

SPORT

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Stones sustain play-off bid with four-point week

WEALDSTONE remain just one place outside of the play-off spots in National League South after they were held to a 1-1 draw by Billericay Town on Monday night.

Jake Sheppard gave the Stones a half-time lead, but Danny Waldren cancelled that out with a second-half finish.

The hosts made a quick start to the game and Simon Mensah came close to giving them the early advantage when he saw his volley from the edge of the box well saved by Alan Julian.

David Pratt then had a chance of his own in the penalty area soon after, but he dragged his effort wide of the far post.

The visitors soon came into the game though, and came close to breaking the deadlock when Ross Lafayette just missed Jake Howells' fizzing delivery.

Instead, it was Wealdstone who opened the scoring after 20 minutes when Sheppard collected the ball and his deflected effort beat Julian at the near post.

Stones goalkeeper Jonathan North saved his side from conceding a quick equaliser five minutes later, pushing a towering header from Charlie Wassmer onto the crossbar.

The home side then had a series of chances to extend their lead, firstly

By Dec O'Reilly

when Mensah forced another strong save from Julian from the edge of the area, then when Danny Green fired a free-kick just over and finally when Crawley Town loanee Tarryn Allarakhia saw Julian produce another top save.

It only took eight minutes of the second half for Billericay to level as Waldren converted after a combination of North and Connor Stevens had stopped efforts from Moses Emmanuel and Alfie Potter.

Wealdstone created some good opportunities to win the game following the equaliser and could have scored when Green's cross was left by Stefan Brown but cleared by the visiting defence, and when Pratt's 81st minute effort was blocked.

The final chance though, fell to Freddie Grant in stoppage time, but his volley from Jeffrey Monakana's cross smacked the post.

The point they picked up in this game, however, was a good addition to the three they took from Eastbourne Borough at the weekend with a 3-0 win.

First-half goals from Pratt and Allarakhia were added to by Green after the break to seal a convincing victory against their mid-table opponents.



Bobby Wilkinson's side remain firmly in the hunt for a play-off place in National League South.

Neither side were able to gain the ascendancy early on, but as the game progressed Stones started to dictate the play and they were rewarded in the 33rd minute when Ramarni Medford-Smith's cross was powered into the back of the net by Pratt.

Eastbourne were reduced to 10 men soon after when goalkeeper Sam Howes brought down Allarakhia outside the box, and the forward

was duly compensated in first-half stoppage time when he coolly slotted past substitute keeper James Earl.

Midway through the second period, the hosts were reduced to nine players when Lloyd Dawes went off injured after they had made their allotted changes, and Green took advantage of the numerical imbalance by netting a free-kick past Earl to seal a 3-0 win.

Route one Borough rewarded

HARROW CLOSE GAP ON POOLE IN RACE TO FINISH IN TOP FIVE IN TABLE

HARROW Borough boosted their Southern League play-off ambitions with a route one 4-0 victory over Poole Town on Saturday as before drawing 1-1 with Walton Casuals three days later.

The four points moved Steve Baker's side to within two points of Poole, who occupy the final play-off spot in Division One South.

Harrow opted for a direct approach on Saturday and although it was to pay off, it initially enabled the visitors to regain possession and apply pressure.

However, Borough were to make the breakthrough in the 28th minute when Luke Cairney beat Ant O'Connor to a Harrow clearance, but the goalkeeper sent the ball towards the centre circle where Frank Kieta didn't break stride as he stroked it into the net from 40 yards.

The lead was to be doubled four minutes into the second half when O'Connor latched onto Michael Bryan's ball over the top of the Poole defence and his finish found its way into the far corner.

Poole continued to have plenty of the play, but the Borough fans were able to start to relax in the 54th minute when Keita scored his second following a fine cross-field pass from Mark Bitmead.

The victory was to be rounded off 11 minutes later when another long ball enabled O'Connor to calmly lob the ball over the advancing keeper.

Tuesday's game saw Shaun Preddie give Borough the first-half lead, but Cole Brown's equalised after he break.

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HARROW
TIMES

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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