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FOOTBALL: Wealdstone boss laments late draw



Wealdstone's Adrian Mariappa (second from right) trudges off at Halifax

Image: Jon Taffel

Taylor: We should've taken all three points

MATT Taylor expressed his frustrations after his 10-man Wealdstone side twice surrendered a lead to draw 2-2 with National League rivals Halifax Town on Saturday.

The Stones were pegged back just seven minutes into the second half after Sam Ashford's penalty had given them the lead, before Micah Obiero's tidy finish was cancelled out late on by Halifax's Tom Pugh.

Taylor's side were reduced to ten men in the 72nd minute when former Watford defender Adrian Mariappa was sent off for a second bookable offence, which was followed by Jaydn Mundle-Smith's red card for dissent after the full-time whistle had blown.

"It should've been three points -

By TOM NORTON
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that's what is so frustrating," said the Stones boss.

"The players have given everything and not gotten what they deserved. The decisions are what have cost us, not anything my players have done on the ball.

"Off the ball, we didn't get decisions we thought we would, and we'll review that. The players have spoken after the game about how harsh they thought the decisions were."

On the red cards, Taylor pointed to his players' passion as the reason as to why they went a man down.

"Adrian looks as though he's going to be suspended. Jaydn has also been sent off for something he said to the referee after the game, which tells you how passionate they are," he told the club website.

"Jaydn has just gotten back to fitness and put in a monster performance; his effort was outstanding, and it shows his frustrations at the end.

"I don't know what Adrian is supposed to do other than stand still and put his arms by his side."

Despite the late collapse, Taylor lauded the efforts of his players in an attempt to galvanise the group after another disappointing result.

"The performance was very good, especially in the first half

where we dominated. The players have put in an extreme amount of effort. I don't know what more we can do to win a game of football," he added.

"The quality was there - we scored two really good goals. I thought Elliot Thorpe's delivery was excellent. Micah (Obiero) goes and finishes, and I thought we were comfortable."

After their National League Cup fixture with Southampton U-21s was called off in midweek, Taylor's men face a tricky test at Gateshead on Saturday (3pm).

Stones have been handed a home tie against Gosport Borough in the fourth qualifying round of the FA Cup on Saturday week (October 12).

Perfect start for Sarries says Tizard

SUCCESSIVE WINS PUT NORTH LONDON CLUB TOP OF TABLE



Hugh Tizard

Image: PA

HUGH Tizard believes Saracens can build on to their perfect start to the 2024/25 Gallagher Premiership rugby season, writes Ziad Chaudry.

Early table toppers Sarries made it two wins on the trot after overturning a one-point half-time deficit to brush aside Sale Sharks 45-26 at StoneX Stadium, Hendon last Saturday.

Brent-born centre Alex Lozowski, 31, who is now the main kicker after former captain Owen Farrell's departure to Paris-based French Top 14 side Racing 92, scored 23 points including six penalties to take man of the match honours. And Elliot Daly added 13 points of his own, including two tries, as Tobias Elliott and Jamie George also touched down. On his 50th league appearance in Sarries colours second row Tizard insisted his side stuck to the game plan but had to be patient during their successful second-half period.

"It was a real test in the first half and they made us play their way," the 24-year-old told the club website.

"But there was a real effort in the second half and to get five points and a perfect start to the season with ten is great.

"We had a good chat at half-time and said we'll let them dictate the game. Let's go back to the drawing board, play our way and regardless of changes and things happening in the game we stick to the system.

"Our scrums did massive work on from last year. We've put a lot of effort in and we saw the rewards today. There was a fair few scrum penalties and mauls to get over the line.

"It just shows the hard work we've put in and it was great to test it against a really good side.

"We had to be really patient. But fair play to the boys, they stuck in there and when the chances came we took them." Saracens host Exeter on Sunday at 3pm.