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OWN goal hands Welling United unlikely victory Lacklustre Stones fall to late home defeat

WEALDSTONE suffered a gut-wrenching National League South defeat as Elliott Godfrey's last-gasp own goal gifted Welling United a 1-0 win.

The hosts would have expected to take all three points from the match considering United's abject form ahead of kick-off.

However, a Stones side lacking suspended midfielder enforcer Sam Cox struggled in a hard-fought contest at The Vale.

The loss ended a sequence of three wins in a row for Gordon Bartlett's side and they will look to lift themselves in time for Saturday's trip to Hemel Hempstead Town.

Things looked ominous for Wealdstone from the opening exchanges as Welling had the better of the first 45 minutes.

Elliott Benyon and Sahr Kabba too frequently failed to match the combative nature of United's centre-backs and were starved of service throughout.

Unsurprisingly, Welling created the first chance and Jonathan North had to be alert in the Wealdstone goal to deny Danny Waldren's powerful strike.

Welling's control continued for

By Harry Gray

the remainder of the half but a Stones defence, which featured debutant Accrington Stanley loanee Liam Goulding, remained relatively solid.

When they were breached North was on hand to deny Welling and once again saved smartly from Adam Coombes at the end of the first half.

The interval provided welcome respite and Wealdstone looked sharper after the break as they began to have a greater share of possession.

They were still struggling to create clear openings and their best chance of the match came with 10 minutes to play.

It came from a moment of individual inspiration rather than a group effort as Danny Waldren's free-kick from the edge of the box clipped the outside of the post.

With the match looking destined to be heading for a draw, Welling pushed forward and fashioned a fortunate winner in the 90th minute.

A hopeful cross looked to have been covered by substitute Godfrey, but in getting up to head the ball



The unfortunate Elliott Godfrey turns into his own net to hand Welling United all three points.
Picture: ALAN PALMER

clear he inadvertently turned past North to hand United victory.

In many ways the manner of the winning goal mirrored a scrappy match which neither side could claim to have dominated.

Stones manager Bartlett was disappointed by the result and insists his side must now look to improve on a below par performance.

He said: "This was hugely frustrating and the players know that they have to be better than this."

"We are all in this together - win or lose - and we will continue to strive forward together."

The loss leaves Wealdstone ninth, a point behind East Thurrock United and seven off a coveted play-off spot.

Cobblers to provide stern test

HARROW LOOK TO MAKE HISTORY IN FA CUP CLASH AGAINST NORTHAMPTON

HARROW Borough will aim to make history on Saturday by reaching the second round of the FA Cup for the first time in 33 years.

Steve Baker's side face a tough task in doing so as they travel to Sixfields Stadium to take on League One outfit Northampton.

The Cobblers have taken to life in England's third tier with ease after gaining promotion last season and currently sit sixth in the table.

Saturday's hosts have won each of their last two league games and head into the match on the back of a 3-2 victory over Bury.

Borough meanwhile will be looking to carry on the form they showed in their 3-0 FA Trophy first qualifying replay triumph over Herne Bay on Tuesday.

They needed a late goal from captain Marc Charles-Smith to scrape to a 2-2 draw in the initial tie on Saturday, but were far more clinical in mid-week.

Charles-Smith was on target again to open the scoring before Bay saw an equaliser chalked off for offside at the start of the second half.

Mark McLeod then rounded the Herne Bay keeper before calmly rolling into the empty net to give his side breathing space.

Harry Newman made the win safe with a fortuitous 72nd minute strike when his shot was saved by Jack Delo only to ricochet off him and in.

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