

News briefly

Saracens pick up losing bonus point

SARACENS claimed an important losing bonus-point after a 15-10 defeat in Biarritz on Saturday. The Men in Black appeared to be heading home without any reward after trailing 15-3 in the final minute following tries from Imanol Harinordoquy and Taku Ngwenya. But Alex Goode's late try kept Sarries top of their pool. The side travel to Northampton Saints in the Premiership this weekend.

Reds dumped out of League Cup

HARROW BOROUGH were beaten 2-1 at home to Cheshunt in the third round of the League Cup on Tuesday night despite a goal from JJ Bates. The Reds suffered a 1-0 league defeat at Concord Rangers on Saturday. Dave Anderson's side are at home to Margate in the Ryman Premier on Saturday afternoon.

Wealdstone Ladies hit by Barnet loss

WEALDSTONE LADIES crashed out of the MCFA Junior Cup after falling to a 14-0 defeat to Barnet on Sunday. Rosie Watts and Nicola Dixon came close but the Stones trailed 7-0 at half time. It did not get any better for the Stones in the second half as they exited the competition.

Athlete chasing Olympic dream

by JOE WHITBREAD

PROMISING distance runner Richard Goodman has put university plans on hold as he aims to fulfil his Olympic dream.

The 18-year-old Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers athlete is one of the country's brightest prospects and has already had success in several high-profile events, including a gold medal in the Junior National League Finals this year.

Goodman, a former student at the Jewish Free School in Kenton, has not yet given up on a place at next year's Olympics in London but recognises it will be tough to qualify.

"I am aiming for the Olympic 2016 games in Brazil when I will be at the peak of my age and fitness," he said. "I will be 24 or 25 and then there will be the European and World Championships around that time too."

"Never say never but the London Olympics is a bit of a long shot. I need to run a qualification time which is ten seconds off my personal best. It is not a million miles off but four or five years from now will be my time to shine."

It has been a remarkable rise for the Stanmore-based runner after he was spotted at a school cross country event at the age of 14.

Goodman has no previous sporting achievement of note in his family and he admits his success in recent

years has been "dramatic".

He said: "I was just playing football and I suddenly grew physically and decided I wanted to pursue running. Running is one of the natural things that humans do."

"It has completely changed my life. I am experiencing new things every year and I am finding the whole thing really exciting."

"It has been quite difficult trying to balance my social life with the hard training. I lost lots of free time and my friends found it difficult."

"But we have accepted that we are going on our separate paths, they're going to university and I am concentrating on this. I have not changed as a person though; running is just what I do."

Goodman has competed in senior international events, including the World Cross Country Championships in Poland, and won both the McCain UK Cross Country Challenge and the Aviva London Grand Prix Diamond League.

He finished his A-Levels this summer and is planning to take up a university scholarship at Oklahoma in the United States, but "has not signed on the dotted line yet".

Goodman was talking ahead of the McCain Cross Challenge in Liverpool this Saturday. For more information on how to get involved in athletics, go to www.mccain-trackandfield.co.uk.



Goodman has not given up on competing at the London Olympics next summer.

O'Leary moves back to Stones

WEALDSTONE received a boost after midfielder Chris O'Leary decided to return to the club.

O'Leary opted to join St Albans City but after a short spell at Clarence Park he has chosen to move back to the Stones.

But Wealdstone have lost Danny Spendlove after he accepted an offer to join Canvey Island.

The Stones suffered a 2-1 home defeat to Canvey Island on Saturday.

The hosts looked in control after taking the lead but a sending off for Peter Dean proved the turning point in the match.

Wealdstone went in front through Wes Parker's header after 19 minutes. But Dean was sent off before the break for a second yellow after a late challenge.

The contest changed completely and John Curran netted the visitors' equaliser after 57 minutes.

Canvey Island's winner came when Sean Cronin conceded a penalty for handball and Rob King tucked away the spot kick.

But Wealdstone managed a 1-0 win over Staines Town in the George Ruffell Memorial Shield on Tuesday thanks to an own goal.

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