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FOOTBALL: Team passes Oxford test in vital win



Sam Bowen scores for Wealdstone against Oxford City. Image: Jon Taffel

Saunders: Huge three points for Wealdstone

WEALDSTONE coach Craig Saunders hailed their midweek win over National League rivals Oxford City as a 'huge three points'.

Kyle Smith cancelled out City's opener, with Sam Bowen netting a second-half brace to see Stones to a 3-1 victory.

And that allowed them to end a five-match winless streak ahead of a trip to Solihull Moors this weekend.

"After the run we've been on it's easy at times to start doubting what we do and how we play," said Saunders.

"If you become outcome-based and just look at results, they've not been really where we want them of late.

"To pick up three points and control the game, dominate as we have - it should've been more really - it's a huge

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three points."

Tarryn Allarakhia's goal had ended a three-game losing run in a 1-1 draw with Boreham Wood in front of the live TV camera on Saturday.

And Saunders was pleased to see the side maintain that momentum at Grosvenor Vale.

"Naturally after a few bad results you get a lack of confidence but the lads didn't show that," he added.

"They looked like the performance on Saturday was taken into today and I thought we were excellent.

"In possession and out of possession, our press was brilliant, we won

the ball back quickly and when we had possession we were effective with it.

"We were very good. We got back to what we are and our identity.

"Controlled the game, had loads of shots, spent a lot of the game in the final third.

"Realistically it could've been a lot more but 3-1 is still a good result. Three points on the board, it's been a good little while so happy to get the win."

Stones climbed up to 15th in the table after their first success since the September 26 triumph over Woking.

And Saunders was pleased to see them rewarded after sticking with their methods.

"The message wasn't really any different to any other game really," he

said.

"We have to believe in what we try and do. We will always say about trusting the process and the lads have to be the same. We can't change based on a few bad results.

"We have to be strong in our beliefs and the way we play gets us to the final third and then you're reliant on the lads at times to finish off in those moments.

"It's easy to doubt the process and what we do at times, when things aren't going brilliantly, but we've picked up three points and that's the main thing.

"We just got back to what we are as a team - heavily possession-based, lots of shots, lots of moments in the final third."

Harrow on a high at Winchester

MITCHELL MAKES MARK IN FIRST AWAY SUCCESS OF SEASON



Harrow players walk off after winning at Winchester.

HARROW Borough claimed a 2-1 win at Winchester City in the Southern League Premier South on Saturday.

The pitch passed a morning inspection and, despite more rain, was deemed just about playable as Borough brought Barsa Mirtahmasebi and Nagheeb Ibrahim into their starting line-up.

And the visitors took a fourth-minute lead when home keeper Ryan Pryce spilled the wet ball and then brought down Reece Mitchell to concede a penalty.

Mitchell converted from the spot, with Tyler Tobin forced into his first save soon after to deny Dan Jones.

Ross Oulton's free-kick, for a foul on Ibrahim, was straight at Pryce but Borough had a chance to double their lead on 38 minutes when Mitchell was again fouled in the box by the keeper, who was shown a yellow card.

Harrow had been awarded two penalties a week earlier, with Mitchell scoring the first and missing the second, and history repeated itself as Pryce saved the resulting spot-kick.

But Harrow went 2-0 up before the hour mark when Theo Ofori cut in from the right and Pryce could only push his shot into the path of Mitchell, who fired into the roof of the net for his ninth league goal of the campaign.

The hosts were reduced to 10 men midway through the second half when Patrick Nolan pulled Excellence Muhemba down as he looked to break.

But they struck in injury time through Conor Lynch, as Harrow held firm for a first away win of the season, extending their unbeaten run to four matches, to climb out of the relegation zone to 17th. They lost 4-1 at home to Bracknell Town in midweek, though, with Ibrahim's goal proving little consolation.

And Harrow now turn their attention to the FA Trophy and a first-round tie against Beaconsfield at Earlsmead on Saturday.