

Albion started their pre-season preparations by beating League One Wycombe 6-1 in a behind-closed-doors friendly at the American Express Elite Football Performance Centre on Saturday.

Danny Welbeck scored four first half goals before Facundo Buonanotte and Charlie Tasker completed the scoreline after the break on a baking hot afternoon in Lancing.

Fabian Hurzeler's side opened the scoring after two minutes when Lewis Dunk's brilliant pass found Kaoru Mitoma on the left, and when the winger laid it off to the onrushing Jacob Slater, Welbeck was inside the six-yard box to tap home the young full-back's low cross.

At the other end, Carl Rushworth did well to tip Alex Lowry's curling effort from range around the post, but he could do nothing about Wycombe's equaliser in the eighth minute with Armando Junior firing into the bottom corner from 12 yards.

Despite Wycombe's leveller and the warm weather, Albion dominated possession and pressed intensely, and restored their lead in the 20th minute when a burst of pace and some fine footwork from Yankuba Minteh took him to the byline, before the Gambia international put it on a plate for Welbeck to score his second from close-range.

The striker then completed his hat-trick just after the half-hour mark when more excellent dribbling, this time from Georginio, led to the ball falling at Welbeck's feet and he didn't even need to take a touch before whipping a shot into the bottom corner from 20 yards.

Welbeck scored his and Albion's fourth moments before the break when another trademark cross-field pass from Dunk found Slater, who took the ball on his chest and dug out a cross which Welbeck steered in from ten yards.

Albion made nine substitutions at the start of the second half, with Rushworth remaining in goal and Andrew Moran playing an hour after replacing James Milner as planned, but the changes didn't slow Hurzeler's side down and Caylan Vickers was denied Albion's fifth ten minutes after the restart when he had a low shot well saved.

Jeremy Sarmiento also looked bright, powering an effort from range over the bar after some good football in tight areas around the penalty box, while Moran and Buonanotte were inches away from heading home crosses from Harry Howell and Jamie Mullins.

Sarmiento was then 1v1 15 minutes from time but was denied by a brilliant Will Norris save, with Moran's rebound also well kept out by Wycombe's keeper and turned behind for a corner. Adam Webster met the resulting set piece with a towering header but Norris made another stunning stop to deny the defender.

Albion deserved a fifth for their second-half efforts and it came in the 85th minute when Buonanotte pressed from the front, won the ball back inside Wycombe's penalty area, rounded Norris and slammed a shot into the top corner from five yards out.

Charlie Tasker got in on the act three minutes when more good work from Buonanotte and Sarmiento saw Wycombe lose possession deep in their half and when the ball fell to Tasker in the area, he smashed a half-volley into the roof of the net to make it six and finish things off nicely.

First half XI: Rushworth, Slater, Boscagli, Dunk, Veltman, Mitoma, Baleba, Milner (Moran '30 as planned), Minteh, Georginio, Welbeck.

Second half XI: Rushworth, Cashin, Igor Julio, Webster, Tasker, Vickers, Mullins, Moran, Howell, Sarmiento, Buonanotte.