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WEALDSTONE a goal down in Trophy semi-final

A Wembley prize very much alive for Stones

WEALDSTONE will bid to overturn a one-goal deficit and reach Wembley on Saturday when they face Brackley Town in the second leg of their FA Trophy semi-final.

Bobby Wilkinson's men got very close to returning from a freezing and snowy St James Park with a goalless draw in the first leg, but were edged out by a late Alex Gudger goal.

With a crowd in the region of 2,000 expected at Grosvenor Vale, Stones boss is asking for maximum backing for his side as they aim to reach the final.

"We more than matched them until a lapse right at the end but we got our tactics correct against a very good side, make no mistake about that," he said after Saturday's loss.

"We all need to go into the second half next Saturday with total positivity and everyone again getting behind the team as the fans did brilliantly at Brackley with a big crowd at The Vale.

"If it ended a 0-0 we would still have to score as it is with a 0-1 situation.

"We will go for it as we did at their place - the tie is very much alive and there is everything to play for."

By Anthony Matthews

The manager's overall game plan worked well for 95 per cent of the contest as they nullified and continually broke up Brackley's domineering style of play that has brought them so much previous success, particularly at home.

Stones pressed the ball hard throughout, often frustrating the hosts' midfield and cutting off the supply to their lethal forwards.

These tactics inevitably produced a cagey game, limited in chances throughout until the game was settled in the 86th minute when Shane Byrne's deep corner was met by Gudger's strike into the top corner.

Wilkinson made several changes to the side that lost 1-0 to Havant & Waterlooville, but it was one of the survivors from that defeat who had the first opportunity. Mustafa Tiriyaki beat Ellis Myles in the box before his low cross was kicked away by keeper Danny Lewis.

Wealdstone then had their best chance of the game. Jake Sheppard made a bursting forward run into the box before his shot was spilled by Lewis, Bradley Bubb toe-poked the rebound goalward but Gareth



All hands on deck: a scramble in the Wealdstone penalty area during Saturday's first leg.
Picture: AQUEOUS SUN PHOTOGRAPHY

Dean cleared off the line.

Stones began the second half well, with Eddie Oshodi flicking a header wide of goal and Ricky Wellard missing the chance to add to his FA Trophy goal tally when he hit a shot just wide from the edge of the box.

The hosts rallied and Dean and his defensive partner Luke Graham both had headers held by Jonathan

North.

Byrne then used the bobble of a testing pitch to try and catch North out, but the Welsh stopper was equal to it.

But Brackley's pressure finally told when Byrne seemed to overhit a corner, only for Gudger to be lurking at the far post, take a touch and unleash a fierce effort past North.

Borough beaten in county cup

HARROW'S SILVEWARE HOPES END WITH SPOT-KICK EXIT AGAINST LANE

IT will be another season without silverware for Harrow Borough after a poor showing resulted in a penalty shoot-out defeat at Rayners Lane in the second round of the Middlesex Senior Charity Cup on Tuesday night.

After much huff and puff Borough finally took the lead with 11 minutes to go, only to allow their Spartan South Midlands League Division One opponents to level, and then threw away an early advantage in the shoot-out as they lost 4-3.

A dull affair was heading for penalties until Harrow broke the deadlock when George Moore stepped up to drill a free-kick low past Luke Daley's left hand.

Daley then made a superb twisting save to keep out Ryan Moss' header, and that was to prove crucial as in the 85th minute centre-back Jordan Payne fired home the equaliser following a cross from the left after being sent upfield.

Kurtis Cumberbatch and Ryan Moss scored Harrow's first two penalties, and when Alex Delasalle hit the post with Lane's second Borough were in control.

But Daley made a fine save from Ahmed El Sahib, Lewis Lavender netted and it was 2-2 after three. Lewis Cole and Tom Pegrum then scored so it was effectively sudden death.

Moore took Harrow's fifth but it was straight down the middle and Daley saved. Melvin Minter hadn't got near any of the first four Lane kicks and he didn't get close to the fifth either, Saleeh Zaheed netting to send his side through.

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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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