

### News briefly

#### Wins a boost for Boro

HARROW BOROUGH'S hopes of surviving the drop were given a boost as two wins in four days lifted them out of the Ryman Premier relegation zone. David Howell's men beat second-placed Staines Town 2-1 on Tuesday night. The win followed Saturday's identical scoreline when Lee Hall and Warren Whitely's goals defeated Boreham Wood.

#### Wood league run goes on

NORTHWOOD extended their unbeaten run in the Ryman One North to 11 games on Saturday with a 2-1 win over Cheshunt. Last night (Wednesday) that run was due to be tested when Dave Anderson's men travelled to Enfield.

#### Stanford faces fraud charges

THE man behind the money-spinning Twenty20 cricket competition which Middlesex and England took part in at the end of October has been arrested for fraud. Sir Allen Stanford, who created the Stanford Super Series which took place in Antigua, was charged with fraud in a Dallas court on Tuesday.

#### News immediately: [harrowtimes.co.uk](http://harrowtimes.co.uk)

## Cup on back burner as league hots up

by ALEX HILL  
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THOSE dreaming of promotion or cup glory were given a reality check in the space of two games as Gordon Bartlett's Wealdstone lost twice in the Ryman Premier League.

Despite taking the lead through a Lee Chappell free kick early on Saturday, Wealdstone lost 2-1 to Harlow, in a game where Bartlett said Chappell was the best player "and even he did not play that well".

That loss was followed by a 2-0 defeat in the mid-table tussle to Boreham Wood Tuesday and with the Middlesex Senior Cup game tonight (Thursday) against Hampton and Richmond Borough, the Stones boss said it is time to get priorities in order.

With several first team players struggling through injury on Tuesday night, Bartlett plans to bring in reserve and squad players for the cup tie, as focus is firmly on the league, and even staying up, rather than promotion.

He said: "We could do without tonight's game. I have got to consider what squad to put out now.

"I think all those people that were talking about the possibility of the play-offs, with the last two results, have had a reality check.

"But we are not a million miles away, but it could go the other way as well.

"There are an awful lot of sides in the middle of the table. When things are going well everyone is up and thinking about going up.

"I think we should be at the top of the



Stop dreaming: Wealdstone manager Gordon Bartlett is focused on staying in the Ryman Premier League.

Picture: HOLLY CANT

table come the end of the season, but am not taking anything for granted and the 50-point mark is still my first target.

"People have started to get carried away. It has been great while it lasted. We had a dreadful start and then were going well, but that has changed in two games.

"If we won we could be sitting in the top five."

Bartlett will "involve" youngsters and squad players such as Rodney Hicks Garry Jones and even keeper Sam Leggett replacing Sean Thomas, as the cup takes a backseat, with the manager focusing on the league game against

fourth place Carshalton Athletic Saturday.

Bartlett said: "As much as I want to win something the main priority is to stay in the league.

"If it is a toss up between winning the cup game or getting points against Carshalton, it has to be about the league.

"Ideally I want to be in with a chance of winning something, but the way the weather has treated us, we were on a roll, but had lots of games cancelled and now we have a couple of games that are going to make or break our season.

"That is the dilemma I have got."

## Strauss makes amends

MIDDLESEX duo Andrew Strauss and Owais Shah played a crucial role as England took charge in the third test against the West Indies.

Strauss' captaincy had been called into question after England's diabolical collapse in the first test defeat last week but the opener led from the front in the third test, after the second was abandoned, with a magnificent 169.

His club team mate Shah was brought into the side to bat at three and added an impressive 57 off 100 balls as England finished on 566 in the first innings.

A five-wicket haul from spinner Graeme Swann helped England bowl the West Indies out for 285.

Strauss did not enjoy as much fortune in the second innings. He was out for just 14 as England finished Tuesday on 31 for one.

As the Harrow Times went to press yesterday, England were about to start the fourth day.



Middlesex and England captain Andrew Strauss

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