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Stones boss Waddock 'proud' of players after their first win

FOOTBALL

By Tom Norton
Sports correspondent

WEALDSTONE manager Gary Waddock says he is "so proud" of his players after the Stones secured their first win of the National League season with a 2-0 away win over Sutton United.

Micah Obiero grabbed a brace on Bank Holiday Monday, lashing the ball in from close range after 12 minutes before confidently converting a 67th-minute penalty to complete a deserved victory for Waddock's side.

Speaking to the club website post-match, a gleaming Waddock said: "I'm so proud of the players. They put in a hell of a performance. I'm so proud of this group of players. It's very satisfying from our point of view; they (Sutton) have started the season really well. They are very good at what they do, and we were able to handle that."

"We did the defensive side really well, and we had a real attacking threat as well."

"We created a number of chances in the first half, and I really didn't want that to come back and haunt us in the second half, but we were able to go on and see the game out."

The Stones have struggled for both form and confidence since the National League season kicked off in early August, picking up just two points from their opening four fixtures.

But a revitalized performance at both ends of the pitch allowed Waddock's side to control the second half and see out a much-needed victory to alleviate pressure both Waddock and his players were feeling going into the game against Sutton.

"We defended really well. We put blocks in and put our bodies on the line," said the



Gary Waddock salutes the travelling away fans. Image: Jon Taffel

Stones boss. "They've got a hell of a long throw that we had to deal with. Dante (Baptiste) made a fantastic save right at the end because that could have spurred them on for the final five or ten minutes, but everybody played their part."

"The whole squad throughout this period, dating back to the start of the season, has done a great job collectively."

Obiero's brace put the seal on an otherwise excellent attacking display from the Wealdstone forward, and Waddock was full of praise

for the matchwinner.

"He was a threat throughout. He's such a good player, and his finishing was really good today," he said. "I'm really pleased for him, as he's playing in a slightly different position at the moment and he's come up with two goals. That tells you what a good player he really is."

Wealdstone return to National League action this weekend as they welcome Kidderminster Harriers to Grosvenor Vale before hosting Stoke City U21s in the National League Cup on Tuesday, September 8.

Sydney Gregson signs a new deal with Saracens

RUGBY

SARACENS Women have announced Sydney Gregson has signed a new contract with the club ahead of the 2026/27 season.

Gregson has been a constant presence in North London since joining Saracens in 2018, establishing herself as one of the club's most experienced and influential players.

The versatile back enjoyed a record-breaking outing last season, crossing the whitewash five times against Loughborough Lightning and etching her name into the Saracens history books.

Her journey has seen her represent England at Sevens level before making the step up to the Red Roses, with Gregson's career decorated with achievements on both the domestic and international stage.

Now, she will continue her journey in North London as



Saracens' Sydney Gregson

Saracens look to build on a memorable campaign.

"I'm so happy to have re-signed with Saracens. We've built something really special, with an amazing group of people, and I genuinely feel there is so much more to come. This is my home club, and I couldn't imagine being anywhere else!"

Henry late stunner rescues Stones in fight back to draw

FOOTBALL

WEALDSTONE rescued a deserved point in dramatic fashion as Aaron Henry's superb late free-kick earned a 1-1 draw against Carlisle United at Grosvenor Vale on Friday night.

The Stones had fallen behind to David Ajiboye's first-half strike but were rewarded for an energetic and competitive display when Henry struck in the closing moments to prevent a third consecutive defeat.

Manager Gary Waddock made two changes to the side beaten at Worthing the previous weekend, with Mason Barrett and Olufela Olomola replacing Jaydn Harris and the suspended Dylan Kadji.

Wealdstone started brightly and created the better opportunities during the opening stages.

After eight minutes, Micah Obiero delivered a dangerous cross that narrowly evaded the onrushing Luke Norris.

The striker then came even closer a minute later when he met Kyle Smith's delivery with a header that was well saved by the Carlisle goalkeeper.

Norris attempted to convert the rebound but was unable to get a clean connection.

Carlisle's first meaningful chance arrived in the 23rd minute when Harvey Bunker flicked a long throw towards goal, forcing Dante Baptiste into a smart save.

The visitors took the lead after 34 minutes.

Georgie Kelly's pass split the Wealdstone defence and Ajiboye timed his run perfectly before coolly finishing past Baptiste.

The Stones responded positively and nearly found an immedi-

ate equaliser.

Norris caused problems inside the penalty area before the ball broke to Smith, whose goal-bound effort was brilliantly cleared off the line by a Carlisle defender.

Just before the interval, Connor McAvooy rose highest from a corner but directed his header straight at the goalkeeper.

Wealdstone continued to press after the restart.

Olomola delivered an inviting cross from a short corner routine, but Dion Conroy's header drifted wide.

Carlisle threatened to extend their advantage midway through the second half, with Kelly heading narrowly past the post before Baptiste produced two excellent saves to deny Stephen Wearne and keep the hosts within touching distance.

As time ticked away, Wealdstone increased the pressure.

In the 86th minute, Obiero's deflected effort looked destined for the net, only for Adam Desbois to claw the ball away from the line with an outstanding save.

It seemed the visitors would hold on, but a foul on Jack Wells-Morrison just outside the penalty area in the 89th minute handed the Stones one final opportunity.

Henry made the most of it in spectacular style, curling a superb free-kick that crashed in off the crossbar to spark celebrations around Grosvenor Vale and earn Wealdstone a thoroughly deserved share of the spoils.