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FOOTBALL: Another defeat in National League



Yeovil celebrate their third goal at Wealdstone

Image: Jon Taffel

Boss Taylor struggles to understand Stones form

A devastated Matt Taylor struggled to understand the form his Wealdstone side are in after Saturday's 3-0 humbling at home to Yeovil.

The Stones created some good chances to take the lead in the first half but couldn't break down a resolute Yeovil block.

And two strikes early in the second half after Brett McGavin had given the Glovers the lead condemned Taylor's men to an eighth National League defeat of the season.

"We've had more possession than the opposition, more shots, more crosses, and we've lost the game 3-0," said Taylor.

"The reality is we've made individual errors. The opposition haven't had to work hard enough to score, and that's

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extremely disappointing when we prep really well. Thursday night's training session was excellent - the best all season.

"We actually started the game quite well with the first couple of opportunities. But then we went a goal down, and the players seem to panic a little bit. We were still well in the game.

"At half-time, it was that we needed to be better. We're going to create opportunities, as we did, but you can't have nine shots in the second half and hit the target once. That's not good enough; that's the reality of the situation.

"The scoreline is 3-0 because the

opposition hasn't had to work hard enough to score against us. There were elements of the game that were okay, but the scoreline was 3-0. We've been pickpocketed by their forward players and from a set play.

"And the reality of it is we weren't good enough in transition. We didn't win enough first contact or second balls, but we still kept the ball really well. When we get to the final third, at the moment there's not enough ruthlessness and not enough quality."

After another damaging loss the former West Ham winger made his message very clear to the players ahead of a crucial period.

"We've just had an open and honest conversation around the reasons as to why we've lost," he added.

"What happens in the changing room should stay in the changing room between the staff and players. But, mark my words, there's been some strong words and there needs to be.

"The players need to accept responsibility, because if they don't, football can change really fast positively, but it can also slowly ebb away from you. What we can't allow is that to happen.

"The players, I know, won't do that, but there'll be a lack of belief. They've lost a game and they'll be down. That lack of belief needs to go, and it needs to go quick. They need to understand they have to believe. We've had this conversation many times."

After hosting Braintree on Wednesday night, Stones visit fellow strugglers Ebbsfleet United on Saturday.

Boss hails 'amazing' Saracens

BACKS-TO-THE-WALL VICTORY AT BRISTOL SECURED WITH LAST KICK



Saracens captain Maro Itoje wins lineout ball at Bristol Image: PA

SARACENS boss Mark McCall hailed an "amazing backs-to-the wall victory" after his team beat Bristol 37-35 in a Gallagher Premiership thriller at Ashton Gate. Bristol's brilliant attacking game had Saracens in all kinds of trouble at times, but they stayed in the contest before Alex Lozowski's penalty with the game's final kick secured a remarkable win.

"I've been at the club a long time and I can't remember a win like that one," McCall said. "There were so many occasions when it felt like they were on top, and somehow there was this fighting spirit among the group.

"Even if we'd lost, I would've been proud. We had quite a lot to contend with this week with injuries and illness in the camp. People like Jamie George and Elliot Daly had the illness and played and got through.

"Their attack is superb. It is unique in world rugby. No one is attacking the way they are - their line-breaks are 30-40 metres. Somehow we found a way to get back and fight and somehow won the match.

"It was such a strange game. They scored, we scored, but when Alex (Goode) got sin-binned we ended up winning that period. Alex Lozowski's kicking was out of this world.

"Bristol must hate Alex Lozowski! I can remember two other games when that's happened. His place-kicking was incredible, and we needed it.

"We found a way to work our way back into the game, and suddenly it was a one-point game. They couldn't believe it and then we get a penalty and one last chance.

"It was an amazing backs-to-the-wall victory, I'd say. Our fighting spirit meant we always had a chance."

Daly scored two tries, with Rotimi Segun and Toby Knight also scoring and Lozowski kicked 17 points.