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WEALDSTONE: Concord to visit Vale on August 5 Stones handed Grosvenor opener in National League

By

CONCORD Rangers will fly into Grosvenor Vale on the first day of the season, it has been revealed, as Wealdstone begin their National League South campaign at home for the first time since 2014.

The Canvey Island side, 18th last season, will visit west London on August 5, before the Stones travel to St Albans two days later.

A double-header with Hampton and Richmond will conclude the busy Christmas period on Boxing Day and New Year's Day, while rivals Whitehawk will provide the final-day opposition at the Enclosed Ground on April 28.

The Stones have already begun their pre-season campaign after a trialist team won 2-1 at Bedfont Sports on Tuesday night, with Abobaker Eisa netting both goals for the visitors.

In previous years, the likes of Ciaron Brown have impressed sufficiently to earn deals with the club - and manager Gordon Bartlett is hopeful of more to follow the four signings he has made this summer. "Most of the boys have come

through training in the last week and all looked reasonable, and the game was a chance to see how they can step up," he said.

"I would not imagine many of them are going to end up in the squad but it is a good opportunity for us and them."

The addition of Josh Hill and Shaquille Hippolyte-Patrick has already given the squad a more polished look ahead of the new season, but Bartlett echoed the thoughts of Dartford boss Tony Burman's comments in the press about the amount of money filtering down to non-league.

"We're pleased to get Josh and Shaquille on-board," he said. "We lacked a wide man last year with pace, and Shaquille fits that bill."

"Josh was with us a few years ago and has got a lot of experience under his belt since then. He's stronger physically and mentally."

"If I go back a few years I would be staggered by the amount of money at this level. Look at Billericay in the league below."

"Budgets are going up considerably, but we want to get the right players for the right prices as we have in the past few years."



Tempers flare in last season's home game with Concord, which saw Aryan Tajbakhsh harshly sent off.
Picture: ALAN PALMER

Boro finally pick up first maiden win

BESSBOROUGH SEE OFF BRENTHAM TOWN WITH EASE IN FIVE-WICKET WIN

BESSBOROUGH picked up a long-overdue first win of the season as some consistent batting saw them to a five-wicket victory at Brentham.

Still bottom of the division by a considerable margin, Bessborough moved into a positive score for the season - having been docked five points in pre-season - as they bowled their hosts out for 211-8.

Good early bowling from Shyam Lakhani, Ajan Sivakumar and Mitesh Vyas reduced the hosts to 31-3, with each taking a wicket, before Vyas put more of the Brentham order to the sword with the scalps of Luke Budden (21) and Matthew Lowen (16).

Vyas' 3-51 was the finest showing from the visiting bowlers but Vikram Teja took two late wickets before Brentham closed on 211-8.

Bessborough's response got off to a shaky start when Vikram Teja was bowled for six, but they never looked back from that point on.

Will Grogan and Tharshan Kanagaraj's partnership of 98 for the second wicket put them in full control, scoring 46 and 48 respectively, before an unbeaten 50 from Ian Barrie, who partnered well with Lakhani (24).

Rameez's innings was shortlived when he was dismissed for eight from 11 balls, but Barrie and Andrew Carr put on an unbroken 25, starting on 190-5, to see Bessborough to victory with time to spare.

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The Harrow Times is published by Newsquest (London) Ltd, Observer House, Caxton Court, Caxton Way, Watford, Herts WD18 8RJ part of the Newsquest Media Group Ltd, Loudwater Mill, Station Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP10 9TY, a Gannett Company. Printed by Newsquest Oxfordshire, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EJ.

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