

# Bucks Free Press

Friday, February 21, 2025

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## LOVIN' IT?



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McDONALD'S OPENS AND RANGE  
PLANNED FOR BUSINESS CENTRE**



**22,000 DRIVERS CAUGHT  
SPEEDING ON TWO A-ROADS**

**PEDESTRIAN DIES AFTER CRASH WITH LORRY: PAGE 3**

# Crackdown on shoplifters plea



### Traders want more action after teens caught stealing on CCTV

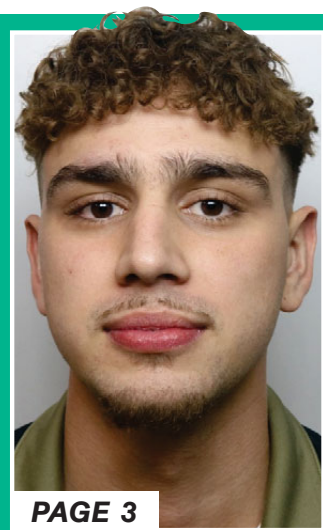
A HANDFUL of High Wycombe businesses have suggested that 'more needs to be done' to tackle the town's ongoing shoplifting issues.

This comes after CCTV footage showed two teenage boys stealing drinks from a Londis branch along the High Street on the evening of

**By James Richings**

Tuesday, January 28.

The clip of the two teens taking the items without paying was only shared on social media on Sunday, February 16, and it has been viewed thousands of times.



**PAGE 3**

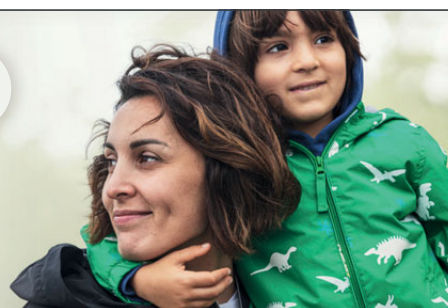
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# Football club chairman 'touched so many lives'

**James Richings**

james.richings@newsquest.co.uk

A long-serving chairman of a non-league football club has died.

Richard 'Woody' Woodward, who passed away aged 77 on Sunday, February 16, spent 27 years associating himself with Risborough Rangers FC, which is based in Horsenden.

His cause of death has been confirmed as a 'sudden heart attack' which he suffered on the evening of February 15.

Originally from Peterborough, Mr Woodward moved to Princes Risborough in 1986 while working as a civil servant at RAF Naphill near High Wycombe.

Upon his relocation to South Buckinghamshire from Cambridgeshire, he got involved with Rangers and played a huge role in their rise through the Non League pyramid.

His leadership and understanding of the game saw Risborough have new stands built,



Richard 'Woody' Woodward. Image: Risborough Rangers

as well as the installation of floodlights.

His time as chairman also saw Rangers rapidly rise through

the divisions and in December 2021 the Reds eclipsed Arsenal's long-lasting English record of 49 league games unbeaten – go-

ing 52 games without a loss.

A statement on the club's website reads: "He was never one to shy away from hands-on work, whether helping on the pitch, serving in the tea bar, or hosting club quizzes for over 20 years.

"Perhaps Richard's greatest legacy is the culture he instilled in the club.

"Anyone who met him would say he was one of the nicest, most humble people you could ever meet - selflessly giving to others, never seeking the limelight, and remaining steadfast in victory and defeat.

"He touched so many lives and will be deeply missed by past and present players, officials, supporters and all who had the privilege of knowing him.

"The club is committed to ensuring that his vision for the future is realised and that his legacy lives on for generations to come."

Risborough's next match is a Buckinghamshire derby against Amersham Town on February 22.

## Pop-up cinema at farm site

A farm launched its first pop-up cinema for half-term.

Hogshaw Farm & Wildlife Park in Buckinghamshire converted its event barn into a 'Wild Cinema' den for screenings of DreamWorks' film The Wild Robot.

The screenings, part of the farm's standard entry fee, offer families a warm indoor break should February weather turn frosty.

Each child ticket includes a free bag of popcorn, and other refreshments will also be available.

The Wild Robot was chosen for its themes of animal survival and human-nature connections, which align with the farm's ethos.

