

Bucks Free Press

Friday, April 4, 2025

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TRIBUTES PAID AFTER 18-YEAR-OLD DIES IN CRASH



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MAN IS JAILED OVER HIGH-SPEED SMASH

Seven children injured in crash



Traffic chaos after young pedestrians hit in collision

SEVEN children have been injured in a crash that closed a major road in High Wycombe. Police shut the A404 Marlow Hill, near Handy Cross roundabout, at 2.30pm yesterday. Wycombe High School later confirmed that seven child pedestrians had been involved in the incident, with one of them being taken to hospital.

By Isabella Harris

The school thanked emergency services for their work after the carriageway was closed in both directions. Police said six children were treated for minor injuries.

Full story: Page 7

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OLLY MURS

PAGE 23

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Infantino on World Cup every two years



Gianni Infantino

FIFA president Gianni Infantino believes a majority of countries would be in favour of biennial World Cups if he called a snap vote.

The leaders of 207 national federations were told on Monday that switching to World Cups every two years would increase revenues by 4.4 billion US dollars (£3.3bn) across a four-year cycle.

The controversial proposal is part of a wider reform of the international calendar put forward by FIFA. Infantino and FIFA's chief of global football development Arsene Wenger hope the new calendar from 2024 will create more meaningful national team football globally and bridge the financial gap between Europe and the rest of the world.

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin has previously said European countries could boycott the World Cup if it was staged every two years, and the confederation is already planning for Euros in 2028 and 2032 which would clash with World Cups under FIFA's proposals.

However, Infantino said: "If I was going to a (Congress) vote tomorrow probably the majority would vote in favour of World Cups every two years.

"But we are looking at the entire calendar, how we can make football better and we're looking at how many we can bring on board with a new way of organising football in the future."

Infantino would not commit to any timescales to put any element of the calendar proposals to a vote, with the next scheduled FIFA Congress in Doha on March 31 next year.



Luke Littler hopes to eventually beat Phil Taylor's record of 16 world championship wins

Pic: PA

Littler motivated by prize money

LUKE Littler admits money is likely to be the main motivating factor in his long-term quest to surpass Phil Taylor's record tally of 16 world titles.

The 18-year-old claimed his first World Championship crown by beating Michael van Gerwen at Alexandra Palace in January.

Taylor – regarded as the greatest darts player of all time – was 29

when he won the first world title of his glittering career, in 1990, with his final triumph coming in 2013 at the age of 52.

Littler suggested boyhood idol Taylor would "struggle" with the competition in the modern era.

"There's a record there to be broken, but it's going to take some doing," he said, speaking on the *Stick to Football* podcast.

Since becoming world champion, Littler has maintained his form by winning the UK Open, while he sits eight points clear at the top of the Premier League ahead of week nine in Berlin.

Asked what would drive him to continue playing long enough to overhaul Taylor's achievements, Littler replied: "Probably just the money, to be fair."

Hamilton denies losing faith in team

By Scott Hunt

Press Association F1 reporter

LEWIS Hamilton dismissed suggestions he was losing faith in new team Ferrari after just two races as "complete rubbish".

The seven-time world champion has had a mixed start to the life with the Scuderia, winning the sprint in China before both Ferrari cars were disqualified from the main race.

Hamilton's skid block underneath his car was found to be in breach of the regulations by half a millimetre, while team-mate Charles Leclerc's car was judged to be underweight.

The 40-year-old also finished only 10th on his debut in Australia, but Hamilton brushed off any hint of doubt in his new team.

"I saw something asking whether I was losing faith in the team, which is complete rubbish. I have absolute 100 per cent faith in this



Lewis Hamilton

team," Hamilton said ahead of this weekend's Japanese Grand Prix.

"There was a lot of hype at the start of the year, whether people were expecting that we would be winning from race one or winning the championship in our first year – that was not my expectation.

"I am moving to a new culture, a new team and it will take time. I have spent the past two months observing how the team works.

"Through this past week I have

been able to make notes and pointers on what we can improve on."

Ferrari came into the new season expected to contend for both drivers' and constructors' championships, but a rocky start to the campaign has left them with just 17 points from two races.

Hamilton had a number of testy exchanges with race engineer Riccardo Adami, including over the swapping of places with Leclerc, in China.

The British driver says he still needs time to get used to his new car.

"We have definitely got a lot of work to do to make sure it is better moving forwards," Hamilton added.

"I am still learning about this car, I have not tested every item that they have yet.

"I didn't feel frustration or anything after (China), it is what it is. We have gone through everything at the factory."

Slot talks of title race challenges



ARNE Slot says Liverpool are not thinking about how early they could secure the Premier League title after going 12 points clear again after Wednesday's Merseyside derby victory.

A day on from second-placed Arsenal bringing the gap down to nine by beating Fulham 2-1 at home, Liverpool replied by defeating Everton 1-0 at Anfield. They now face Fulham themselves at Craven Cottage on Sunday in the first of eight remaining games.

Asked how close he felt to clinching the title and about when it could happen if results went Liverpool's way, boss Slot told a press conference: "Again, we felt yesterday how hard it is to win a Premier League game. I think (Everton boss) David Moyes deserves a lot of credit for how his team was lined up, how difficult they made it for us. It's nice for us that we beat them because we know how hard it is.

"That also tells you that with eight games to go, it's every time a challenge, starting Sunday against Fulham, who are having a very good season as well.

"We are not working on theories about how many points this is, this, this. We are taking the challenge of Fulham on for Sunday, where we have to be at our best again to get a result."

