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FOOTBALL: Skipper nets stoppage-time winner



Kyle Smith, Jack Cook and Sean Adarkwa celebrate. Image: Jon Taffel

Amazing feeling says Stones captain Cook

WEALDSTONE captain Jack Cook admitted it was an 'amazing feeling' to net an injury-time winner against Rochdale.

And the skipper is hoping they can start earning more rewards on their travels, as they make the long trip to FC Halifax Town on Saturday.

Cook headed home from Kyle Smith's free-kick in the fifth minute of stoppage time to seal a 3-2 victory and told the club website: "Whenever you score a last-minute winner, whether you score or not, it's still an amazing feeling.

"I thought we played really well so to get the winner to top off the performance was amazing.

"I wouldn't want to say it was a bullet header - I think the keeper got stuck in the sand a little bit and it seemed to roll

in. It felt like it took an age to go in, but once it did it was an amazing feeling.

"The fans are obviously a massive help, getting on our side.

"Away form has been difficult, we're travelling up early, we don't have the resources like some of the full-time teams do, when they get to stay up.

"We're all getting up early, making the effort on the day, it can be tough, but there's no reason why we can't take some of this form into the away games.

"We know in the changing room we're not doing well enough away from home. We just want to pick up points wherever we can.

"The fans do travel a long way so we want to make it count for them."

Alex Dyer and Sean Adarkwa returned to the starting line-up, with

Brandon Mason making his home debut, but Stones fell behind on 10 minutes as Kairo Mitchell poked past Jed Ward.

Adarkwa was denied by Louie Moulden's fine save, before Ward held onto Mitchell's first-time effort.

And Tarryn Allarakhia had a near-post strike kept out, before Ward's fingertip save foiled Ryan East.

Dale's Ian Henderson had an effort ruled out for offside before Cook diverted Allarakhia's cross home to level just before the break.

But East restored Rochdale's lead eight minutes into the second half, only for Adarkwa to convert Cook's cross on 56 minutes.

Substitute Corey Andrews headed over from Smith's cross, but Cook found the target to seal all three points.

"We've been working on how we get to those crossing positions," he added.

"At the end of the session the strikers, full-backs go and do crossing practice whereas we defenders go and do something else - I'm mostly in the physio room getting treatment so I don't see what goes on!

"All the plans we do with the full team is to get into crossing positions and when you've got someone like Kyle playing right-back who can put them in from every single angle, as attackers you gain confidence seeing someone like that over the ball.

"I don't think it was necessarily a strategy going into the game that we needed to cross the ball more, but once we put the first few in and it was working you've just got to carry on doing it."

Borough back home after mixed away trips

FIRST CLEAN SHEET OF SEASON FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER LOSS

HARROW Borough welcome Merthyr Town to Earlsmead on Saturday, having experienced mixed fortunes on their travels this week.

Jordan Berry's men made the long trip to Devon to take on Tiverton Town on Saturday, after the pitch passed a morning inspection, with the hosts having seen their chairman resign a few days earlier after only five months in the role.

And after the two captains had laid wreaths on Armistice Day, both teams observed a minutes silence before the Last Post was played.

Home keeper Zak Baker raced out of his area to deny Victor Osobu on three minutes, with the striker putting another effort off-target soon after. But an unmarked Elliott Dugan headed over from six yards for the hosts, before Reece Yorke was booked for pulling his shirt.

Harrow looked more threatening as Osobu forced Baker to push a low shot behind, before Ross Oulton sent a free-kick high over the bar.

The visitors had claims for a penalty when Harry Seabrook went to ground at a corner, before Osobu charged down Baker's kick only to see the ball spin behind for a corner.

But Harrow had an escape when Carlo Garside's cross just evaded Dugan and flew wide of Tyler Tobin's left post.

Tiverton enjoyed a spell of pressure after the restart, but Yorke and Seabrook stood firm and Jack Veale's header dropped over the bar.

Dugan glanced wide after good work from Niall Thompson, before Reece Mitchell sent a well-struck volley straight at Baker on 67 minutes.

And a goalmouth scramble six minutes from the end of normal time saw Dugan's shot blocked by a Harrow leg and the ball loop over the heads of several other players before Tobin smothered.

The visitors claimed a valuable point as they recorded their first clean sheet in the league, but they returned empty-handed from Beaconsfield in midweek. Joe Morrison opened the scoring with just eight minutes played, with Zidane Akers adding a second on 18 minutes. Mitchell replied from the penalty spot just past the half-hour mark, but Harrow's joy was shortlived as Tom McElroy restored the two-goal cushion just four minutes later.

And defeat leaves Harrow just above the relegation zone, with Plymouth Parkway and Tiverton both having three games in hand.