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## WEALDSTONE: Benyon hat-trick downs Hemel Stones' endeavour earns late derby win

GORDON Bartlett was left more content with the result than the performance after his Wealdstone side overcame Hemel Hempstead 3-1 thanks to two late goals from Elliot Benyon.

The 29-year-old raced into second place in the National League South top scorer standings after a stunning hat-trick over the Stones' local rivals, after Jordan Parkes had opened the scoring for the hosts just after half-time.

Benyon's first came just before the hour mark but not until the final minute of the 90 did he give Wealdstone the lead for the first time, before sealing his hat-trick deep into stoppage time.

The first half had been a largely dull affair, with only the Tudors' Sam Corcoran and Stones' Elliot Godfrey in real danger of breaking the deadlock before the break.

Three minutes into the second half, Michael Thalassits shrugged off Josh McLeod-Urquhart, and saw his shot parried to Parkes for a simple finish.

Benyon soon got the visitors level with an impressive volley from a corner, before they held on during waves of Hemel attacks.

By Ron Walker

They would be rewarded for their defensive resilience when Benyon grabbed his second of the day, latching on to a long ball over the top before slotting home from a tight angle.

And with the hosts pushing men forward, he added a third in added time with a stunning lob to seal his hat-trick.

Bartlett admitted his star striker would get the plaudits, but paid tribute to his entire team for their determination to win the game.

He said: "It wasn't our best performance, but local derbies are always different and while I felt Hemel edged it, we've walked away with the three points.

"Elliot will get all the praise, but there were more hands to the pump than just him. Our back four was questioned earlier in the season but they did very well."

The Stones are finally seeing some of their most prized footballers return from injury, with captain Wes Parker fit enough to start against the Tudors.

"Losing Tom Cadmore was a blow to the way we play because he's a



Elliot Benyon celebrates after sealing his hat-trick goal at Hemel Hempstead.

Picture: ALAN PALMER

footballing defender," said Bartlett. "Jack Smith has been out for a long time too. And not having our strong experienced defenders hasn't helped us either.

"We will have illness or family issues and in the last two years we have had more than our fair share, but we are still going forward.

"That said, the last month has

been poor. We need something to kick-start our season and we want to be better; November is a massive month, playing sides in and around us in the table, and I'm glad we've got one out of the way."

This weekend, Wealdstone will host 14th-placed Eastbourne Borough, and can move within four points of the play-offs with victory.

## Boro run brought to an end

HARROW CLAPPED OFF AFTER 6-0 FA CUP LOSS TO NORTHAMPTON TOWN

HARROW Borough had their heads held high despite their FA Cup run being brought to an abrupt end in a 6-0 drubbing by League One Northampton Town on Saturday.

The visitors were blown away by their classy hosts at Sixfields, in front of 371 travelling Borough supporters, but did have chances of their own before the break.

They trailed from the sixth minute when Paul Anderson's stunner from the edge of the box put the Cobblers ahead, and found themselves 2-0 down soon after through Marc Richards' sliding finish.

After surviving further scares, Lewis Driver saw an effort blocked for Harrow, as was Josh Webb's follow-up, before Marc Charles-Smith failed to test Northampton's Adam Smith.

Any hope of a comeback was extinguished when Richards added a third 10 minutes after the break, but still the visitors rallied as Webb fired over from the edge of the box.

John-Joe O'Toole made it four when heading in a free-kick from Matt Taylor, the former Bolton midfielder, before he went one better with a strike from a dead ball in the final 10 minutes.

Harrow still searched for a consolation and substitute Francis Babalola forced a smart save, but JJ Hooper had the last laugh, rounding off the scoring late on.

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