

Stones' fixture congestion could hit promotion bid

Wealdstone manager Gordon Bartlett admits their mounting fixture congestion caused by the bad weather is making their promotion challenge much harder.

The Stones had two more matches postponed due to waterlogged pitches this week and Wealdstone have five games in hand on Ryman Premier Division leaders Maidstone United.

Bartlett said: "I still think there is some bad weather to come and it is certainly making our task of getting promotion more difficult.

"It is a balancing act between working too hard and not working hard enough. But our fitness levels are understandably waning at the moment."

Bartlett added: "We are four or five games behind teams in front of us. But it's only nice to have games in hand when you get the points. We are playing catch up and it's difficult when you are striving to be successful.

"But we will deal with it the best we can because whinging will not make a blind bit of difference.

"We are still focused on trying to get promoted this year and that won't change despite the weather."

The Stones were due to host Lowestoft Town last weekend in the league and AFC Hayes in the County Cup on Tuesday until the weather intervened.

Bartlett's side visit Thamesmead



Wealdstone boss Gordon Bartlett braved the rain recently but the weather ensured there was no match action this week. Picture: STEVE FOSTER/WEALDSTONE FC

Town this Saturday before hosting AFC Hornchurch, who thrashed them 6-1 in October, on Monday.

The Stones boss said: "It won't be easy against Thamesmead despite their league position.

"I watched them last week and they gave a good account of them-

selves.

"When we played Hornchurch earlier this season we caught a massive cold.

"That still hurts and we will do everything in our power to turn the tables on them."

Wealdstone's advanced FA Char-

ter Standard Community Club status renewal has been successful for another year.

● Harrow Borough also did not play this week and Dave Anderson's side face a daunting trip to league leaders Maidstone United this weekend.

Fraser handed England role

Middlesex CCC director of cricket Angus Fraser has been appointed as an England selector.

Fraser's role with the ECB will start on March 1 but his position at Middlesex will be unaffected.

Fraser said: "I am chuffed to be involved and am looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead.

"As a player I always took great pride in representing England and I am delighted to be given another chance to contribute.

"Despite the doom and gloom after this winter's Ashes, I believe it's a really exciting time to be involved in the England set up.

"There is a real chance to create something and there are a lot of talented young cricketers within the county game. This new position will not affect my desire to turn Middlesex into the most competitive and respected club in the country."

National selector James Whitaker added: "I am delighted to welcome Angus Fraser on to the selection panel. Gus has been heavily involved in cricket for many years as a player and an administrator.

"He brings integrity and the wealth of knowledge that we will need as we look to identify the players across all formats who can thrive in the international environment."

Middlesex chairman Ian Lovett said: "All of us at Middlesex would like to offer our sincere congratulations to Angus on his new appointment onto the England selection panel and it's a fitting acknowledgement of the regard in which he is held within the game that the ECB have turned to him to fill this role.

"Angus's appointment is yet further proof of the importance that we as a county place on supporting the progression of England Cricket at the highest level.

"His appointment receives the full support of the Middlesex Executive Board, safe in the knowledge that Angus's commitment to achieving the goals he has set himself and the Middlesex squad remain firmly in place."

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