

News briefly

Finn called up for England

MIDDLESEX fast bowler Steve Finn could make a shock debut for England tomorrow after being called up to the squad for the Test series against Bangladesh. In the warm-up game with Bangladesh A, he took three wickets in 18 economical overs. The 6ft 7in talent will act as bowling cover following the injury to Ryan Sidebottom. Finn has also been named in the 30-man provisional squad for the ICC World Twenty20.

Stones dinner for manager

WEALDSTONE are holding a testimonial dinner for manager Gordon Bartlett next month at Ruislip Social Club. Steve Perryman will be the guest speaker for the event on Wednesday, April 21. Tickets, which include a three-course buffet, are available for £40 by ringing Leo Morris on 01895 637487 or by emailing ruislipmanorssc@aol.com.

Leeds Carnegie sink Saracens

SARACENS' dreadful run of form took a turn for the worse after losing at Leeds Carnegie 19-12 on Sunday. It was their fifth Guinness Premiership defeat in the last six games. The Men in Black travel to Northampton Saints on Sunday for their LV= Cup semi-final.

Stones boost play-off hopes with United win

by SIMON MAIL
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WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett has thanked the club's supporters after they helped his team revive their Ryman Premier play-off hopes.

The Stones have been on a dreadful run since Christmas but victories in the last week at Cray Wanderers and against Hastings United have put them firmly back in contention for promotion.

Bartlett said: "Full credit to the players for their work ethic but a big thank you must go to the fans. They sung their hearts out and played their part. The fans woke us up and we're all in this together."

"The last two games we have got back to what we were doing in the early part of the season, in terms of our energy levels and confidence."

"It is an enormous week and I'm very satisfied with the start. We've won two games but it's important that we extend that run. The mentality is getting back to being positive again and it has given us a great platform."

Wealdstone produced a superb second-half fightback to win 3-1 at Cray on Saturday, with goals from Danny Spendlove, Callum Martin and Jamie Osborne.

Bartlett added: "I was most pleased with the character we showed in the second half when

we played very well. I always felt comfortable about the situation because I felt we could turn the game around."

Wealdstone earned their first home win in 2010 on Tuesday night with a priceless 1-0 victory over in-form Hastings United.

Ryan Ashe's first-half penalty was enough to take Bartlett's side up to sixth and the manager thinks winning half of their remaining 14 league games will be enough to seal a play-off spot.

He said: "Hastings are a decent side but we produced a good battling performance. We created a lot of opportunities, probably more than we have done for a long time."

The Stones' hectic programme continues tonight when they travel to Sittingbourne for their Ryman League Cup quarter-final tie. Bartlett claims cup success is a priority, despite only being back in the competition after Tonbridge Angels were thrown out for fielding an ineligible player.

"The idea is to put out our strongest side," he said. "We are missing a few because of work commitments but it will still be a strong side. Our priority is to do well in the cup and league and winning is a habit and gives you momentum."

Wealdstone host second-placed Kingstonian at the St George's Stadium in the league on Saturday.



Goal threat: Danny Spendlove found the net in the Stones' win at Cray Wanderers. Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

Howell faces battle to hold on to Clarke

HARROW BOROUGH manager David Howell is confident about keeping Dewayne Clarke despite Boreham Wood putting in a seven-day approach for the striker.

It is the third time their Ryman Premier rivals, who host Boro on Saturday, have tried to lure Clarke to Meadow Park but he has turned them down on two previous occasions.

Clarke was sent off in Tuesday night's 1-1 draw at Canvey Island after pushing a player over in the dying seconds.

"I would like to think we can keep him," Howell said. "They could offer him a king's ransom but he says he is quite happy here. He's obviously disappointed and frustrated with the sending off."

"He has speed and ability and a good understanding with Rocky Baptiste, who I call the Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke of non-league football."

Howell has responded to the interest by putting in a seven-day approach for Wood attacker Greg Morgan.

The manager added: "He is a player I like but I'm getting fed up with their approaches for Dewayne."

Boro fought back to earn a valuable point at Canvey Island when substitute Kurt Morlese scored a last-gasp header.

It was his second goal in a week after he came off the bench to score in the disappointing 2-1 home defeat to Bognor Regis Town on Saturday.

Howell, whose side play AFC Wimbledon tonight in the London Senior Cup, said: "It was a very similar match to the Canvey Island match. We started brightly but then lost our way. In the second half we battered them and should have won the game."

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