

Stones take bragging rights after derby day glory against Harrow Borough



Wealdstone came away with the honours after thrashing rivals Harrow Borough 4-0 on Boxing Day.
Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett admits he is full of optimism going into the new year after his side took the derby day honours by thrashing rivals Harrow Borough 4-0.

The Stones brushed aside Dave Anderson's team on Boxing Day in front of almost 900 supporters which was their biggest attendance of the season at Grosvenor Vale.

Wealdstone's latest victory extended their unbeaten run to eight games and kept the Ryman Premier play-offs within their sights.

Bartlett, whose side failed to win their first four games, said: "I was optimistic at the start of the season and can't deny my disappointment at the way things went early on. But I'm as optimistic now as I was at the start and things are looking good for us. We want to try and get into the top eight as soon as possible.

"It is the best crowd [Harrow Borough] we have had for some time. We've got a massive game coming up against Barrow [FA Trophy] and if we can get that sort of turnout then that's going to help.

"I feel like there is a buzz and real energy around the place at the moment which bodes well for club.

"We are paying the price for our poor start to the season but there is still a long way to go. It is not about where we are now, it's about where you finish at the end of the season.

"I believe the players have learnt a lot of valuable lessons from early on in the season.

"The league is wide open and everyone is capable of beating each other. With a bit of luck we can certainly be there or thereabouts."

Boro came into the match with a worrying run of four consecutive league defeats and they quickly found themselves 1-0 down against the Stones.

The opening goal summed up their recent woes as Brit Assombalonga's cross was sliced into his own net by Danny Leech.

Wealdstone came to life after their opener and it took them just nine minutes to double the lead. Alex Dyer wriggled his way through the defence before setting up Richard Jolly for a simple tap-in.

The Reds had a decent spell during the second half but their hopes were killed off in the 77th minute when livewire Assombalonga turned sharply in the box and netted the third goal.

Wealdstone completed the rout in the last minute when Jolly lashed in his 25th goal of the season.

The result continued the Stones' perfect record in the fixture as they made it five wins from five during the festive derby.

Bartlett said: "Things have gone very well over the last few years in this game but it was just important to win the match. The fact it was against our rivals makes it sweeter for the fans.

"I think it flattered us a little bit because I don't think we played particularly well. It is nice to win 4-0 without playing our best. But when we play with tempo we look a good side.

"That is one defeat in 18 games and we've kept ten clean sheets. It keeps us gradually moving up the table and we're just delighted to get three points in our local derby."

Assombalonga has been a big hit since moving to the club on loan from Watford. The youngster has scored six times for Wealdstone and Bartlett is hopeful of keeping him beyond the start of next month.

The manager, whose side entertain Carshalton Athletic on Saturday, added: "I think Brit is learning all the time. There were a few times when he needed to move the ball quicker because you don't get as much time as youth or reserve football.

"But he has a great attitude, listens well and always wants to improve. He has been an important part of the team and we would like to extend his time here. He has only been here a month but hopefully we can extend the loan."

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