

News briefly

**Boro take sting out of the Bees**

HARROW BOROUGH warmed up for the new campaign with a 1-0 win over Brentford on Tuesday night. The League One side fielded a strong team with seven first-teamers including new signing Carl Cort. But Boro got the better of them with Trinidad striker Freedom Pigott netting the winner. Boro's only setback was Ryan Watts suffered a fractured wrist ruling him out for several months.

**Middlesex's misery continues at Lord's**

MIDDLESEX remain rooted to the bottom of County Championship Two after losing by 35 runs to Northamptonshire. The hosts were chasing 222 for victory but they were bowled out for 186 after Monty Panesar took two wickets. The defeat leaves them stranded at the foot of the table still winless after nine games.

**Parkfield denied by the weather**

PARKFIELD AND HEADSTONE were frustrated by the rain as their match with Hitchin Seconds in Division Five ended in a draw. A 176-run partnership between Wasim Saber (85) and Andrew Ward (80) guided them to 254 for six from their innings. Dipak Shah took four for 19 as Hitchin were relieved to survive on 122 for six.

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

## Martin moves step closer to Crewe deal

by SIMON MAIL  
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WEALDSTONE defender Carl Martin could complete his move to Crewe Alexandra in the next week.

The 21-year-old has impressed the League Two club enough to earn an extended trial.

Martin, who has been with the Ryman Premier club since 16 as part of the scholarship programme, was expected to play for Crewe on Tuesday night but this was altered and he will instead play in a friendly next Wednesday which could decide his future.

Martin spent time at Aldershot Town last month but after failing to win a permanent move he could, via Crewe, follow in the path of Leeds striker Jermaine Beckford in landing a professional deal.

Stones manager Gordon Bartlett said: "I think he has done himself justice and we just hope he can secure a professional football career. He has won all the sprinting and has been excellent in training for them.

"My number one objective with Carl was to give him the opportunity to play professional football and if we can fulfil that and get something in return then I will only be too pleased.

"I can't praise Carl highly enough. My philosophy is Carl will sign for a professional club and if it's not Crewe then it will be somebody else."

The Stones are preparing for life without Martin and Bartlett has signed right-back Kenny During. Wealdstone have also signed former Hillingdon Borough prospect Rob Fitzgerald. The 20-year-old centre-back was released by Yeovil this summer and Bartlett moved quickly to snap up the talented defender.

Wealdstone have also boosted their attack by signing two strikers. Pacy forward Charlie Mpi will provide competition alongside former Aylesbury striker Ross Lafayette, who is a doubt for the opening league game due to an ankle injury, this season.

Bartlett said: "I'm looking for a balance which gives us options. Greg Ngoyi is little and a goalscorer, Ross is big and strong and Charlie is a quick, raw talent."

The Stones' impressive pre-season form continued on Tuesday night with a 4-1 home win over Oxford City. The goals came from Fitzgerald, a Ryan Ashe penalty, Jamie Osborne and Darren Locke.

Wealdstone travel to face Hitchin on Saturday afternoon.



**New signing: Striker Ross Lafayette has agreed to join the Stones this season.**

Picture: ACTION IMAGES

## Strauss hopes for fit Flintoff

ENGLAND captain Andrew Strauss is confident Andrew Flintoff will be fit for the fourth Ashes Test at Headingley tomorrow.

Flintoff's fitness has been in doubt throughout the series but Middlesex batsman Strauss expects him to make the side. Flintoff has already announced he is retiring from Test cricket after the final match at the Oval later this month.

Strauss said: "Freddie seems OK. We're still pretty optimistic he'll be OK for Headingley.

"Every time he bowls you have to be careful to see how he recovers, especially with the next game beginning on Friday. Hopefully he'll be fine to play."

England go into tomorrow's contest with a 1-0 lead after being frustrated in the final day at Edgbaston. The hosts felt victory was within their grasp but Australia held their own and batted out the day to keep the Ashes in the balance.



**Matchwinner: Andrew Flintoff could prove the difference at Headingley if he is fit.**

Picture: ACTION IMAGES

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