

News briefly

Morgan nets IPL contract

MIDDLESEX batsman Eoin Morgan was the only English player to be bought at the Indian Premier League auction. The 23-year-old will join the Royal Challengers Bangalore after being sold for a fee of £134,000. The new season starts on March 12 and runs until the end of April. Morgan has impressed since coming into the England one-day side scoring a stunning 85 in their Twenty20 win over South Africa in November.

Saracens face Italian job

SARACENS need to earn a bonus point victory in Rovingo and hope for a favour on Saturday. If the Men in Black secure a big win they can still qualify for the Amlin Challenge Cup quarter finals as long as Castres deny Toulon maximum points in their match. Sarries kept their hopes alive after a 28-9 win over Toulon on Thursday night.

Harrow set for Vase encounter

HARROW RFC host Ickenham in the Federation Vase this Saturday. The hosts will be hoping to show the form which has taken them to the top of Herts Middlesex Four this season. Their match with Hayes failed to beat the wintry weather on Saturday.

Bartlett demands more effort from his players

by SIMON MAIL
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WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett has warned his players to work harder if they want to maintain their promotion challenge.

The Stones were dumped out of the Middlesex Senior Cup on Tuesday night after losing 3-2 at home to Uxbridge and Bartlett was annoyed by his side's performance.

Bartlett said: "We have forgotten what got us into this position in the first place, which is a good team ethic and hard work. We have to earn the right to win but we went out there over confident."

"It's a good kick up the backside for us. We need to get back to working hard again. It's not good enough if we want to have a chance of winning something this season."

"We're a passing side but we forgot to defend. A lot of that is just down to application. Their [Uxbridge] energy levels and tempo was greater than ours. We haven't played well for a while. We have to rise to the challenge and we didn't against them."

A brace from Danny Spendlove was not enough as a last-minute winner from Uxbridge sent them through. Bartlett admits it was a

wasted opportunity to go all the way.

He said: "We're disappointed to go out. If you take the positives, it will help ease our fixture congestion, get rid of three players suspended and we have just had another pre-season so it was like a warm up game."

"But I wanted to win this competition and felt we had a very good chance. I think we've blown it. We played far too open and we've been like that for some time."

The Stones suffered a blow after former striker Jermaine Beckford came off the transfer list at Leeds United. Wealdstone have a 20 per cent sell on clause but Beckford is out of contract in the summer when he could move on without a transfer fee.

Bartlett said: "It looks like he is going to stay until the end of the season. We're hugely disappointed because the prospect was good for us if he moved on."

"We will get absolutely nothing for him if he leaves on a free transfer. It is no surprise to me whatsoever but if I'm proved wrong then we will be pleasantly surprised."

The Stones play their first Ryman Premier game for four weeks on Saturday when they travel to Bognor Regis Town.



No move: Former Wealdstone striker Jermaine Beckford is poised to see out his contract at Elland Road.

Picture: ACTION IMAGES

Fightback earns Boro home draw

HARROW BOROUGH manager David Howell praised his side's character after they recovered from 3-1 down to draw 3-3 at home to Aveley at Earlsmead on Tuesday night.

Howell handed a debut to former AFC Wimbledon and Kingstonian winger Lewis Cook and he repaid him by firing the hosts into the lead.

But three goals from the visitors put them in the driving seat until Ryan Watts pulled one back for Boro. The match headed into injury time when Watts' cross was turned in by Kurt Morlese to salvage a valuable Ryman Premier point for Boro.

Howell said: "We showed a lot of character to come back from 3-1 down. But it was frustrating because we should have put the game beyond doubt in the first half when we were leading."

"I was very concerned when we were losing but we had so many players creating chances and we just needed that finish."

Cook's arrival has coincided with the departure of Jonathan Constant to Bedfont Green. Howell has come up against Cook in the past and is delighted with his latest signing.

"I played against him when he was at AFC Wimbledon and Staines and have always liked him. He was disillusioned at Kingstonian because he wasn't in the team."

"He just wants to play and he is a good footballer. He has good pace and delivery and can play on the left and right. He's shown already he will be a good addition to the side."

Howell will come up against former player Jonathan Hunt on Saturday when Boro entertain AFC Hornchurch.

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