

News briefly

Stones snap up young striker

WEALDSTONE have signed forward Joe Stevens from Ware. The 22-year-old scored 37 goals in 122 first team appearances for the Ryman One North club. The Stones' cup game against Staines and league trip to Boreham Wood were both postponed due to the freezing weather this week. The side return to action in the Ryman Premier at Grosvenor Vale on Saturday when they host Billericay Town.

Wood extend good form

NORTHWOOD moved up to fifth in Ryman One North after a 2-1 win over Ware on Saturday. Staforde Palmer, on-loan from Hayes and Yeading United, fired the hosts in front before Darryl Wilson equalised. Wood sealed their sixth win in seven league games when Kyle Matthews netted just before half-time.

Strauss in frame for captaincy

MIDDLESEX batsman Andrew Strauss is the favourite to become the new England captain after Kevin Pieterston left the role on Wednesday. Strauss stood in as temporary skipper in 2006 and he could be handed another opportunity in the role. England travel to the Caribbean this month to take on the West Indies.

News immediately: harrowtimes.co.uk

Howell tips Shroot to make impact for Blues

by SIMON MAIL
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HARROW BOROUGH manager David Howell has tipped Robin Shroot to have a bright future after joining Championship promotion contenders Birmingham City.

The Northern Ireland Under-21 midfielder has left Earslmead after completing a move to St Andrews on a two-and-a-half year deal, with the option of an additional year, and Howell is convinced the 20-year-old will make an impact for the Blues.

Howell said: "He has the ability to go as far as he wants. He's got a bright future and I wish him all the best. I'm confident he will bring something to the Birmingham squad.

"It's a massive leap for him but it is something he has been wanting for a while and he has worked towards it. I'm confident he will do well.

"As long as he remains focused there is no stopping him. He has that natural ability and awareness where he can make opposition players look silly. He has good movement and vision."

The former AFC Wimbledon attacker was a non-contract player at Boro, but Birmingham have agreed to play the Ryman Premier side in a friendly over the summer, and are in talks over a goodwill donation to the club.

Shroot sat out the 6-0 defeat at Wealdstone in their last game and Howell believes the uncertainty over the deal, at the time, adversely affected some of his players.

Howell added: "I think a lot of players

were affected by Robin being at the game but not playing. I'm not making excuses but it would have been better if it had been the week after.

"He will be missed. Robin was our most prolific goalscorer but we have to carry on. Our team was never based on one player. We lost Albert Adomah last year to Barnet, who was instrumental in our attacking play, but we went on an unbeaten run for a month.

"There will be a void to fill but it's just a case of the players we've got realising what they bring to the table."

Boro's two games over the New Year, at home to Staines and at Godalming, were postponed due to frozen pitches.

Howell's side face a tough trip to fourth placed Carshalton on Saturday in the league and the manager wants his side to put results before performances. Boro are currently in 18th position which leaves them only one point and one place above the relegation zone.

He said: "At the moment it's more about getting a result to give us more confidence. I would happily take a few ugly results at this time.

"They beat us 5-1 earlier in the season when they gave us a good hiding. But their home form has been patchy. I think that they like to pass the ball around and a lot of away teams have tried to stop them from playing.

"They have found it more difficult at home whereas away from home they have had more space to attack.

"The Wealdstone result is one we want to get out of our system. We have got to be positive and try to get back on track."



Robin Shroot's performances for Harrow Borough have earned him a lucrative move to Birmingham City.

Picture: ANDREW ALEKSIEJCZU

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