

SPORT

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WEALDSTONE: 11-game unbeaten run is ended

Season all-but finished with Stones defeat

By Ron Walker

WEALDSTONE'S 11-match unbeaten run was ended emphatically as Eastbourne Borough romped to a 5-1 win on Saturday.

The nails were all but in the Stones' promotion coffin as early as mid-January before two months of title-quality form, yielding 25 points, had given them the slimmest of hopes.

But a 12-point gap to the top five, while mathematically possible to bridge, would require such an unlikely set of results in the final five games that Gordon Bartlett can now safely begin planning for next season.

Their afternoon on the south coast began unravelling six minutes in when Jonathan North parried a shot straight into the path of Christian Oxlade-Chamberlain, brother of Arsenal's Alex, who tapped home.

He doubled his money before the half-hour when charging down a loose ball from Sam Cox and finish-

ing confidently.

But if that was composed, it was nothing on the third. Jamie Taylor spotted North off his line from 30 yards and duly lobbed him to settle the game well before half-time.

Dan Fitchett did give them a glimmer of hope just before the interval with his first Stones goal.

The next goal would be crucial, and it almost came Wealdstone's way when first Joe White had an effort cleared off the line, before Aryan Tajbakhsh struck the bar with a 25-yard free-kick.

Their hopes of an unlikely comeback were dashed when Taylor latched on to Ian Simpemba's header from close-range.

There was a moment of *deja vu* when Oshodi again had a shot cleared off the line and Danny Green struck the bar from another free-kick, as even with a three-goal deficit the Stones refused to go down without a fight.

But a fifth would follow for the hosts through Kieron Khinda-John on the hour mark when he headed home Gavin McCallum's cross.



Dan Fitchett (pictured) scored his first Wealdstone goal, but it was scant consolation in their 5-1 defeat at Eastbourne. Picture: ALAN PALMER

Islanders see off poor Borough

HARROW CONDEMNED TO 3-0 DEFEAT BY EARLY GOALS IN BOTH HALVES

AN eight-point gap to the bottom four in the Ryman Premier League is just as well for Harrow Borough, who did themselves no favours with their early-goal hoodoo still afflicting them on Saturday.

A 3-0 defeat at Canvey Island was largely settled in the opening minutes of both halves - and once Ryan Blackman struck a third-minute opener for the hosts, they were facing an uphill battle.

The Canvey midfielder played a neat one-two before stroking the opener beyond Luke Williams.

Harrow offered little in the way of threat before the interval and two minutes after it, they were two behind.

A corner was missed by Williams before defender Frankie Merrifield nodded in from close-range, as the hosts gave themselves extra breathing space.

Harrow crafted their best chances with the game likely beyond them, and Lheureux Menga, Joshua Webb and Michael Bryan all went close.

But with 12 minutes to go, Canvey put the game beyond any doubt with a third on the break, which ended with George Sykes netting the final goal.

Harrow drop to 14th but will still be content with the relative safety of mid-table, and next host Burgess Hill Town on Saturday.

Harrow: Williams; Ochoa (Newman 63), Peacock, Webb (Nicholas 76), Laffeur; Bryan, Cumberbatch, Preddie, Brown; Menga (Turl 63), Charles-Smith.

Not used: Babalola, Laalizi.

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