

Chairman celebrates centenary triumph

PETER BOIZOT, chairman of PizzaExpress, was a happy man yesterday as his club qualified for next year's National League following their three outright wins in the National League play-offs.

Boizot, president of Hampstead and Westminster, poured champagne after their 2-1 win against Harborne and apologised: "It may be all fizz but that's Hampstead all through. I am delighted they have made it at last — a fitting achievement in our centenary year."

So near to achieving a PizzaExpress National League place in the past three years Hampstead made no mistake yesterday and owed much to Andy Thompson, younger brother of Hounslow and England's Rob, for a 22nd-minute goal from open play and then eight minutes later he converted a penalty stroke. Although Mark Evans scored a 59th-minute goal for Harborne, Hampstead were always in control.

In the second pool, Doncaster beat Whitchurch 2-0 with Mark Wood scoring both goals to bring his weekend's tally to six to ensure that Doncaster became the first League side to retain their status in the play-offs. Whitchurch must now beat Olton and West Warwick on Saturday 9 April in Wales if they are to become the first Welsh Club to join the English National League.

Olton, who have not had the best of weekends, came from behind with goals from James Daughton and Justin Thorpe after Andy MacLeod had given Crostyx a sixth-minute lead to win their last game

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and a final chance against Whitchurch.

Two former National League sides fighting to regain their status, Anchorians and Formby, were involved in a fight to the end with Formby edging home 3-2 to claim a visit to Crostyx. After Phil Capper had opened the scoring for the Lancashire club in the second minute and John Bell had put them further ahead just after the interval, two goals from that prolific Nastro Azzurro scorer, Neil Gordon, inside two minutes brought Anchorians on terms before Capper, with his second, clinched the winner.

In the penultimate games of the women's National League all issues have yet to be settled with the exception that Colwall are doomed from the Second Division to go back to their regional league. Thanks to goals from Lucy Cope and Kath Johnson, the Premier Division leaders, Balsam Leicester, held their two-point lead over Ipswich who had a good 2-0 win at Hightown. The title will be decided when the two teams meet in the last match at Leicester on Saturday 23 April.

In the First Division Bracknell regained the leadership from Trojans, who could only manage a 1-1 draw at Bradford, with a crushing 4-1 win at home to Wimbledon. In the Second Division the leaders, Canterbury, lead Sunderland Bedans by three points.