

SPORT

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STONES beaten on penalties after Truro triumph County Cup hopes end in sudden death sorrow

By Anthony Matthews

WEALDSTONE'S hopes of reaching the Middlesex Senior Cup final ended in penalty shoot-out agony after an entertaining 3-3 draw with Staines Town at Grosvenor Vale on Tuesday night.

Dan Fitchett gave the Stones an early lead before Sam Hatton, Elliott Buchanan and Max Worsfold put the visitors 3-1 ahead. Danny Green converted a penalty to halve the deficit before an injury-time minute header from David Pratt, who had scored a quick-fire double in Saturday's 3-1 win at Truro City, sent the tie straight to penalties.

Stones had the chance to win the shoot-out but Connor Hudnott saved Matty Whichelow's effort to send it to sudden death. The keeper then kept out Fitchett's penalty to secure a 6-5 victory and set up a final against Hendon or Barnet, who both play next week.

The Stones made the breakthrough after 11 minutes when Green whipped in a corner and the unmarked Fitchett had the easiest of tap-ins from six yards out.

Staines responded well though,

and levelled from a well-worked short corner; the low cross deflected goalward forcing North into a quick reaction save but he tipped it into the path of Hatton, who slotted in.

And the Swans were ahead just five minutes later when Worsfold's cross was met by a well directed header from Buchanan which gave North no chance.

The visitors added their third on 57 minutes when Mo Bettamer was given a clear run on goal after beating Glenn Wilson, his shot was parried by North into the path of Worsfold and he tapped into an empty net.

Stones reduced the deficit 12 minutes later after Pratt was shoved attempting to head in Whichelow's cross. Green converted the penalty despite Hudnott going the correct way.

The home side continued to pressure a resilient Staines backline and just when the game looked to be over they equalised.

Pratt headed in Green's free-kick in the third minute of injury time to send the tie to penalties, but it ultimately proved not to be their day from 12 yards.



David Pratt had not scored for Wealdstone before Saturday but has now netted three in two games.
Picture: AQUEOUS SUN PHOTOGRAPHY

Borough bag crucial three points

CUMBERBATCH BRACE CREATES MORE BREATHING SPACE FOR HARROW

A SECOND-HALF brace from Kurtis Cumberbatch, and a first league clean sheet since the start of December, secured a vital three points for Harrow Borough as they beat Thurrock 2-0 on Saturday.

The victory created a little more breathing space for Borough at the foot of the Bostik Premier Division table, moving them up to 18th place.

The hosts nearly scored in the first 15 seconds when Charles Banya's deep cross from the left was met by a George Moore shot past the far post.

Banya had further opportunities to make the breakthrough in the first period and was then to be flagged offside when Ryan Moss did succeed in finding the back of the net.

It took an outstanding save from Borough keeper Melvin Minter to keep the scores level before Curtis Ujah threw himself in the way of another Banya shot as an entertaining opening period ended goalless.

But the deadlock was to be broken five minutes after the restart when Moss sent Moore away on the right, and his low cross was turned into the net from three yards by the rushing Cumberbatch.

The opportunities continued for both sides, but Harrow made the points safe in the 87th minute as Lewis Cole held the ball up on the edge of the box before laying it to his right to Cumberbatch, who steadied himself before driving the ball low past Ben McNamara.

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