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High hopes for new Stones arrival Stevens

BOBBY Wilkinson believes Wealdstone have made a real coup by securing the services of Connor Stevens and wouldn't be surprised if he lands a big move sooner rather than later.

The former Watford youngster arrived at the Vale at the start of the month after impressing for the Stones during pre-season and is familiar with the National League South having spent time on loan with Oxford City last season.

Stevens came through the ranks with Watford and signed his first professional contract with the Golden Boys two years ago.

Having helped the Hornets' Under-18s win the Professional Development League 2 South title in 2015/16, he went on to establish himself as a regular in the club's Under-23s after signing his first contract at Vicarage Road.

Wealdstone, who drew 0-0 against Maidenhead United on Tuesday following Saturday's 1-0 win at Swindon Supermarine, acted quickly to snap up the former Watford man this summer and Wilkinson believes the Stones are fortunate to land such a "young talent".

"We're very fortunate to pick up a young lad like this," Wilkinson said.

"He's definitely going quite far in the game. Hopefully, I can guide him

By Bradley Hayden

a little bit and help him out. To sign such a young talent with the desire that he's got, I'm very surprised he's come out of the game if I'm being honest.

"He's very good on the ball and he's a winner as well. I don't think he'll be with us for long. We've signed him on a contract but I think if we start the season well, people will be all over him.

"I do get a bit of a buzz helping people move on to the next level as I can remember when I was that age and you want to help people.

"As long as he's doing well for Wealdstone, we'll all wish him the best. It's a very shrewd signing if it works and he plays with the confidence that we know he can."

It has proven to be a busy summer for the Stones off the pitch, with 16 new faces arriving at the club, one of whom is Bradley Hudson-Odoi, who has returned to the Ruislip-based club after two seasons away.

There have also been a number of departures as well, meaning it will be a new look Wealdstone team which lines up against Weston-super-Mare on the opening day of the National League South season on Saturday, August 4.

The Stones boss was pleased to get



Bobby Wilkinson says a hectic summer of transfer activity at the Vale may not be over yet.

most of his business done early but hasn't ruled out further arrivals in the coming weeks.

He said: "As a manager, you always want to get your business done early. You always want to attack the players you want, know the players you want and then believe in them. The ones that are going to fight day and night and work hard are ones that are going to succeed.

"I've gone for a certain player. I haven't gone for the most talented

players all the time. You go for winners and then you go for the talented players, because individual talent doesn't win you anything. It's all about being together and I think that's so important.

"I have to be careful what I say because I wasn't going to sign anyone else and then someone else knocks on your door.

"I'm happy with the squad but you can always improve and I'll certainly try and improve."

Victorious St Marys move up to third

BOWLERS SECURE TOWN TRIUMPH IN LOW-SCORING CROUCH END CLASH

HARROW St Marys are now third in Middlesex League Division Two after a convincing seven-wicket victory over Southgate on Saturday.

The win owed much to St Marys' performance in the field as the home side were dismissed for 134.

Harrow took their time to reach the victory target, crossing the line in 43.5 overs to leave them 13 points behind second-placed Stanmore.

Opening bowlers Chris Brown (2-44) and Kaleb Antony Auld (2-10) took two wickets apiece to reduce Southgate to 41-4, but Harrow then had to be patient for a spell as Declan O'Leary (38) and Phil Dunnett put on 55 for the next wicket.

Once Dunnett was removed for 29 by Harindu Gunsakera (4-33), he was to take another three wickets as the tail was polished off with relative ease – the other two falling to Syed Khawar Ali Kazmi (2-24).

Although St Marys lost Pritesh Vaghela (4) cheaply in reply, Aamon Soni (39) and Kazmi (47) put on 87 for the second wicket.

Both batsmen were to fall in rapid succession but Auld (22 not out) and Sam Blennerhassett (21 not out) were able to see their side safely home.

It looked bleak for Harrow Town when they were bowled out for 105 in their Division Three clash with Crouch End.

But Uzairuddin Mohammed (4-29) and Dharamveersinh Jadeja (3-2) were in fine form as Crouch were dismissed for 83.

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