The film also educates about animal behaviours that can be observed at the farm.

Besides the pop-up cinema, Hogshaw Farm & Wildlife Park boasts a range of attractions, from rare breed farm animals and European wildlife to a daily birds of prey display.

Visitors can also enjoy indoor soft play, pedal go-karts, bouncy pillows, and an all-weather sand and water play zone.

Chris Titley from Hogshaw Farm said: "We're hoping that our pop-up cinema will give parents the best of both worlds – an opportunity to enjoy some relaxed family time indoors, but also the chance to spend time with their children outdoors, connecting with nature for real."

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## Manager hits out at forward after miss



Darwin Nunez

ARNE Slot will talk to Darwin Nunez about his disappointing drop in work rate after the Liverpool striker "got too much in his head" following his costly miss at Aston Villa.

The Reds failed to open a 10-point lead over Arsenal at the Premier League summit as Wednesday's trip to Villa Park ended in a helter-skelter 2-2 draw.

Villa had chances to win it late on but Nunez's botched opportunity shortly after Liverpool levelled was most glaring, with the Uruguay international missing an open goal after being teed up by Dominik Szoboszlai.

Slot's frustration at the time was as clear as his disappointment about the striker's dip in performance.

"I can accept every miss, especially from a player that has scored two very important goals against Brentford, that scores for us in the home game against Villa," he said ahead of Sunday's trip to Man City.

"I would prefer him to score, but the word 'chance' says it all. It's a chance, so it's not 100 per cent sure that the ball goes in and players miss chances.

"That I can accept but what was a bit harder for me to accept was his behaviour after that chance. With behaviour, I think it got too much in his head.

"I think he was too disappointed after missing that chance and maybe – we will never know, we will never find out – that's why he was just fraction short the moment afterwards.

"I always truly believe that it's always the best to have Wata's [Wataru Endo] mindset and what I mean with that is that for the whole season he doesn't stop playing, keeps on going, and whenever we need him he's ready."



Marcus Smith

## Boss stands behind Smith move

ENGLAND boss Steve Borthwick has backed "world-class goal-kicker" Marcus Smith to rediscover his aim from the tee during Saturday's crunch Calcutta Cup showdown with Scotland.

Having been shifted from fly-half to full-back to accommodate Fin Smith for the round-two clash with France, 26-year-old Marcus Smith wastefully skewed a conversion

and a penalty during a 10-minute spell in the second half.

Fin Smith capped a standout first Test start by taking over duties and adding the extras to tries from Fin Baxter and Elliot Daly to secure a thrilling 26-25 success which kept England in the hunt for the Guinness Six Nations title.

Borthwick, whose defence coach Kevin Sinfield instructed the

in-game switch, confirmed the responsibility will revert to Marcus Smith at Allianz Stadium this weekend.

"He's a world-class goal-kicker; we all know that, so it's very simple," said Borthwick.

Harlequins playmaker Smith will have another run in the 15 position, where he enjoyed mixed fortunes against Les Bleus.

# City eye return to Champions League

By PA sport reporter

Press Association

MANCHESTER City set their sights on returning to the Champions League next season after their latest challenge was ruthlessly ended by Kylian Mbappe and Real Madrid.

Mbappe scored a brilliant and devastating hat-trick as the holders powered into the last 16 with a convincing 3-1 win in the second leg of their play-off tie at the Bernabeu Stadium on Wednesday.

It completed a 6-3 aggregate success and was another low point in a frustrating campaign for City, who now look set for a rebuild in the summer.

With hopes of winning a fifth successive Premier League title also long since gone, the chief objective for the remainder of the season is ensuring top-level European football next term.

Manager Pep Guardiola said: "Yes, of course (it is the main target). The FA Cup is there too but now we are out of the Champions League and we have 13 games in the Premier League to be in the top four or five, I don't know, to try to be here again."

The odds had been against City progressing but they did travel to Spain with a little hope after going toe-to-toe with the record 15-time winners in the first leg at the Etihad Stadium.

City had led 2-1 at home only to concede twice late on, but any prospect of a fightback in Madrid seemed over before kick-off

when it emerged Erling Haaland was not fit to start.

