of Sam Cox following the 2-1 win over Brackley Town.

Image: Jon Taffel

Stones striker Boldewijn praises team mentality

WEALDSTONE forward Enzo Boldewijn praised the resilience of his teammates after the Stones began the post-Sam Cox era with a solid 2-1 win over ten-man Brackley Town.

Goals from Sean Adarkwa and Nathan Tshikuna either side of half-time sent the hosts on their way to a much-needed victory at Grosvenor Vale, as Brackley's Danny Newton was given a straight red card in the 22nd minute by referee Emily Heaslip.

Cox was sacked as Wealdstone manager on Monday after a torrid run of league form left the National League strugglers languishing in 17th place and dangerously close to the relegation zone.

Speaking to the club website post-match, Boldewijn said: "First and fore-

By TOM NORTON

most, the win was the most important thing today.

"We had a different approach today, and I think everyone could see that when we were playing against 11 men, we were doing our thing.

"We had to score more goals than we did at the time (before the red card). It's always difficult to play against ten men, but we got the job done in the end, and we're happy with the three points."

After Cox was relieved of his duties, first-team coach Danny Payne took charge of the win over Brackley despite overseeing just one training session.

On Payne's initial impact as interim boss, Boldewijn revealed: "We've trained the whole season on our patterns, so we couldn't change too much about that. It was just about putting less risk in the things we are doing. We just went off our own game and got the job done.

"Credit to the boys – they knew what needed to be done, and everyone was on it today. We all ran hard for the cause, and even when they scored their goal, we knew that we had to get this over the line."

Adarkwa's goal marked his first National League goal since September, as injuries and a lack of rhythm have blighted the Wealdstone forward's season.

"We all know Sean. He's strong and

quick, and it was good that he got his goal today. It's literally every time he comes on, he gets his goal. I'm happy for Sean, and there's hopefully more to come from him," said Boldewijn.

The Stones travel north to face Kidderminster Harriers at the quarter-final stage of the FA Trophy this weekend with high hopes of progressing deeper into the competition after a turbulent week at Grosvenor Vale.

"We all knew that our form wasn't the best, so today was massive, and it puts us in a good position to go there on Saturday, and it gives us confidence," added Boldewijn.

The Stones make the trip to Kidderminster on Saturday for the FA Trophy quarter-final clash before hosting Morecambe on Tuesday March 3.

Itoje: We have to get better

RUGBY



Ireland's Caelan Doris is tackled by England's Joe Hayes

AFTER admitting their faults against a clinical Ireland outfit, Saracens Maro Itoje insists England will be working harder to get it right when they travel to Rome to face Italy in their next Guinness Six Nations Championship fixture on March 7. Irish eyes were certainly smiling at Twickenham's Allianz Stadium last Saturday when ran away with a convincing 42-21 victory – the Men in Green's biggest ever win at RFU headquarters – to revive their Guinness Six Nations title aspirations. They move into third place in the standings with 9 points after three round rounds of matches.

England meanwhile, who are in fourth with 5 points, are completely out of the picture after suffering back-to-back defeats to Scotland and now Ireland. Tries from Jamison Gibson-Park, Robert Baloucoune, Tommy O'Brien, Dan Sheehan and Jamie Osbourne plus 17 points from Jack Crowley's kicking boots was more than enough for Ireland, coached by former Saracens player Andy Farrell, to see off the hosts.

England, who also had Itoje's fellow Sarries team-mates Ben Earl and Jamie George on the field last Saturday, were already chasing the game close to half-time when they were 22-0 down, had converted tries from Fraser Dingwall, Ollie Lawrence and Sam Underhill.

"I guess the first half we turned the ball over too much and when we did get in their half we weren't clinical," Itoje, who celebrated his 100th England appearance last Saturday, told host broadcaster ITV1. "As players we have to own it, we have to take responsibility and make sure we're better.

"Ultimately we weren't accurate. We got into good positions. We didn't come away with points or score. We know it's not good enough. We'll be working harder to get it right."