

News briefly

Saracens target home semi-final

SARACENS will be looking to claim a home semi-final in the Premiership when they finish the season this weekend. The defending champions are currently third in the table and will be hoping for a slip up from either Harlequins or Leicester Tigers. Saracens finish the season with a home clash against Exeter Chiefs who still have an outside chance of reaching the top four.

Harrow face final at Twickenham

HARROW RFC will face Baildon in the National Junior Vase final at Twickenham on Saturday. About 350 supporters are expected to make the journey to the stadium for the cup final. The game gets underway at 11am. After the final, the team and fans will head back to Grove Field for an afternoon barbecue.

Jolly wins Stones player of season

WEALDSTONE striker Richard Jolly has won the club's player of the season award. In addition to claiming the Jock Law Trophy, the prolific forward picked up the players' player of the season. Injured goalkeeper Jonathan North was rewarded for his form by landing the young player of the season.

Wealdstone win books Ryman play-off place

WEALDSTONE reached the Ryman Premier play-offs after a 3-1 win over Concord Rangers.

The Stones' reward was a trip to Lowestoft Town for their semi-final tie.

Speaking ahead of the match, Bartlett said: "We have achieved what we set out to do. We've had a couple of bonuses along the way in the FA Trophy and County Cup but we've achieved our main objective.

"We've gone into the lottery which is the play-offs but we have as good a chance as anybody. It's a one off game but full credit to them for getting there."

Lowestoft finished the league campaign with a convincing 4-1 win at champions Billericay and also picked up four points against Wealdstone this season.

Bartlett said: "If you reach the play-offs then you are going to have to face all the best sides. We have drawn and lost to them in close games this season.

"They have a very good side and they were my tips to win the league at the start of the season.

"Lowestoft have shown consistency this season but we're not going to be fearful of them. We will do our homework to give us the best chance of going through.

"They have just won 4-1 at the champions which is a great result no matter what. They will be full of confidence and they will be favourites but it's pointless going into a semi-final thinking we don't have a chance.

"There is a wonderful prize at the end of it where we could pit our wits against teams at a higher level. We will certainly be giving it our best shot."

The Stones took the lead against Concord after just 21 seconds when Alex Dyer found the net.

Wealdstone were pegged back before Richard Jolly and Scott Fitzgerald sealed their fifth win on the trot.

Bartlett, whose side hope to feature in Monday's final, said: "We have got the momentum and have been on a fantastic run so there is no reason why we can't go to Lowestoft and get a result.

"We've had a tremendous run since Christmas so why shouldn't we be confident? I think we're top of all the form tables and have come from being 12th when we were knocked out of the Trophy by Newport.

"There will be a partisan crowd but we will hopefully be taking a couple of coaches to support us."



Stones boss Gordon Bartlett has guided his side into the play-offs. Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

'I won't be doing major surgery'

HARROW BOROUGH manager Dave Anderson does not expect to be overhauling his squad this summer.

The experienced boss had to start from scratch last year after taking over, with most of the club's players leaving, but expects to retain the bulk of his staff.

Anderson said: "I think if we can keep the squad together and add three or four players to it I hope it won't be as traumatic as this year.

"I won't be doing major surgery. We did enough of that last year. I hope the squad will come back but like any club there will always be a couple of changes.

"I think I used more than 50 players this season and it was the hardest pre-season I've faced. It was like we were doing our Christmas shopping on Boxing Day.

"It's not something I want to repeat and I feel pre-season will be easier and we will be able to control our own destiny and hopefully be on a level playing field."

Boro faced a relegation battle but ensured their survival before their last game of the season which resulted in a 4-2 defeat at Lewes.

Anderson's side got off to an ideal start when Jon-Jo Bates converted from eight yards out.

But four efforts from the hosts turned it around before Danny Leech headed home the Reds' second goal.

Anderson admitted his first task each year will be to ensure the team retain their place in the Ryman Premier.

The manager said: "It's been a difficult season for us but we managed to accomplish our minimum requirement which was to stay in the league.

"My first job each year will be to get us to 50 points and once we get that we can determine what we can achieve."

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