Their chances were then extinguished by Mbappe, who struck after just four minutes and added two more either side of the break in a clinical display of finishing.

City hardly threatened all night before mustering a stoppage-time consolation through Nico Gonzalez after an Omar Marmoush free-kick hit the bar.

It has been some comedown for City after the heady heights of recent years, not least the treble of 2023 when they beat Real en route to Champions League glory.

"We were not good enough," said defender Ruben Dias. "We shake hands and we look forward."

## Horse on track for Gold Cup



THE Boodles Cheltenham Gold Cup remains the goal for L'Homme Presse, with connections remaining positive their horse of a lifetime has a chance of giving them another special day at the Cheltenham Festival.

Venetia Williams' stable star has a fine record at Prestbury Park, winning the Dipper and then the Brown Advisory at the Festival as a novice in 2022.

He also followed up a game third in the King George at Christmas by registering another victory at jumping's Headquarters in the Cotswold Chase on Festival Trials day last month.

The 10-year-old had his momentum briefly checked in the Ascot Chase last Saturday when an early mistake saw jockey Charlie Deutsch pull his mount up early into the piece.

## Champion to return



VENUS Williams will return to singles action at the age of 44 next month after being handed a wild card for Indian Wells.

The seven-time grand slam singles champion will compete for the first time since March 2024 after an injury-hit year, while she has not won a Tour-level match since August 2023.

Her only competitive action last year came after she received a wild card to this event and the Miami Open.

Two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova, who is about to make her return to the sport following the birth of her first child last July, has also been handed a wild card.

## FOOTBALL

# Beaconsfield extend unbeaten run to six



'Captain Matty Harriott celebrates at full time' Photo: Craig Anderson

BEACONSFIELD made it six matches unbeaten in all competitions with a 2-0 win away at North Leigh, writes Arran White.

Despite the extremely heavy surface, Beaconsfield produced some good moments and controlled the game well.

A couple of early attacks came to nothing as Beaconsfield looked to open the scoring.

Joe Lawal made it 1-0, giving Beaconsfield a deserved lead, in the 28th minute when he fired home after being played in by Manu Oke-William. Beaconsfield remained the team on top and entered the break leading by the goal.

It was a similar story in the second half, with Beaconsfield

having most of the possession, and looking the only team likely to score.

North Leigh had a chance to trouble Eddie Brearey in the Beaconsfield goal from a free kick, but it was well saved by the keeper. Beaconsfield made it 2-0 midway through the second half, Oke-William claiming it after his effort looked to be in, although there may have been a touch on the line.

The afternoon got worse for North Leigh as defender Andre Bromfield was shown a second yellow card for a late challenge and dismissed from the game.

Beaconsfield are back on the road on tomorrow, with a trip to Barton Rovers.

## FOOTBALL

# Chesham can earn only one point in a difficult week

CHESHAM United welcomed Enfield Town on Saturday afternoon and then Salisbury on Tuesday evening under the lights.

We start with Saturday's game as Chesham went down to a second defeat in five days with Enfield clinching their fourth consecutive win to move out of the relegation zone, ending 3-1.

Enfield scored in the twelfth minute in their first serious attack, when Anointed Chukwu squared the ball from the visitors' left and it fell for Sam Youngs to drive home.

It was the visitors who scored again as half-time approached, when Chukwu challenged for a cross from Kasimu and Youngs stabbed the loose ball into the net from close range.

On 70 minutes, Chesham halved the deficit when a long cross from Jack Cawley was headed on and Minhas netted from close range but the game was effectively over after Enfield scored a third against the run of play on 83 minutes.

On Tuesday Chesham could,

and perhaps should, have taken all three points but an injury time equaliser for Salisbury ensured the visitors shared the spoils in a 2-2 tie.

Despite a really good start for the home team and a few clear-cut chances to take an early lead it was Salisbury that netted first after Elliott-Wheeler cut inside from the right and fired past Addai with the visitors first attack. 15 minutes later and Chesham had the ball in the back of the net only for it to be ruled offside.

The second half started positively albeit the officials disallowed another Chesham goal.

