

# SPORT

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## STOCKPORT or Brackley final hurdle to Wembley

# Sensational Stones into FA Trophy semi-finals

EITHER Stockport County or Brackley Town stand between Wealdstone and the FA Trophy final at Wembley after Bobby Wilkinson's men completely upset the pre-match odds to cruise into the last four with a dramatic and crushing 5-2 victory over big-spending Billericay Town at the AGP Arena on Saturday.

New signing Bradley Bubb struck a hat-trick on his debut, with Ricky Wellard again scoring in the competition and Matty Whichelow netting direct from a corner.

Rob Swaine and Ricky Modeste replied for the hosts on a day when they were totally out-classed, out-foxed and out-planned by their opponents on a difficult playing surface with minimal grass coverage.

Brackley and Stockport were due to replay on Tuesday, but that fell victim to the weather. They will try again this Tuesday and the winners will be at home in the first leg of the semi-final on Saturday, March 17. The return will be at Grosvenor Vale a week later on March 24.

After both sides had chances in the early stages of the quarter-final, Stones struck in the 20th minute when Whichelow played a well-weighted long ball to Bubb, he

By Anthony Matthews

slipped marker Robbie Evans and slotted past the out-rushing Alan Julian.

The hosts response came soon after. Jonathan North got down well to deny Sam Deering's effort, but Jake Robinson reacted quickest to play the rebound back to the unmarked Swaine at the far post to nod past the Welsh keeper.

Wealdstone replied immediately when Accrington Stanley loanee Reagan Ogle played a deep cross into Bubb, and he brought the ball down superbly on his chest and dinked it past Julian with the second touch.

Stones were back in front and carried this momentum through the remainder of the first half. Mustafa Tiryaki brought down a long ball and played Wellard into the box, he beat Matt Paine before his effort caught Julian out at the near post to make it 3-1.

With the breathless action continuing, Whichelow then, almost unbelievably, added a fourth just five minutes later, scoring direct from a corner when the experienced Julian somehow completely missed



Wealdstone fans enjoyed an afternoon to remember in Essex on Saturday. Picture: ALAN PALMER PHOTOGRAPHY

his punch to clear.

After North had made a crucial stop just before half-time, Bubb completed his hat-trick just minutes into the second period. Jerome Okimo threw the ball to the ever dangerous new signing and he was given the freedom of Essex to turn and swerve an effort past Julian from the edge of the box.

The Blues dominated the rest of the half, but were only able to pull one back thanks to the heroics of North, while Sam Cox made two clearances off the line.

The consolation followed soon after when Modeste nodded Swaine's deep cross past North, but it couldn't take the gloss off a memorable afternoon for the visitors.

## Harrow edge to important victory

**BOROUGH RISE TO 16TH AFTER BEATING FELLOW STRUGGLERS**

HARROW Borough defeated another one of the teams around them in the scrap at the wrong end of the Bostik Premier table with a 1-0 win over Worthing on Saturday.

It's been a feature of previous struggles that Harrow have been unable to win these 'six pointers' and, come the end of the season, it could be that Borough supporters look back on overcoming this tendency as the key factor in ensuring another season of football at this level.

What proved to be the decisive goal arrived as early as the ninth minute when Charles Banyan worked hard to stop the ball running out of play on the left, and tracked back inside to receive a return pass from Michael Bryan. Heading into the box, he hit a shot that was heading for the corner flag, but the alert Ryan Moss arrived at the far post to redirect it into goal.

Borough keeper Melvin Minter was forced into action several times in the first half, but the hosts also had opportunities to increase their lead and might have had a penalty when Banyan went down after poking the ball past the Rebels' Brazilian stopper Cavagnan.

Minter was the busier keeper in the second half as Worthing, unsuccessfully, tried to get back on terms, although the Harrow defenders were never under constant pressure as a win was secured which lifted the home side to 16th.

Harrow's Middlesex Charity Cup trip to Rayners Lane on Tuesday was called off.

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