

SPORT

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STONES rolled away by Hampton and Richmond Wealdstone finally beaten in Middlesex Cup final

WEALDSTONE suffered their first defeat of pre-season, and missed out on their first chance for silverware, with a 1-0 defeat at Hampton and Richmond on Tuesday night.

The long-awaited final, re-arranged from last season, turned out to be far from friendly when Hampton's Charlie Wassmer was sent off for kicking Josh Hill with 20 minutes to go.

It was not enough to inspire a late resurgence in Gordon Bartlett's team, however, who were second-best for much of the fiery encounter.

The Stones had seen off Reading Under-23s 6-1 on Saturday at Grosvenor Vale, thanks to braces from Abobaker Eisa and Elliot Benyon, and goals from Shquaille Hippolyte-Patrick and Michael Anastasiou.

An even game swung the way of Hampton after half an hour, when Brendan Kiernan's mazy run turned Josh Hill in the box, but Jonathan North was equal to his shot.

Max Kretzschmar, a former Wycombe forward, was then left reeling after missing a double-chance to open the scoring.

His first effort was well saved by North, before he smashed the rebound into the side netting.

By Ron Walker

Two minutes before the break he chanced his arm again, this time with better fortune.

Taurean Roberts robbed Ciaron Brown, back from a trial at Sheffield Wednesday, before crossing for the striker to fire a header goalwards that North had little chance of stopping.

Dan Fitchett ended last season in fine form, but has not found the net as easy to find during preparations for 2017/18 - and that continued after the break.

Eddie Oshodi's header from a corner deflected into the path of the ex-Sutton man, but he fired over from close-range in Wealdstone's best chance.

Hampton were guilty of their own profligacy when Ryan Moss was denied by North, who in fairness threw his body on the line to keep out the striker's effort.

With 20 minutes to go the Stones were given a lifeline when Wassmer made the ill-advised decision to kick out at Hill in front of the watching eyes of the referee, and even in pre-season there was little choice but to show the defender a straight red.



Elliot Benyon was at the double for Wealdstone against Reading Under-23s at the weekend.
Picture: ACTION IMAGES

Even with 10 men, Hampton remained in the ascendancy, and Bartlett would have been left unamused with the manner the hosts were able to carve open his troops, ending with Christian Jolley's effort fizzing across goal.

Duncan Culley's deflected free-kick presented another opportunity for the hosts despite their numeri-

cal disadvantage, but their first-half opener would prove enough to secure victory.

Wealdstone: North, Oshodi, Okimo, Harwood, Hill, Brown, Whichelow (Godfrey 46), Cox, Benyon, Fitchett (Hunt 83), Wellard.

Not used: Constable, Anastasiou, Crilley.

Captain Marc leaves Borough

CHARLES-SMITH LEAVES HARROW AFTER THREE AND A HALF YEARS

HARROW Borough are on the look-out for a new captain after the surprise departure of striker Marc Charles-Smith to Wingate and Finchley, after three years with the club.

The forward struck 68 times in 202 games for the Boro after joining at the start of 2014 - but may see his old teammates again in the near future, with the two sides meeting at the Maurice Rebak Stadium on August 15.

Steve Baker's side have enjoyed a fine pre-season without their old skipper, beating Hayes and Yeading, of the Southern League Division One Central, 1-0 on Tuesday night thanks to a Charles Banya goal.

That followed up Saturday's 3-0 win at Spelthorne Sports on Saturday, where Anthony O'Connor put the visitors ahead early on following a fine move down the left.

It should have been 2-0 long before the Boro finally struck again, with Spelthorne's goalkeeper in fine fettle.

A well-delivered corner finally brought them some more comfort, as Adam Richards headed home from close range.

George Moore added a third after half-time following a raft of substitutions, to wrap up a comfortable victory.

The club will welcome Championship side Cardiff to Earlsmead this weekend, with an early kick-off of 2pm planned.

Neil Warnock's Bluebirds will visit West London as part of the deal which took striker Ibrahim Meite to Wales in January.

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