Nathan Minhas worked a position to get a shot off and fired into the far corner to level it up. After more pressure Chesham took the lead on 82 minutes after a mad scramble in the Salisbury box.

Sadly for the home team Salisbury mustered an attack as Chesham sat back in injury time and levelled the score on 95 minutes.

Chesham travel to Hornchurch on Saturday and then Hampton & Richmond Borough on Tuesday.



Matt Lench pus Chesham ahead late in the game. Photo Neale Blackburn.

# Holmer Green big winners over Windsor FC

WINDSOR were resoundingly beaten 3-0 by former boss Keith Scott and his Holmer Green side on Tuesday in Combined Counties Division One.

Holmer Green triumph in getting the very best out of the resource they have and so it proved on the night, as Holmer Green eventually ran out 3 nil winners in this tightly fought and highly competitive match. Goals aside, for much of the game, this was an evenly balanced affair, with very few clear-cut chances created.

As Scott remarked after the game, we al-

ways expected that a breakthrough would come from a set piece, and in a game where his side's corner tally reached 12, it was inevitable that at some point one of those would be turned into a goal.

Sure enough in the 31st minute, a corner from the right, found its way to Calum Gray at the far post who headed in from six yards to give the home side the lead.

The remainder of the half was very much a midfield battle in which both sides gave as good as they got without

ever really creating any clearcut chances. Avta Akhsiasvili in particular looked a threat on the right wing for Windsor but was never able to turn his creative flair into attempts on goal.

The first 20 minutes of the second half saw Windsor prod and probe at a resilient Holmer defence in an effort to get back on level terms. But as much as they huffed and puffed, they were never able to create any clearcut chances.

Holmer sat back, mopped up the pressure and waited for the chance to coun-

terattack. That counterattacking strategy paid dividends in both the 65th and 75th minutes when Tyler Sims and James Saxby broke through to put the game beyond doubt with two well taken goals. The Jacks looked like they might find a way back in the 81st when Sam Healey's neat footwork earned a penalty, but Troy Williams spot kick was well saved by Samuel Bell diving to his left.

Windsor face relegation strugglers Deportivo Galicia at Holloways Park on Friday (7.45pm ko).

## FOOTBALL

# Landmark day for Sonny

AYLESBURY United picked up a third successive away win at Kings Langley on Saturday, emerging 2-1 victors.

Sonny French opened the scoring in the first half, his 69th goal for the club on what was his 300th club appearance.

Bently Assiedou equalised for the hosts with 25 minutes left on the clock, his deflected effort from the edge of the box wrong-footing Jack Hopwood between the sticks.

The winner came courtesy of another cruel deflection, this time in the Ducks' favour. Luqman Kassim crossed from the left and Ben Casey diverted past his own goalkeeper to restore the visitors' lead.

Sat eighth in Southern League Division One Central, Aylesbury are nine points outside the play-offs and have a game in hand over most around them.

Up next is a home game against Northwood on Wednesday, February 19, followed by another home match on Saturday against former landlords Leighton Town.

## HOCKEY

# Marlow host Army Women in midweek friendly

WITH no league game to play this week, Marlow Women's 1st team were happy to be able to play the British Army Women under floodlights.

The Army were a physical and well-drilled side using the friendly as preparation for the upcoming Inter services fixtures.

Marlow competed well with the physicality with a couple of new players stepping in to play in the 1s.

The score was 0-0 at the end of the first quarter although Marlow had an opportunity to take the lead from a counterattack started by Emily Thatcher.

There followed more end-to-end action with two more clear chances on counterattack slipping away.

After the break, the Army came out with renewed vigour and scored an early goal on a counter-attack leaving the defence a little split and unable to cover their break.

Marlow continued to create chances but were unable to capitalise on them.

The Army's fitness and ability to sustain pressure eventually led to a corner which was converted well with a deflection.

## Sport

## FOOTBALL

## Flackwell in a play-off battle after defeat

**BRISK**, wintry temperatures welcomed Flackwell Heath to Leighton Town for their third away fixture in 18 days, but it was to be the home side whose resilient and determined performance, led impressively by Lynton Goss and Godlove Oppong, would ensure the three points deservedly remained in Bedfordshire- winning 3-2.

