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FOOTBALL: Clarets win builds buffer on drop zone

Wealdstone must be looking up not down

WEALDSTONE should be looking towards the National League South play-off places rather than the relegation zone, according to manager Gordon Bartlett.

Saturday's 2-0 win at Chelmsford City – secured with goals from Wes Parker and Bradley Hudson-Odoi – leaves the Stones three points and five places above the bottom two.

However, just six points separate St Albans City in 21st and Hemel Hempstead Town in 11th.

And for that reason Bartlett insists Wealdstone should be looking up rather than down.

He said: "We've got to looking at the fact there's six point separating ten teams in the early part of the new year.

"We've got to be looking at that." Asked if that meant the play-off places – ten points from Wealdstone's reach – were achievable, Bartlett said: "I think we've got to say so.

"I think in the new year there's cover in most positions now. The only thing evident on Saturday was we should have taken more of our opportunities."

Bartlett has finally solved his goalkeeper problem with the sign-

By Tom Bodell

ing of West Ham United youngster Sam Howes on loan whilst Joe Taylor has joined following his release by Fleetwood Town as Jonathan North prepares for knee surgery in January.

Meanwhile, experienced defender Jack Smith, formerly of Watford and Millwall, has joined from Hemel Hempstead Town.

The Stones go to Hemel on Boxing Day before Sutton United visit on December 28.

In the Isthmian Premier Division Harrow Borough blew a 3-1 lead to draw 3-3 at Tonbridge Angels on Saturday.

Tom Parkinson put Tonbridge in front after 40 minutes but Reds skipper Marc Charles-Smith levelled from the penalty spot five minutes later.

Five minutes into the second half Josh Webb put Steve Baker's side in front.

Harry Newman then extended that lead in the 58th minute before Luke Blewden and Luke Allen snatched a draw.

Harrow host Hendon on Boxing Day.



Wealdstone celebrate after scoring at the Melbourne Stadium against Chelmsford City on Saturday.
Picture: ALAN PALMER

Defeated Smith has no excuse

BOXER APOLOGISES FOR TRASH TALK AFTER FIRST DEFEAT OF PRO CAREER

HARROW fighter Mitchell Smith apologised to opponent George Jupp for the disrespectful things he said prior to his first pro defeat on Saturday and admitted he performed like c***.

The 23-year-old super featherweight (13-1) suffered an undisputed points loss to Jupp (12-2), surrendering his WBO Inter-Continental title in the process.

Speaking to iFL TV afterwards, Smith said: "There are no excuses, I got beaten by the better man on the night.

"George performed out of his skin and I performed like c***."

"The Baby Faced Assassin" continued: "I've been doing a lot of talking. I still know how good I am.

"I've backed up most of everything I said but tonight I didn't.

"I said some horrible things and disrespectful things to George in the build-up to this fight. I apologise to him, I was just trying to build up this fight."

Smith added: "I started my diet in the middle of October. No excuses but I lost 36lbs from the middle of October to the weigh-in scales.

"On Monday morning I weighed 68kgs. I've messed around with the sport, I've spoken too much on Twitter and I've possibly needed to be knocked off my perch. Today I have been.

"It's time to start living the life again. The only way is up now, I've hit rock bottom. I've just got to take it like a man and get on with it."

Smith returns on January 22.



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HARROW
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