

### News briefly

#### Strauss leads side in Durban

ANDREW STRAUSS leads England in the second Test against South Africa, which gets underway in Durban on Boxing Day. England hung on to salvage a draw after a late collapse in the opening match in Centurion. Middlesex batsman Strauss, who had innings of 46 and one, opted to bowl first but his side were second best for long periods of the match.

#### Wealdstone in tough draw

WEALDSTONE have been handed a difficult draw in the Championship Manager Cup. The Stones will travel to Tonbridge Angels in the fourth round of the competition. The tie will be played on Tuesday, January 5. It will be a repeat of the recent game where Wealdstone won 3-2.

#### Young Stones get cash boost

WEALDSTONE YOUTH FC will be presented with a cheque for £1,620 at the Stones' match with Harrow Borough on Monday. The grant, from Hillingdon Council, is for the new soccer 7's metal folding goals and will be presented by councillor Douglas Mills.

# Stones get derby warning



**Derby date: Harrow Borough manager David Howell, left, will aim to reverse the recent run of defeats against Stones boss Gordon Bartlett (above).**

by SIMON MAIL  
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WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett has warned his side they have "no divine right" to beat Harrow Borough despite holding the recent bragging rights.

The Stones have enjoyed the better of the derby matches in the last few years, including a replay win over Boro in the FA Trophy last month, but Bartlett knows his side will have to be on their game to overcome their in-form rivals on Monday.

Ahead of the big clash at Grosvenor Vale, Bartlett said: "We have had the upper hand over them in the last few years but they will be champing at the bit to beat us and will be fired up for it.

"I've always said the derby is more

for the fans. The players only realise how important the game is to them when they are playing in them. They have tasted success in recent years and long many that continue."

Wealdstone face a fixture pileup in the new year after two more games were postponed this week due to the freezing weather. The Stones currently sit fifth in the Ryman Premier but Bartlett is only concerned about where they end up at the end of the season.

Bartlett added: "The majority of the dodgy weather normally doesn't kick in until January or February and we already have a fixture pileup. We will have to deal with it as best we can but our fitness is not a million miles away and we will have to use the squad wisely.

"Here we are, halfway through the season sitting in the playoffs with only

two defeats and we have games in hand which gives us the chance to have a dip. Our aim at the start was to finish higher than last season and we are on target for that.

"We won't get carried away and we know there will be disappointments between now and April. But it only matters where we are at the end of the season and not now."

The Stones' first match after Christmas is on Boxing Day when they travel to play-off challengers Ashford Town. Bartlett has watched them recently and is wary of their pacy forwards.

He said: "The two guys up front have got pace and are a real handful but if we can get at them I think we can nick some points."

Boro head into the festive programme

with a home game against Hendon on Saturday. David Howell's side were disappointed to have their last two matches called off because of the snow after going on a run of six games unbeaten.

Howell said: "Wealdstone have had the bragging rights recently but we played two close matches against them already this season.

"They have had a great start to the season and have only lost once at home in the league but we've done well in the last six matches.

"That has given my team the belief and confidence and I would just like that to continue.

"It would be great if we can continue that run but if we don't, we have to make sure we get back on the horse and ride it again."

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