

SPORT

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Stones shake off setback to stay in play-off zone

By Bradley Hayden

WEALDSTONE bounced back from their weekend defeat to Torquay United in perfect fashion by beating Gloucester City 2-0 on Monday night.

Strikers Bradley Bubb and David Pratt scored a goal apiece to ensure the Stones remain in the play-off places after 14 games.

First-team coach Mike Percival took charge of Stones in place of the absent Bobby Wilkinson and the hosts got off to a bright start with Fumnaya Shomotum's free-kick being turned away, while captain Jerome Okimo's diving header was blocked on the line.

The match opened up after the restart, with Gloucester's Joe Parker stinging the palms of Jonathan North early on, but the Stones would hit the front in the 55th minute.

Pratt picked up the ball on the right and played in the onrushing Bubb, who fired an unstoppable volley over goalkeeper Adam Przbek from 25 yards to hand the Ruislip-based side a deserved lead.

An excellent tackle from Spencer Hamilton prevented Hudson-Odoi from doubling Wealdstone's advantage soon after, before Godfrey

Poku tested Przbek with a powerful effort in the dying minutes.

But the Stones would seal the victory late on and this time the roles were reversed, as Bubb set-up strike partner Pratt to slam home.

Percival said: "It was a scrappy game, I thought the boys looked slightly fatigued. But what we've done well is responded brilliantly. I'm so proud of the group and how they've responded in the circumstances so credit to everyone."

That result was the perfect response to Saturday's defeat against Torquay, who ran out comfortable 3-0 winners at the Vale.

Gary Johnson's side started strongly and would have gone ahead from the penalty spot if it wasn't for a brilliant save from North, who quickly recovered to prevent Torquay from converting the rebound as well.

But that proved to be a temporary reprieve for the Stones, who trailed at the break thanks to Opi Edwards' goal on the stroke of half-time.

Things went from bad to worse just two minutes after the restart when George Essuman headed home from close range.

Jamie Reid then sealed the victory for the visitors with eight minutes remaining to make it four wins in a row for Johnson's side.



Stones fans celebrate after David Pratt doubles his side's lead against Gloucester City.
Picture: GEOFF SMITH/TOP-PICTURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Borough suffer early Trophy exit

HARROW Borough were knocked out of the FA Trophy in the first qualifying round for the second year running after conceding two late goals against Biggleswade Town.

The Boro led after just 14 seconds thanks to Ryan Moss' delicate lob and that's how it remained until the final 10 minutes when Biggleswade equalised through Jonny McNamara.

Having led for so long, it seemed like Harrow were in full control, but any hopes of progressing to the next round were ended when substitute Peter Clark scored the winner in the 83rd minute to hand Biggleswade a 2-1 win.

Harrow got off to a dream start when they took the lead inside 14 seconds, when Moss lofted the ball over the on-rushing Sam Donkin.

Their promising start almost got even better moments later as George Moore audaciously tried to replicate Moss' effort from the halfway line, but his effort agonisingly struck the post.

Harrow were in control of the tie until the 78th minute when Biggleswade got back on level terms against the run of play, as McNamara chased down a through ball before lifting his effort over Hafed Al-Droubi.

Al-Droubi had barely had anything to do, but he was picking the ball out of his net for a second time moments later, as Biggleswade turned the game on its head in the space of five second-half minutes.

McNamara was involved once again and he found substitute Clark, who had time and space to calmly slot home.

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