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FOOTBALL: Stones boss facing defensive crisis

Bartlett goes back to the drawing board

Wealdstone boss Gordon Bartlett has been forced to strengthen at right-back after being besieged by availability issues during preseason, admitting the Stones are slightly behind in their preparations.

Right-back was a position the vastly-experienced Bartlett had been happy with after the signing of Oliver Duffy from Hanwell Town.

However, with James Hammond departing and Carl Martin taking up a coaching role with Watford's Under-18s alongside playing for the National League South side, Bartlett's plans have been thrown into disarray with the news Duffy will now go travelling.

"I would say we are probably a little bit behind," admitted Bartlett.
"We have got another little problem at right-back in that we have signed Olly Duffy but he has made the decision to go travelling now.

"I had a long chat with him last night (Tuesday) and he feels really guilty but his circumstances have changed.

"It has been a tough time this pre-season," stated Bartlett. "A lot of things have gone on which you

By Tom Bodell

would not believe.

"He (Duffy) does not have an issue with club and won't be playing elsewhere but circumstances in his life mean he is going to go travelling with his brother.

"Carl Martin will be at Hull City on the first game of the season. We will be at Bath City. I went away and we had three right-backs. I came back in the early hours yesterday (Tuesday) and we have got none."

Bartlett missed Saturday's 2-0 defeat by National League side Dover Athletic whilst he was on holiday but returned to take charge of Tuesday's 3-1 defeat by Wycombe Wanderers of League Two.

And he was pleased with what he saw after fielding a patched-up back four.

"I felt for an hour on Tuesday we did well against a side who reached the League Two Play-Off Final last year. Despite the scoreline there were a lot of positives.

"Hopefully in three weeks we have not only got the sharpness back but those missing players as well"



Gordon Bartlett says this pre-season has been one of the toughest he has known. Picture: Steve Foster/Wealdstone FC

The wait goes on for Boro

THE LATEST ACTION FROM THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY LEAGUE

Bessborough's wait for a Middlesex County Cricket League Division Three victory stretched to seven weeks as they rescued a losing draw at home to South Hampstead on Saturday.

The visitors put up an imposing 266 all out with all of the top five batsmen getting starts and two of them – Shrutarth Rajani (52) and Sacha Duran (58) – bagging half-centuries.

The wickets were shared between the Borough spin trio of Nitin Modha (three for 31), Sherrick Chavda (three for 87) and Rohan Karkhanis (two for 28).

In reply, Bessborough were struggling to score at the required runrate, reaching 64 for two after 20 overs.

That apparent serenity was blown away by a devastating three-over spell which reduced Bessborough to 65 for six with more than half the innings overs still to come.

Chavda (29) and Gihan Pallage (9) stopped the rot for ten overs before the latter holed out.

Skipper Karkhanis stuck around until the 40th over before he was out caught, while Chavda finally succumbed in the 47th.

Fortunately, last pair Sharuban Kanthasamy (2 not out) and Modha (7 not out) were able to survive the remaining 23 balls to secure the point.

The Second lost by four wickets against South Hampstead.





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