

# SPORT

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## LAPSE from free-kick gives Havant 1-0 victory

# No case for the defence in cheap Stones defeat

GROUNDHOG Day struck again for a seething Gordon Bartlett on Monday night as Wealdstone succumbed to more shoddy defending and were beaten 1-0 by plucky Havant and Waterlooville at Grosvenor Vale.

The Stones dominated from start to finish and goalkeeper Jonathan North's main contribution was picking the ball out of his net seven minutes before half-time, but it counted for nothing in the end.

Before the goal, the hosts had struck the bar through Danny Green but it was as close as they would come to getting on the scoresheet, as the visitors' long-ball football won through in the end.

Bartlett's side had been pegged back five minutes from time at Gloucester City on Saturday from a poorly-defended corner kick, and it was a case of déjà vu for the veteran manager against the Hawks.

Theo Lewis couldn't believe his luck when he was left totally unmarked to head beyond North from Theo Widdrington's 35-yard free-kick, with the visitors' first real chance of the game.

Wealdstone huffed and puffed, and hard-working Dan Fitchett came close when played through by Sha-

By Ron Walker

quille Hippolyte-Patrick after half-time, but found Ryan Young in inspired form to dive at his feet.

Late on substitute Dylan Kearney missed a free header from eight yards but despite an onslaught of pressure, the Hawks' rearguard held firm to leave the Stones with four points from four games.

"We were very dominant, made one mistake, switched off from a set-piece and have lost three points," fumed Bartlett.

"On Saturday, with five minutes to go we switched off from another one. If you're going to be up there, dominance doesn't mean anything - scoring more than the opposition does.

"We've hit the woodwork five times this season. There's no disasters, but the fact of the matter is we've got four points from four games, and it's not good enough."

The Stones hierarchy had been expecting to challenge at the right end of the league after a storming end to last season lifted them within touching distance of the play-offs, but it has been far from plain sailing so far.



Gordon Bartlett's side have picked up only four points from four games so far this season.  
Picture: ALAN PALMER

And after seeing more defensive woes dog his side, Bartlett - who sent his players back onto the pitch for a post-match inquisition - is calling for more leadership in the dressing room to improve matters.

"Normally you'll have people who take the blame, but we didn't," he said. "You could see at full-time how frustrated the play-

ers are. The opposition have had maybe eight attempts on goal in four games and scored six times. "It's an organisational thing between the players. They've got to stand up, be counted, and we've got to get through this. There's no disasters, but this cannot continue."

On Saturday, Wealdstone host Chelmsford City at Grosvenor Vale.

## Boro bounce to back-to-back wins

RELEGATION- SAVED HARROW PUT PAST TO BED WITH PERFECT SEASON START

WHAT a few months for Harrow Town - from a relegation reprieve to topping the table in the Isthmian Premier League.

An unlikely 3-1 win at promotion hopefuls Wingate and Finchley has left Steve Baker's side sitting pretty at the top of the division after two games, only three months after they were saved from the drop when Worcester resigned from the north section of the league.

They began their league season with a 2-1 win over Harlow Town on Saturday, with debutant Anthony O'Connor grabbing a brace.

Boro had to do it the hard way after Alex Read put the visitors ahead from a corner, but they struck back within two minutes when O'Connor connected with Kurtis Cumberbatch's curling free-kick.

Baker may have been settling for a point when his new signing popped up with six minutes to go, when he was again fed by Cumberbatch, and slotted home the winner.

The bouncing Boro continued their good week at the Maurice Rebak Stadium on Tuesday, seeing off talented Wingate with ease.

They flew out of the blocks as Cumberbatch fired them into a 10th-minute lead, and recovered well after former player Marc Charles-Smith equalised for the hosts.

Second-half goals from Charles Banyan and another from O'Connor gave the visitors the points, and an opening two wins for the first time in 40 years.

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