

News briefly

Saracens see off Sale Sharks

SARACENS kept up the pressure on leaders Harlequins after a 23-10 win at Vicarage Road. David Strettle crossed the line for the champions' opening try and they sealed the win when Matt Stevens scored in the second half. Rob Miller and Mark Easter grabbed consolation tries for the visitors. Sarries begin their Heineken Cup campaign with a home game against Italian side Treviso on Sunday afternoon.

Harrow advance in National Vase

HARROW RFC eased into the third round of the National Vase after a 37-10 win over Kingston. Harrow held a slender 10-3 lead at half time following a try from Gary Conroy. But four second-half tries helped Harrow get the better of their higher ranked opponents. The Lions went down to a 24-10 defeat to Mill Hill.

California dreams for Wealdstone

WEALDSTONE LADIES thrashed California 11-1 on Sunday. Nicola Dixon was on fire with five goals and Stevie Wicks netted a hat-trick. Catherine Fahy grabbed a brace and Katie Harling also scored in the one-sided home win.

Dyer goal puts Stones through in FA Trophy

ALEX DYER helped Wealdstone wrap up a 2-1 home win over Margate in their FA Trophy replay on Tuesday night.

Scott Fitzgerald's equaliser earned Gordon Bartlett's side a 1-1 draw in the second qualifying round on Saturday.

But the Stones proved too strong for their Ryman Premier League opponents when they returned to face them at Grosvenor Vale.

The second game started scrappily but Fitzgerald had another opportunity to score when his long-range volley floated over the bar.

Margate had a real escape after 20 minutes, when Sean Cronin's free-kick was headed on by Wes Parker and the ball slipped out of goalkeeper Simon Overland's hands before it was cleared away.

The hosts opened the scoring four minutes later after Lee Chappell drilled the ball across the area and striker Richard Jolly could not miss from close range.

This gave the Stones a lift and they had decent chances to extend their lead before the break. Fitzgerald's effort was saved by Overland before Jolly unleashed a

powerful strike which flew just past the post.

Margate started the second half the better of the two sides and this resulted in their 50th minute equaliser.

Cronin was adjudged to have brought down Kwesi Appiah and he stepped up to fire the penalty past Jonathan North.

Chappell should have restored the home side's lead when he was unmarked at the far post but he fired well over the crossbar.

Margate were reduced to ten men after 67 minutes when Dean Pooley was sent off for tripping Jolly.

The Stones took advantage of this by grabbing the winner 12 minutes from time. Chappell sent in a cross which was slid home by Dyer.

Wealdstone nearly added a third goal late on when the visiting goalkeeper kicked the ball to Peter Dean but his 40-yard lob dipped over the bar.

In the next round, Bartlett's side will travel to Banbury United on Saturday, November 26.

The Stones face a stern test this weekend with a trip to league leaders Billericay.



Scott Fitzgerald scored during the Stones' draw at the weekend.

Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

Anderson optimistic despite Reds' cup exit

by Joe Whitbread

HARROW BOROUGH manager Dave Anderson believes his team "have come a long way" despite crashing out of the FA Trophy to AFC Hornchurch on Tuesday.

The Reds lost the second-round replay 1-0 after the first match finished 1-1 at the Earlsmead Stadium on Saturday.

Anderson accepted his side deserved to lose on Tuesday night but pointed out that there were positives to take from both games.

"We were disappointed to lose but I think they were a lot better than us," he said.

"We were just not in the game and did not really look like we were going to score."

"They scored just before half time and we struggled to break them down after that. But, over 180 minutes, we have lost by one goal to a team that is second in the league. We have to take the positives out of it. We have come a long way over the past four or five weeks."

Quincy Rowe headed a second-half equaliser for Harrow on Saturday and the Reds arguably could have won the game but they were denied a late penalty.

Anderson said: "Everyone in the stadium could see it was a clear penalty but the referee did not give it."

"I am critical of referees at this level and I was on Saturday too. I have no complaints about the result though - a draw was fair."

Harrow host Leatherhead in the Ryman Premier League on Saturday followed by matches against strugglers Concord Rangers and Margate.

Anderson believes it will be a crucial few weeks for his side as they target a possible play-off push.

"The next games will define our season," he said.

"In a perfect world I would like us to win all three and then maybe look to push for the play-offs but it will be tough. Leatherhead are struggling but you have to be careful."

"But I am confident going into it and it will be a massive match. Footballers enjoy the big games and we are very much looking forward to it."

Boro are offering half price admission on Saturday to ticket holders for the England versus Spain match at Wembley Stadium. Kick-off at Earlsmead is at 3pm.

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