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FOOTBALL: Bartlett unhappy after latest defeat Stones performances 'have let club down'

WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett was "extremely frustrated" with his players after a 2-1 loss to Bishop's Stortford on Tuesday, claiming inconsistent performances from the team have let the club down this season.

Goals from captain Anthony Church and Elliott Buchanan won the game for the Blues, cancelling out Shaun Lucien's leveller to keep the away side marooned in mid-table of the National League South.

Bartlett said: "I think we shot ourselves in the foot.

"We were playing on a bobbly hard surface but on too many occasions we haven't done ourselves justice.

"There was very little between the two teams.

"We gave the ball away in a good area and they played in the conditions better than we did."

The Stones found themselves behind after failing to deal with a long throw, allowing Church to nick the ball home from close range.

The Blues were fortunate to maintain their lead when Jefferson Louis completely missed the ball at the back post after a low cross was sent in.

Although the home side started

By Oli Gamp

the second period brightly, they quickly found themselves level when Lucien unleashed an unstoppable free-kick that looped over the wall and into the bottom left corner.

But Wealdstone were caught out by a perfectly weighted cross from loanee Robbie Willmott. Buchanan latched onto it in the box and applied the neatest of touches to send it past North.

Bartlett said: "There was not a lot in the first half. We allowed the ball to bounce and got caught. They didn't cause us many problems but we didn't cause them many problems either.

"It was a great free-kick from Shaun and I thought we had the upper hand. I'm extremely frustrated with our inconsistency."

The Stones drew 0-0 at home to Maidenhead United last weekend and host relegation-threatened St Albans City on Saturday.

Bartlett says he expects an improvement from his players this weekend.

He said: "It has to be better. The ability in the squad has never been in question, but the application col-



The Stones were held at home to Maidenhead United on Saturday.
Picture: Alan Palmer

lectively has not been up to what we expect."

Safety is not mathematically guaranteed, with the Stones six points clear of danger with two games to go, although a far superior goal difference should see them through.

The experienced manager said the team owe it to the fans to ensure the season does not fizzle out with the

side currently 14th in the table.

"It's in our hands," he said. "We got a point on Saturday (Maidenhead) but I don't want our season to peter out into nothing. I want to enjoy it and I have not enjoyed it.

"Some of the performances have let the club down and I know we're capable of so much better. The fans deserve better."

Errors see Boro fall to defeat

REDS GROW INTO THE TIE IN SECOND HALF BUT LOSE SEASON'S LAST AWAY GAME

HARROW Borough suffered a 2-0 defeat at East Thurrock United in their final away match on Saturday.

The Reds got off to an awful start when the league's top scorer Sam Higgins was played in on the counter-attack after Lewis Driver gave away possession.

He showed no hesitation in lashing a shot past Joe McDonnell in the Harrow goal.

East Thurrock kept the pressure on as Joe Ellul went close from a corner but Harrow had a chance of their own when Harry Newman's square ball agonisingly evaded the boot of the onrushing Kane Jones.

Higgins was threatening to bag another, testing McDonnell with a low drive and then being thwarted by Tom Willmont after running through on goal.

The second period was a more even contest.

Fejiri Okenabirhie's snapshot flew over the bar and Newman forced a great stop from East Thurrock goalkeeper Lukas Lidakevicius.

The home team stayed firm and wrapped up the victory in the last few minutes thanks to a mistake from the otherwise solid Willmont. He failed to clear a ball on the edge of the area, allowing Tom Wraight to slot home.

Boro play their final game of the season next week at home to Leatherhead.

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