In a first half where Chris Ayres' side struggled defensively and were unable to gain any

real foothold in the game, the home side capitalised through goals from Kyal Williams, Oppong and Goss, whose effort in the final moments of the first 45 after a defensive mix up would ultimately ensure the Heathens left empty handed. This would be despite two more goals - the 27th and 28th of his campaign - for the outstanding Wiktor Makowski, giving the away side a fighting chance of salvaging something from the fixture.

A result which saw the

Heathens drop to fifth in the battle for the play-offs could have finished with a higher scoreline in favour of the home side, with multiple chances in the second half to increase their lead.

Following the recent defeat to Barton Rovers, Flackwell cannot afford another slip up on Saturday as they travel up the M25 to face 12th placed Ware, with Thame United hot on the Heathens tails having picked up 10 points from their last available 15 in the league



Flackwell Heath

## FOOTBALL

## Chesham Women edge closer to safety with a win

CHESHAM'S United FC Women's first team had two important games in the last week, one in the FA Women's National League and one in the Berks & Bucks County Cup. First to the league.

Chesham's visitors were fourth in the table Actonians who very comfortably won the reverse mid-week tie last year.

However, on this occasion they met a very different team, who were unbeaten in five with 11 points from a possible 15.

It was a tight, high tempo game from the start with Actonians edging the possession in the first half.

However all of Chesham's players threw themselves into the challenge with incredible energy and every attack was snuffed out before it turned into anything of note.

In the second half Chesham got the breakthrough that their endeavour deserved.

A goal kick to half way from Erin Radbourne, a beautiful ball from Sophie Bishop, a strong run and strike from Natalia Makowska and Maddie Wright was on hand to smash the rebound in off the keeper high into the net.

With 40 minutes still to play Actonians threw absolutely everything they had to find an equaliser but Chesham battled to snuff out every attack and the game eventually came to an end after six minutes of second half injury time. 1-0 on the night and another vital three points.

Chesham's manager Mani Asare said: "Our work ethic out of possession was breathtaking. 0-0 at half-time it felt

By Andy Westlake

like something good was going to come and it's like I had a crystal ball.

"I'm so delighted for the team".

That performance now puts Chesham 11 points clear of the drop.

On to Sunday and a home tie in the semi-final of the Berks & Bucks Senior Women's Cup.

Newport Pagnell were the opponents and they scored first with a strike from range in the second minute.

Before half-time they extended their lead and took a 0-2 lead into the changing rooms.

Chesham had lots of possession and also created lots of chances in the second half but just couldn't find the final touch and the polished strike to get the ball in the back of the net.

A really frustrating afternoon for the hosts, but Newport Pagnell progress and meet Maidenhead FC in the final.

Chesham's next game sees them on the road for two games.

First up, a trip to in-form Norwich City FC Women on Sunday February 23.

And then the first of their games against bottom half opposition as they head to AFC Sudbury.

Chesham lost the home tie 1-2 and so will be looking to put that scoreline right on the road.

After that, they welcome Dulwich Hamlet to The Meadow on Sunday, March 9, kick-off 2pm.



Maddie Wright celebrates Chesham's winning goal against Antonians. Image: Glenn Alcock

## DARTS

## PRDDL: The latest results and fixtures

RESULTS from matches that were played on Thursday, February 13 in the PRDDL (Sponsored By Terry's Badges)

*Division 1 (Sponsored By Avocet Construction)*

Bledlow Village Cricket Club A 9-2 Bradmoor Warriors  
Bradmoor Farm A 6-5 The Bull A  
Chinnor Pavilion B 8-3 The Crown Jacks  
Rivets 9-2 Chinnor Pavilion A  
The Crown Royals 6-5 Chinnor Pavilion D  
The Honey Bee 4-7 Weavers  
Whiteleaf Cross B 4-7 Thame Snooker Club

*Division 2 (Sponsored By Wessex Landscapes & Brickwork)*

Aylesbury Vale FC 3-8 Bradmoor Farm B  
Bay 19 9-2 Chinnor Pavilion C  
Bradmoor Farm D 7-4 Bledlow Village Cricket Club B  
Chinnor Pavilion E 0-11 The Black Horse  
Golden Cross 2-9 The Bell  
New Zealand 10-1 Wendover RBL  
The Three Horseshoes 6-5 The Plough

