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Stones run rumbles on with Southport victory

WEALDSTONE are three wins from Wembley after making it through to the FA Trophy third round for the first time in five years at National League Southport on Saturday.

Manager Gordon Bartlett maintains his side are not looking beyond next month's last 16 tie at home to Stockport County or Brackley, but the momentum of their increasingly impressive run will not be lost on the club's players.

Having already seen off runaway National League South leaders Maidenhead United in the tournament, the Stones turned their attention to Southport last weekend.

And in front of a travelling contingent somewhere in the region of 300, they progressed 2-1, thanks to goals from Danny Green and Ricky Wellard in either half.

Bartlett's side were pegged back eight minutes after half-time when Sheffield United loanee Jake Wright's header levelled the scores, but they remained dominant for the most part.

Wellard's solo strike would have been fit to win most games, and followed a 20-yard run before he fired home from the edge of the area.

"It was a very good all-round

By Ron Walker

performance both on and off the pitch," said Bartlett after the game. "The lads played very well - but the 300 supporters who travelled sang their hearts out.

"It gives us a real boost and it was influential, especially when six weeks ago they were giving us a bit of stick, and rightly so. "The final whistle was a very proud moment on Saturday, looking back on the 20 years I've been here it was one of the best days.

"It's the result of the season so far. We haven't had enough to get excited about this year.

"With the quality of players we have got, we should be doing better. I keep believing in the players and Saturday was an indication why - we need to maintain it."

The Stones fell at the final hurdle before reaching the home of English football in 2012, losing over two legs to Cambridge United in the semi-finals of the competition.

That memory has stuck firmly in the mind of Bartlett, who is not getting carried away ahead of the next round on February 4.

"I've been doing this a long time.



Ricky Wellard celebrates his winning goal in Wealdstone's victory at Southport, which sealed their FA Trophy progression. Picture: STEVE FOSTER

You try not to think about anything more than the next hurdle," he said. "The thought of Wembley is great, but we fell one short last time.

"I've been twice as a manager - it would be lovely to finish it off but let's concentrate on the next one. We've got the quality to give ourselves a chance."

On Saturday, the Stones travel to

Weston-super-Mare as they return to league action. They were 1-0 winners over Harrow Borough in the Middlesex Senior Cup on Tuesday.

Wealdstone: North, Sheckleford, Goulding, Oshodi, Brown, Godfrey, Cox, Wellard (Mavila 87), Whichelow (Wright 77), Green (Koroma 90), Benyon.

Not used: Hamblin, McGleish.

Harrow held to 1-1 draw by Canvey

HARROW DROP TWO POINTS TO STAY 18TH IN ISTHMIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

HARROW Borough could not find their way past a dogged Canvey Island as their relegation rivals held them to a 1-1 draw at Earlsmead on Saturday.

The second-bottom side refused to be beaten by Steve Baker's men, who could have opened up a five-point cushion on the four Isthmian Premier League relegation spots with victory.

In fact, Borough had to come from behind against their lowly hosts after George Allen had turned home ex-Harrow man Frankie Merrifield's cross.

An equaliser arrived with less than 19 minutes on the clock when Andy Lomas' free-kick was swept in by Steve Brown.

The goal ignited the hosts' confidence and Josh Webb and Lomas both pushed forward as they increasingly found themselves on the front foot.

Brown headed over from a corner and David Taylor flashed an effort wide, but they failed to make their dominance count before the half-time interval.

Harrow continued to create chances after the break but found Canvey in the ascendancy, albeit unable to fashion real clear-cut opportunities.

A late rally followed from the hosts when George Nicholas headed past the post from Josh Webb's cross, and Marc Charles-Smith doing likewise following the same man's corner.

Harrow lost 1-0 against Wealdstone in the Middlesex Senior Cup on Tuesday night and, back in the league, travel to Staines Town on Saturday.

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