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News briefly

Sarries slump to Sale defeat

SARACENS slipped up in the Premiership as they lost 28-22 at Sale Sharks on Sunday. The Men in Black were well off the pace in the first half as they conceded three tries which left them 28-9 down. Sarries, who handed a first start to Gavin Henson, battled back in the second half and James Short's try earned a losing bonus point. Brendan Venter takes charge of his final game on Sunday at home to London Irish.

Finn misses out on final Test

STEVE FINN was left out of England's side for the final Ashes Test in Sydney. The Middlesex seamer did not feature during the comprehensive fourth Test win over Australia and England went with an unchanged lineup. Andrew Strauss led the side and scored a quickfire 60 in their first innings.

Harrow aiming to fly high

HARROW RFC return to action in the league this weekend against British Airways. Harrow have not played for more than a month due to the wintry weather but they will put their unbeaten run on the line against BA.

QPR interested in Harrow Borough striker Hewitt

by SIMON MAIL

HARROW BOROUGH manager David Howell has confirmed Championship leaders QPR have expressed an interest in taking Troy Hewitt on trial.

The 20-year-old striker has impressed since joining the club at the start of the season and has already been the subject of a seven-day approach from Conference South side Thurrock.

But QPR have also indicated an interest in the pacy forward who netted a hat-trick in the FA Cup win at Eastbourne Borough earlier this season.

Boro boss Howell said: "He is definitely capable of playing at that [Championship] level. As soon as I saw him in the summer I liked him straight away and saw the potential and ability he had."

"I told him to concentrate on his football and the interest would come after Christmas and this has happened."

"Ultimately if the right club comes in with the right move for Troy then that's the way the game goes. He just needs to concentrate on his football and he can't let the interest turn his head."

Hewitt was on target as Boro

cruised to a 3-0 win at Hendon on Saturday. The visitors took the lead through an own goal from goalkeeper James Reading.

Hewitt's strike doubled the lead before a late close-range finish from Dwayne Clarke. The victory was their fourth consecutive away win in the league and maintained their excellent form since their FA Cup defeat to Chesterfield in November.

Howell, whose side host Canvey Island on Saturday, said: "I have been impressed with the way the players have applied themselves since our cup exit. Two days after that we won at Aveley and since then we have kept our form going."

"We're in a good position only six points off the play-offs and just have to keep it going."

"The key is to keep going and when we do lose a game then we need to make sure that we start on another run."

Boro were knocked out of the London Senior Cup on Monday after losing 3-1 on penalties against Wingate and Finchley. Evrardo Delgado fired Boro in front but they were pegged back in their 1-1 draw.



Harrow Borough striker Troy Hewitt has attracted the interest of Championship leaders QPR.
Picture: ANDREW ALEKSIEJCZUK

Stones search for signings

WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett has admitted he is keen to strengthen his squad after losing several key players.

The Stones agreed to let Kieron Forbes move to Forest Green Rovers at the end of last month and Scott Fitzgerald, Chris O'Leary and Darren Locke all face injury lay-offs. Bartlett accepts his squad is getting thin and is actively on the lookout to improve his playing resources.

Bartlett said: "There is no doubt we are in a situation where we need to look to strengthen the squad."

"We have lost Kieron and Chris O'Leary has hurt his groin. Darren will be out for a month and Scott is on crutches with a knee injury."

"It has left us a little thin on the ground so we would like to bring people in but we won't be panicking."

Wealdstone suffered a disappointing start to the New Year after a 3-0 home defeat to AFC Hornchurch on Saturday. It was the Stones' first match for nearly three weeks and Bartlett was unhappy with their lethargic display.

He said: "Rustiness was the bottom line. Physically and mentally they were the much stronger side. It was men against boys and they deserved their victory. We are very disappointed but we have to bounce back. We looked very lacklustre and lethargic."

"I don't think the players have lost their belief. We have had some excellent performances over the last few months and we just need to turn those into results."

The Stones travel to Tooting and Mitcham United this weekend.

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