*Fixtures for Thursday 20th February 2025*

*Division 1*  
Bradmoor Farm Warriors vs The Crown Royals  
Chinnor Pavilion A vs Whiteleaf Cross B  
Chinnor Pavilion D vs Bradmoor Farm A  
Thame Snooker Club vs The Honey Bee  
The Bull A vs Rivets  
The Crown Jacks vs Bledlow Village Cricket Club  
Weavers vs Chinnor Pavilion B

*Division 2*  
The Bell vs The Three Horseshoes  
Bledlow Village Cricket Club B vs Bay 19  
Bradmoor Farm B vs Golden Cross  
Chinnor Pavilion C vs Aylesbury Vale FC  
The Black Horse vs Bradmoor Farm D  
The Plough vs New Zealand  
Wendover RBL vs Chinnor Pavilion E

# 'I have got the best and worst job' – Mike Dodds

WYCOMBE Wanderers head coach Mike Dodds has admitted to having 'the best job and the worst job' when it comes to squad selection.

The 38-year-old made four changes to his side as the Chairboys defeated 10-man Bristol Rovers 2-0 on Tuesday evening, following a drab 1-1 draw against Crawley Town three days earlier.

Two of the most notable starts included right back Fin Back, who made his debut, and midfielder Xavier Simons.

The latter had a brief cameo over the weekend but shone in the fixture versus the Gas on February 18, as he played a huge role in both of Wanderers' goals.

This includes getting an assist for the second, which was scored by Dan Udoh.

Speaking after the match, he said: "I have got the best job and the worst job as I am going to have to look at some players in the eye and say they're not playing.

"I had to do that with Sonny [Bradley], who has been terrific in the last two games.

"But, I felt in this game, the pairing of Joe Low and Caleb Taylor was probably the right choice and thankfully, I have been vindicated for it.

"That's my role and sometimes I get it right, sometimes I get it wrong and if I do, I will have to eat some humble pie."

Both of Wycombe's goals were scored the opening 15 minutes of the second half, which took the game away from Bristol Rovers who lacked any real attacking threat.



Wycombe made four changes in the 2-0 win against Bristol Rovers on February 18. Image: Bradley Collyer/PA

Their challenge to try and rescue something at Adams Park was made even more difficult when Shaq Forde was shown a straight red card just six minutes after coming on as a second half substitute.

This was for an awful tackle on former Bristol man,

Luke Leahy.

Dodds said: "It was a really bad tackle and the referee got the decision right.

"But Luke is a tough kid.

"He's a Coventry kid so he'll be OK, as he was given an ice pack."

Finally, Wycombe go into the clash against Wigan this

weekend second in the table, five points clear of third place Wrexham, who lost 2-1 at home to Leyton Orient midweek.

This has opened a slight gap but Dodds admitted he is not looking at the table.

When asked about if he is keeping an eye on other re-

sults and the league, he said: "No, not at all.

"I have said to the players that we just need to look after ourselves.

"If we try and look at anything outside our group, we will lose focus.

"We just need to focus on us."

## FOOTBALL Dodds' first win in charge of Wycombe

MIKE Dodds won his first game in charge of Wycombe Wanderers at the third attempt, as they beat 10-man Bristol Rovers 2-0 at Adams Park.

The Chairboys, who went into the game winless in their last three in which they had drawn each match, started the better and could have gone a goal up inside the opening five minutes, as Dan Harvie's cross nearly caught out Rovers keeper Jed Ward.

However, the shot stopper was on hand to tip it over the bar.

Wycombe continued to show their dominance against a struggling Pirates side which are flirting with relegation, as they had an onslaught of attempts.

Cameron Humphreys was denied by Ward, whilst Beryly Lubala saw his deflected shot go wide of the post.

The home side's best chance of the half fell in a huge goalmouth scramble.

First, Caleb Taylor had his shot blocked before Josh Scowen and Lubala were thwarted by some last-ditched Rovers defending.

