

News briefly

Saracens face final rematch

SARACENS will take on Leicester Tigers in a Premiership final rematch on Saturday afternoon. The new champions will be looking to defeat an understrength Tigers side who have been hit hard by the World Cup. Sarries picked up their first home win of the season beating Worcester Warriors 18-6 on Sunday. Second-half tries from David Strettle and Brad Barritt sealed the win.

Middlesex claim title victory

MIDDLESEX CCC won promotion after winning County Championship Two following a victory over Leicestershire. Middlesex earned a five-wicket win over their opponents to seal a return to the County Championship for the first time since 2006. The team finished the season with eight wins and just two defeats from their 16 games.

Parkfield finish with club day

PARKFIELD AND HEADSTONE CC ended their campaign with a club day at Saddlers Mead in Hatch End. The players had a Twenty20 match and also held a team meeting about next season. The first team finished eighth in Herts Division Five and the Seconds ended up seventh in Division Nine. The Thirds suffered relegation from Division 12.

Stones boss slams 'unacceptable' defeat

WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett labelled his side's performance as "unacceptable" after they were dumped out of the FA Cup by Beaconsfield SYCOB.

The Stones boss could not hide his disappointment after their limp 2-0 home defeat which ended their hopes of a cup run.

Bartlett said: "I think the manner of the performance was disappointing.

"It was very lacklustre and there was no conviction. We have paid a very big price.

"The FA Cup and league were our two main targets and we have just thrown one of them away. We never got going at all and have paid the ultimate price.

"It was an opportunity for a financial reward and I just can't put my finger on what happened.

"We just had no conviction about us. We were comfortably the better side in the first half but we still didn't have any shots of consequence.

"When they scored their tails went up and we didn't ask any questions of their back four or goalkeeper."

The Stones boss warned his side about the possibility of an upset before the game but they still misfired badly.

He added: "We said before the

game the FA Cup has no respect for league positions or ability and over the 90 minutes we didn't perform well enough.

"They were hungrier than us and that is not acceptable. We know our fans have put their hands in their pockets and I feel sorry for them because we have let them down. It is bitterly disappointing.

"Everybody was shocked and I haven't slept well over the last few nights. But all we can do is deal with it and put things right.

"If we had gone down fighting then there would have been no complaints but I didn't see any fight from us."

A bad week got even worse on Tuesday night when the holders were dumped out of the Middlesex Charity Cup after losing 1-0 at home to Ashford Town.

The Stones face a difficult trip to AFC Hornchurch on Saturday in the Ryman Premier and Bartlett is expecting a decent response to their setbacks.

He said: "We have to bounce back from it. There is no point crying about it.

"It will be a very difficult game against a big strong side. I expect a response from the players. We will use the defeat to get a reaction out of the players."



The Stones had no answer to Beaconsfield in their dismal FA Cup defeat.

Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

'We will be big underdogs'

HARROW BOROUGH manager Dave Anderson is relishing the prospect of being underdogs in the FA Cup tie at Dartford next month.

Boro booked their place in the second qualifying round after beating Marlow 2-0 at Earslmead on Saturday.

Gary Jones scored a penalty and a superb free-kick to take Boro into a tie with the Conference South side.

Anderson said: "Dartford away is a role reversal where we will go in as big underdogs. I think it will suit us because as a manager you always want to take the pressure off your players.

"It's more difficult as favourites but we won't need to motivate any players on the day. Whether we are good enough to beat a team flying high in the division above us remains to be seen.

"I think six teams in the league have been knocked out by lower division sides so I was just pleased to avoid another upset."

Anderson was pleased to see his side record consecutive wins for the first time this season and believes their confidence is starting to rise.

"It has been a good week for the club but I don't believe all the work is done," he added.

"After a disappointing defeat to Cray Wanderers, beating Lowestoft and winning in the cup has been a great response."

Boro entertain Hastings United this weekend and the manager's sole focus is on this match.

He said: "We have a big game on Saturday and that is all we can concentrate on. It is important that we don't skip past vital games in the league."

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