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WILKINSON pleased to start season at home Fitness and organisation musts for Stones boss

BOBBY Wilkinson has been pleased by the way that Wealdstone's players have returned for pre-season, as the Ruislip-based club step up their preparations for the upcoming National League South campaign.

Wilkinson's men kicked off their pre-season with a 3-3 draw with Bracknell Town 10 days ago, which has since been backed up this week with a 1-0 win over Marlow thanks to David Pratt's goal, and a 2-0 defeat in a behind closed doors friendly against Reading Under-23s.

The friendlies are coming thick and fast for the Stones, who head to Swindon Supermarine on Saturday, before hosting National League outfit Maidenhead United at Grosvenor Vale on Tuesday night.

By the time the National League South campaign kicks off, Wealdstone will have played 10 friendlies and Wilkinson intends to test his players during pre-season so that the Stones have one of the fittest sides in the division.

Speaking last week, he said: "The boys have been really committed to this football club, myself and my management team. We've got the balls out straight away, but we are working them really hard.

By Bradley Hayden

"I've said in many interviews that I will always have a fit and organised side because that's so important and doesn't cost money. That doesn't cost anything apart from hard work and if you're not fit and organised, that's the manager's fault. First things first, we've got to get fit. Everyone is training hard at every football club but we've got to train harder."

Wilkinson continued: "We have one or two who I'm not happy with if I'm being open and honest because they have been on holidays. I have to say that 99 per cent of the squad have come back fit and strong.

"A lot of them know me well because if they don't come back fit and strong, then they just won't be included or they won't be part of the squad when it comes down to the final 18."

Wealdstone have been handed a home game on the opening day of the National League South season, with Weston-super-Mare set to visit the Vale on Saturday, August 4.

After that a tough opening month will see the Stones travel to Wilkin-



Bobby Wilkinson has been working the Wealdstone players hard since returning for pre-season.

son's former side Hungerford Town, as well as newly-promoted Billericay Town, before Woking and Concord Rangers visit the Vale.

Wilkinson though, is delighted to start the season at home and is relishing the Stones' tough start to the campaign.

"I'm really pleased to get a home game but it's going to be a tough one

as they are a very good footballing side," he said.

"We've got to focus on what we're trying to do. I think the first 10 games are very difficult. You've got Billericay, Woking, Dartford and Concord all in there. It's going to be very difficult but you've got to play them some time. We'll certainly be trying and giving it a good go."

St Marys fall one wicket short of win

FORMER LEADERS HELD TO DRAW BUT TOWN SUFFER A HEAVY HOME LOSS

HARROW St Marys are fourth in Middlesex League Division Two after drawing with Stanmore, who dropped to second in the table following the result.

Having won the toss and chosen to bat, St Marys had to settle for a total of 183-9 from their 55 overs after Syed Khawar Ali Kazmi had top-scored with 73.

It was to be a fine all-round game for Ali Kazmi as he claimed 5-63 from his 21 overs to reduce the former leaders to 91-5, and then 166-9, but Harrow were unable to take the final wicket to seal victory.

St Marys had been in some bother at 43-4, but Ali Kazmi and Kaleb Antony Auld compiled an 82-run stand before Auld fell leg before wicket four runs shy of his half-century.

His partner kept going though, until he was the final wicket to fall of his side's innings.

Steven Reingold (45), Rishi Pandya (37) and Grant Reingold (49) were the only Stanmore batsmen to really trouble the scorers, but their side claimed the draw as Omaid Ali (2-8) and Auld (1-35) also took wickets.

Harrow Town are mid-table in Division Three after finishing on the wrong end of a 157-run drubbing at home to North London.

Having seen North London make 256-8 declared off 50 overs, Harrow were rolled over for 99 with only tail-ender Buddhi Attanayake (32) scoring more than 12 in a poor response.

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