The opening half belonged to the Chairboys, the only thing they were missing was that cutting edge up top.

This wasn't a problem in the second-half as Dodds' side took control.

First, Cameron Humphreys' deflected effort beat Ward on 50 minutes, before Dan Udoh's second in as many games seven minutes later sealed the win.

Xavier Simons, who was making his first start for the club following his loan move from Hull City played a huge role in both strikes.

For Humphreys' opener, his long ball found Dan Harvie who laid it off to the on-loan Ipswich man, whilst for the second, it was another searching pass which was brilliantly found by Udoh.

Rovers lacked any attacking threat and their task was made even more difficult when substitute Shaq Forde was shown a straight red card for an awful tackle on Luke Leahy.

Wycombe stay in second on 63 points, two off their tally of last season, whilst Bristol Rovers remain in 18th.

It was also the third season in a row that Wanderers have done the double over the West Country outfit.

Attendance: 4,419 (419 away).

## FOOTBALL

# Dan Udoh rescues a point for Wycombe

DAN Udoh scored his first goal in two months as Wycombe Wanderers drew 1-1 away at Crawley Town in Mike Dodds' inaugural league game in charge.

Despite going into the match in West Sussex second in the table, it was the side near the foot of the table that took the lead, as a brilliant strike from Will Swan put Rob Elliot's side ahead.

Wanderers pressed on and were almost rewarded for their efforts when Fred Onyedinma's looping header had to be clawed off the line by Jojo Wollacott.

But it wasn't long before the Adams Park side were on the scoresheet as Declan Skura's long ball was collected by Udoh, who brilliantly placed his sixth strike of the season and his first since December.

In the second period, Tyreece John-Jules found space on the right flank and drilled a low ball into the box, which evaded all of the Wycombe defenders, but Will Norris

on his league debut for Wanderers, got a strong hand and palmed it away for a corner.

For the Chairboys, Xavier Simons made his debut with five minutes remaining following his loan move from Hull City, and the 21-year-old showed why there is a lot of excitement surrounding him, as he played some laser-guided passes and made an important challenge to deny a quick Crawley counter.

In the dying embers of the contest, Wycombe could've won it in stoppage time, through Gideon Kodua and Beryly Lubala but both were denied.

Sam Vokes, who was playing his first game since August also went close.

Wycombe stay second in League One, now with just two points between themselves and third-place Wrexham, following their 2-0 victory over Northampton Town at lunchtime.



Daniel Udoh (pictured against Blackpool in January).



# SPORT

## Mike Dodds on team's performance and rotation



The victory against Bristol Rovers was Mike Dodds' first as Wycombe's head coach.

WYCOMBE Wanderers head coach Mike Dodds believes his side were 'in control' as they defeated struggling Bristol Rovers 2-0 at Adams Park.

After a goalless opening 45 minutes in which the Chairboys had the better of the chances, two quickfire strikes from Cameron Humphreys and Dan Udoh gave the home side their first league victory since the end of January.

Rovers' task was made a lot harder when Shaq Forde was given a straight red card for a terrible tackle on former Pirate Luke Leahy, just six

minutes after coming on as a substitute.

Speaking after the victory, Dodds said: "We spoke at half-time about having a little bit more of a threat and being more direct, and we did that and the game was put to bed.

"We were in control for the whole game regardless of the score line.

"We were very strong in possession and I don't really remembering them having a shot at Will Norris' goal."

On the squad selection, Dodds made four changes to the side that drew 1-1 away at Crawley Town on

Saturday, which saw Caleb Taylor and Beryly Lubala come in.

Fin Back made his debut in the starting XI whilst Xavier Simons made his first start after a brief cameo on the weekend.

His start was vindicated as he played a huge role in both of Wycombe's goals, claiming an assist for Udoh's strike.

Speaking on his squad selection: "I have got the best job and the worst job as I am going to have to look at some players in the eye and say they're not playing.

"I had to do that with Sonny [Bradley], who has been terrific in the last two games.

"But, I felt in this game, the pairing of Joe Low and Caleb Taylor was probably the right choice.

"Thankfully, I have been vindicated for it.

"That's my role and sometimes I get it right, sometimes I get it wrong and if I do, I will have to eat some humble pie."

