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FOOTBALL: Strugglers empty-handed at Easter



Wealdstone players look dejected after defeat. Image: Jon Taffel

Defeat is hard to take for Stones boss Noble

WEALDSTONE boss David Noble admitted Monday's gut-wrenching 1-0 loss to Solihull Moors was 'hard to take' as his side found themselves plunged deeper into National League relegation trouble.

A last-gasp strike from Jamey Osborne gave the play-off-chasing Moors his side beaten 1-0 at already relegated basement boys Oxford City on Good Friday.

"I think that's what makes it harder to take," said Noble, having also seen his side beaten 1-0 at already relegated basement boys Oxford City on Good Friday.

"As a whole, from my time here, that could be our best performance of the season without getting what we deserved.

By Tom Norton

"It feels that way at the minute. Nothing seems to be breaking for us, but it will turn if you keep putting performances like that in. It will swing around."

As for the performance itself, boss Noble looked to the positives and praised his players for the desire and commitment they showed throughout the match.

"Bar the 15 minutes towards the end of the first half, and without scoring, it's almost a complete performance from the boys," said an exasperated Noble.

"On the ball, off the ball, sticking to the structure and the game plan - we were really good today without getting

the goals, which is the most important bit.

"There were five or six balls that went over the stand. Their keeper has made a couple of good saves, and for other chances, we've not picked the right option.

"I think it's more of a worry if you're not getting the chances. The boys are frustrated, of course, their heads are down in there just because of the manner of it.

"But when you perform like that, you know as a player that it's been a really good performance and it's a tough one to take."

Despite another damaging loss, the Stones players will take a lot from their performance on the day, which was echoed by Noble.

"They should take confidence from the performance. That's the message I've put into them. If they play like that, we'll be alright," he said.

"That's the task. Keeping people at the same level as they were today. As I say, we haven't gotten the result, but I was quite pleased with quite a bit today."

Noble's men, one point above the relegation zone but with three games in hand, face Boreham Wood at Meadow Park on Saturday in a crucial game in the fight to stay in the National League, with their opponents also struggling to preserve their status.

The Stones then play three consecutive home games, giving them a chance in front of their own to save their season and beat the dreaded drop.

Harrow's hopes hit by champs

BANK HOLIDAY DEFEAT LEAVES BOROUGH ON THE BRINK

HARROW Borough moved a step closer to relegation after losing 4-1 at home to newly-crowned champions Chesham United on Easter Monday. Harrow lie 10 points adrift of safety in the Southern League Premier South with five games left after losing to Chesham in front of a bumper crowd of 662 at Earlsmead.

Harrow goalkeeper Tyler Tobin twice denied Ricardo German early on. And the hosts then took a surprise sixth-minute lead when Ronny Mfinda netted from five yards, after Reece Mitchell had crossed into the six-yard box.

Harrow were competing for every ball and looking the more dangerous, going forward.

Mitchell's deflected strike flew off for a corner before the same player saw his piledriver crash onto the crossbar.

This seemed to bring Chesham to life as Brad Clayton's shot beat Tobin only for Henry Lukombo to block the goalbound shot while Lewis Rolfe fired over after James Gurteen's mistake had presented the chance.

But Chesham equalised on the half-hour mark as centre-half Kieran Murphy was allowed to run uncontested towards the front post and deftly finish with his right foot from a corner.

Harrow have a habit of not learning from their mistakes this season and they continued this trend when Murphy scored his, and Chesham's second, in the 42nd minute.

It came from another corner from the right, as Murphy pulled away from his marker into space close to the penalty spot and finished right-footed, through a crowd of players.

Harrow went into the second half looking for an equaliser and Lonit Talla's low cross flashed across goal, with no home player in the vicinity to tap the ball into an empty net.

But Chesham made it 3-1 in the 81st minute when German scored from the spot, after substitute Toby Nnadozie had been harshly penalised for a foul on Zak Joseph in the area.

And the visitors sealed their win seven minutes later through Callum Adebisi, who netted with a powerful header from a corner.

Harrow had gone into the game on the back of a 4-4 draw at Walton and Hersham, on Saturday.

Mfinda, Nnadozie, Reece Yorke and an own goal made up Harrow's goals. They host Beaconsfield, on Saturday. Harrow Borough: Tobin, Mirtahmasebi (Lawal 77), Gurteen, Tutton, Lukombo, Yorke, Ibrahim, Mfinda (Nnadozie, 65), Muhemba, Talla, Mitchell. Unused subs: Miskin, Jude-Boyd, Jagdev.