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FOOTBALL: Wealdstone rise to ninth in table Stones bounce back with Gosport victory

WEALDSTONE manager Gordon Bartlett has called on his players to use their first league victory since September 13 to begin a winning run in the National League South.

The welcome 3-1 victory at Gosport Borough, the Stones' first in three league games, saw them rise to ninth in the league standings on Saturday.

Elliot Benyon, now with 12 goals to his name before the end of October, was at the double in South Hampshire while Matty Whichelow was also on target.

Goalkeeper Andrew Thomas, on loan from Watford, was named between the sticks for the first time since his arrival, with Jonathan North still missing after being injured in last week's defeat at Dagenham.

It was Whichelow who would get the ball rolling 14 minutes in, when he found himself on the end of a Sehr Kabba cross a quarter of an hour in, but Ben Poate's equaliser from a free-kick a minute before the break levelled the scores.

Benyon restored the lead within 60 seconds of the restart before Sam Cox was sent off with half an hour to play.

By Ron Walker

But instead of folding, Wealdstone added a third through Benyon in the dying moments.

"We need to try to get a little run going," Bartlett said after the game. "We had slipped off the pace and need to keep ourselves in contention."

"To go away from home and beat another side in the middle of the table is important for us."

"At half-time there were a lot of disappointed bodies in there. But to go back ahead within the first minute was exactly what we wanted."

"Josh [McLeod-Urquhart] will hold his hands up and say it was a sloppy foul to give away for their goal, but he won the ball which led to us going back in front."

Bartlett was equally glowing about his star striker Benyon, who has been a revelation in north London since his arrival in the summer.

"He's having a great season," he said. "If you took the goals away, what he also gives the side is a willingness and work ethic."

"I'm prepared to work hard and if you have got that all over the park you will do well."



Elliot Benyon celebrates his first goal in Wealdstone's 3-1 win at Gosport.
Picture: ALAN PALMER

The result cut Wealdstone's gap to the play-off places to five points, cementing their improvement from last season when they earned six fewer points in their first 14 games.

"Our aim is to be in a position to challenge in the second half of the season," said Bartlett. "There's some difficult months coming up, and in December we have Maiden-

head twice."

On Saturday the Stones host a Welling side with just eight points to their name, but Bartlett warned his team not to expect an easy ride.

"We've learned in this league there are no easy games," he said. "This time last year we weren't doing as well as we are now - but no one fancied playing against us."

Harrow's unbeaten run over

HECTIC SCHEDULE CATCHES UP WITH BORO IN LATEST MIDWEEK GAME

HARROW Borough were downed by two second-half goals at Harlow Town on Tuesday night as they missed the chance to move into mid-table in the Ryman Premier League.

Boro have as many as four games in hand over some of their rivals following their FA Cup exploits, but 15 points from 13 games has left them languishing sixth-bottom in the division despite a seven-match unbeaten run which was ended in midweek.

A 4-1 thrashing of Folkestone Invicta on Saturday left them looking up the table, when Luke Driver at the double, and George Nicholas and in-form Ibrahim Meite sealed a big win.

But it seemed Boro's recent run of games took their toll in their midweek fixture, as despite starting the better in Essex, they faded and were well beaten in the final half-hour.

Meite was up to his usual tricks before the break and saw a cheeky back-heel attempt cleared, before Nicholas headed wide from a Josh Webb cross.

But on the hour mark, from a Harrow attack, Harlow countered and with right-back Lewis Ochoa out of position, a cross found Khale Da Costa who put the hosts in front.

A second followed in the final minute, when Harlow again found space on the left, and another delivery was turned home by Leon Antoine.

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