Up next for Wycombe is a home bout against Wigan Athletic on February 22.

## Positive injury update provided on striker Kone

WYCOMBE Wanderers head coach has confirmed that star striker Richard Kone is back in training.

The Ivorian had played in every one of the club's league matches this season but suffered a knee injury in the 2-1 home victory against Barnsley on January 28.

In that match, he scored a last minute winner to keep the Chairboys' automatic promotion hopes alive.

Since then, he has missed the last four games in all competitions (Cambridge United, Preston North End, Crawley Town and most recently Bristol Rovers), as he continues to recover.

However, the 21-year-old was seen doing some light jogging in an induvial warm up ahead of the clash against the Gas on February 18.

Richard Kone isn't in the match-day squad as he continues to nurse his knee injury, but he was out doing some light jogging earlier this evening. #Chairboys pic.twitter.com/qLtScMmU7T

— James Richings (@James\_BFP) February 18, 2025

Speaking after securing his first win as Wanderers' new man in charge, Dodds said: "Richard Kone is back in training.

"He is back in training so he has to try and get into the team."

Prior to his recent absence from the team, Kone had scored 19 goals in 37 matches in all competitions this season.

The win against the West Country outfit saw Dodds make four changes to the starting 11, which included Fin Back making his debut in the right wingback position, whilst Xavier Simons shone in the centre of the park following his brief cameo against Crawley Town a few days earlier.

Caleb Taylor and Beryly Lubala

**James Richings**

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also came in.

Mike Dodds has confirmed Richard Kone is back in training. #Chairboys

— James Richings (@James\_BFP) February 18, 2025

Out when Declan Skura, Sonny Bradley, Luke Leahy and Garath McCleary.

Two notable absentees from the matchday squad were Anders Hagelskjær and Magnus Westergaard.

The two Danes were signed during the January Transfer Window for club record fees, but have only played five times between them since their move to South Bucks.

Hagelskjær featured in the 2-1 away win against Mansfield Town on January 18 and in the 1-1 draw at Cambridge United, whilst Westergaard has played in the FA Cup match at Preston North End, the late win against Barnsley and also in the draw versus Cambridge.

Dodds explained: "The club has invested in them, but with the Danish players, they are in their pre-season so in the 12 or so days I have been in, I spotted quite early that they are still getting up to speed.

"They are both on board in terms of what their plans look like but their timeline is slightly distorted.

"They need to get up to speed, but they are great investments and the Wycombe fans should be excited to see them, but at this present moment, it is not the right time for them.

"We need to introduce them at the right time."

Up next is Wigan Athletic at home on February 22.



Wycombe Wanderers' Richard Kone has not played since the 2-1 win against Barnsley on January 28. Image: Bradley Collyer/PA

## Wycombe hire two new first-team coaches

WYCOMBE Wanderers have appointed Tom Hounsell and Pete Shuttleworth as first-team coaches.

The duo arrives at Adams Park today [February 15], the same day Mike Dodds' side travels to Crawley Town in his first league game in charge of the Chairboys.

Wanderers currently sit second in the League One table, seven points behind league leaders Birmingham City, and four ahead of third place Wrexham – two sides Wycombe will play next month.

Hounsell recently worked as both an assistant and interim manager at Burton Albion and has spent a bit of time working at Fulham's academy.

Shuttleworth previously worked as the Head of Analysis at Birmingham City before moving to Derby County as a first-team analyst.

He later transitioned into various coaching roles, serving as the assistant manager at both DC United and Plymouth Argyle, gaining valuable experience in first-team management at different levels of the game.

Chief Football Officer Dan Rice commented "We're delighted to welcome Tom and Pete to Wycombe Wanderers.

"Their experience and expertise will be invaluable in supporting Mike and the squad as we continue to build on our ambitions.

"Tom's strong background in player development, data insights, and coaching, alongside Pete's wealth of analytical and coaching experience, will strengthen our approach both on and off the pitch.

"Their combined knowledge, energy, and innovative thinking will be crucial as we continue to develop a positive and progressive environment for the players."

"We look forward to seeing their impact and working together to drive the club forward."