

News briefly

Sarries suffer Gloucester loss

SARACENS were beaten 19-13 at Gloucester in the Premiership on Saturday. The Men in Black dominated the first half and James Short gave them the lead with his third try in as many games. Sarries led 13-6 at half time but the Cherry and Whites started the second half strongly. Charlie Sharples got the decisive try and despite late pressure, Saracens could not produce a winner. Sarries entertain Harlequins on Sunday.

Harrow Borough games called off

HARROW BOROUGH did not play any football this week after their two games were postponed. David Howell's side were due to face Carshalton Athletic on Saturday but it was called off due to a frozen pitch. Boro were also scheduled to visit Horsham on Tuesday night but this was also postponed. Boro are due to face AFC Hornchurch this weekend.

Stones manager releases book

WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett is releasing a book telling his story of more than a quarter of a century in the Non-League game. 'Off the Bench' is available at £14.95. To buy a copy, email Roge.s@btinternet.com or ring 01992 509105.

Late agony for Stones after Sutton setback

by SIMON MAIL
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WEALDSTONE boss Gordon Bartlett believes his team deserved better after two late goals condemned them to a dramatic defeat at Ryman Premier leaders Sutton United.

The Stones were on the brink of a 3-2 win at United on Saturday before they were stunned at the death. Their disappointment continued after a 5-3 penalty shootout defeat to Wingate and Finchley on Monday night in the Championship Manager Cup.

Bartlett said: "I thought we were very good on Saturday and we thoroughly deserved to get a win let alone draw. To concede two goals in injury time was a bit of a body blow.

"Once again, the work ethic of the players was outstanding. We went to the top team in the league and we were better than them. It was a bitter disappointment for the lads and they didn't deserve it. I could not see them scoring a second goal let alone four. We had a great opportunity to beat the league leaders and their experience just won through."

Two goals in the space of six minutes from midfielder Alex Dyer fired Wealdstone into a 2-0 lead at Sutton. But the pace-setters pulled one back on the stroke of half time through Andy Forbes.

Danny Spendlove made it 3-1 before James Hammond put the ball past his own goalkeeper. With 89 minutes played, Simon Downer grabbed an equaliser and Sam Page headed home in the 95th minute to complete a sickening finish for the Stones.

Wealdstone created countless opportunities against Wingate and Finchley but only had goals from Kieron Forbes and Martin Carter to show for their efforts. The team's misses proved costly as Dyer's penalty was saved and the Stones were dumped out of the competition.

Bartlett said: "We probably should have sown it up after half an hour when we could have scored five or six goals. Some of our football was a pleasure to watch but we were guilty of overplaying. We wanted to look pretty rather than being effective. We needed that killer instinct.

"I don't think we have any major problems. We just need to be a little more clinical and professional."

The Stones host struggling Aveyley in the league on Saturday afternoon at Grosvenor Vale.

Ashes boost for England

ANDREW STRAUSS believes England have the momentum after the tourists dominated the last two days of the first Ashes Test.

England were in trouble after trailing by 221 runs following the first innings but a record-breaking revival saw them declare on 517 for one at the Gabba.

The match ended in a draw, with Middlesex skipper Strauss hitting 110 in the second innings, but England will be the happier side heading into tonight's Test in Adelaide.

Strauss said: "To come back in the match and draw it, we've got a belief we can go on and win the series from here.

"We'll have a spring in our step going to Adelaide but we have to transfer that to the pitch."

Middlesex team-mate Steve Finn made an encouraging Ashes debut, claiming six for 125 in Australia's first innings.

The 21-year-old said: "It's great to get the opportunity, and the crowd were amazing. They were loud and it was exhilarating to be a part of it."



Peter Dean and Alex Dyer, right, celebrated their early lead against Sutton United but two late goals sent them to an unlucky defeat.

Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC



Andrew Strauss captained England to a draw in the first Test.

Picture: ACTION IMAGES

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