He added: "We've played 30 games now. Maybe there were three or four where the score was so clear that in the last 20 minutes it wasn't a problem. Almost all of our other games have been really tight.

"That probably tells you as well how big of an accomplishment it is that we are 12 points clear.

"It's not like the team that won the league the last four times (Manchester City), where so many times, 20 minutes before the end, or at half-time, already 3-0 or 4-0 up. That's not our season.

"Credit to our players, because if every time you have to fight with a one-goal lead or you were one goal down, that's probably even harder than being 3-0 or 4-0 up at half-time."

Sport

HOCKEY

How did the hockey teams in Marlow do?



Oliver Blundy scored Marlow's second goal

HAVING won the league and gained promotion, Marlow Men's 1st team were still keen to finish the programme on a high.

Marlow started well and quickly earned a penalty corner. That came to nothing, but the ball bounced around in the circle, and Matt Law was on hand to pop the ball into the net.

The second half saw Marlow more on top, and a flowing movement involving several players saw Alex Land score with the goalkeeper

out of position. The rest of the half was end to end, but Marlow kept possession better, and the defence coped with the visiting forwards well before Oliver Blundy the youngest member of the team, scored.

Haslemere didn't give up and eventually scored a consolation goal, which their all-around energetic display deserved.

Marlow finished up by winning the League

by 9 points with a record of P22 W18 D2 L2 Goals against 22, for 51, Points 56

The Men's 2nds were away to Abingdon 1st team. It has been a tough season for their mostly young team but they will be in Premier League 2 again next season, helped by the experience they have gained.

Marlow Women's 1sts final game of their season saw them travelling to Bath. The West Country team dominated possession and territory, with Marlow being penned back into their own defensive circle. Marlow came back into the game again in the second quarter but Bath still had the better chances, however, neither team could break the deadlock going into half time. Bath continued to push and scored two goals in five minutes to take the lead. Marlow continued to have their own chances but couldn't break the Bath defence, leaving the final score at 2-0.

FOOTBALL

Fantastic win for the Heathens

FLACKWELL Heath continued their good run of form with a 3-1 home win against Leverstock Green to make it four wins in a row in the Southern League Division One Central.

After a bright start from Flackwell the visitors won a free kick around 35 yards out in the fifth minute, a scuffed free kick found the feet of a Leverstock player in the box and after some neat play a deflected shot looped over the helpless Denison to give Burton a debut goal and put the visitors ahead. Leverstock's good start was quickly spoiled when their full back Baruwa saw red in the 8th minute for bringing down Makowski who was through on goal.

Although Flackwell dominated the ball after the visitors went down to 10 men they still struggled to create an opening and Leverstock were defending well as a unit.

Finally on the 31st minute

Flackwell broke the visitors resolve and equalised but it took a wonder goal from Jack Shakespeare.

After some good build play Makowski dollyed the ball up in the air for Shakespeare to spectacularly volley home from outside the box much to the delight of the home crowd.

With the home side firmly on top after the equaliser Eddie Lee had the best chance but his shot was straight at the keeper meaning the sides went in level at half time.

The second half started as expected with Flackwell having a lot of the ball and the 10 men of Leverstock doing all they could to stay in the game but it was always going to be an uphill battle for the visitors.

This was proven in the 51st minute when Makowski turned provider again after a lovely turn and run into the box, his low cross was met by Patrick who smashed the ball past the keeper to put the home side ahead. With a taste for goal Patrick scored again just two minutes later with a lovely curling shot that nestled into the top corner to earn the in form left back a brace.

Flackwell having the two goal lead managed to see the game out in front of the 294 in attendance and completed a very professional win against a very competitive opponent in Leverstock.

With no midweek game Flackwell's next game is in the league away to Hertford Town FC on Saturday 5th April and then they have the exciting Berks&Bucks Senior Cup Final against Bracknell Town FC at Slough's Arbour Park on Tuesday, April 8.

FOOTBALL

Rams are hit for seven by league leaders Real Bedford

BEACONSFIELD came into an already tough game away at top of the league Real Bedford without some key players, and were comfortably beaten losing 7-1, writes Arran White.

The opening exchanges gave Beaconsfield hope for the afternoon, with both sides coming close to scoring.

However, the game soon became a very one-sided affair. Real Bedford took the lead in the 16th minute when striker Joe Evans tapped home, after youth team goalkeeper Matt Keane had saved an initial strike. The hosts extended their lead to 2-0 in the 25th minute with Evans tapping home from close range once again. Beaconsfield looked to get themselves back into the tie, but any hope of that was soon put to bed when Real Bedford made it 3-0 on the half hour mark through Drew Richardson, before extending the scoreline to 4-0 with minutes of the half remaining with Ben Stevens getting his name on the score

sheet.

The second half began as the first bad ended, as Real Bedford scored once again, with Evans completing his hat trick to put his side 5-0 up within minutes of the restart. Evans got his 4th of the afternoon with 58 minutes on the clock, finding himself one on one with Keane who he fired past to make the game 6-0.

A rare Beaconsfield attack saw them get a goal back. Manu Oke-William's header from the corner found the back of the net, but the game was well beyond them at this stage. Real Bedford rounded off the afternoon for themselves scoring a seventh to see them finish the game 7-1 winners as Jack Snelus added his name to the hosts impressive score line.

Real Bedford sit nine points clear at the summit of the Southern League Central Division, with Beaconsfield in 10th, looking to return to their recent impressive end of season form when they travel to Kings Langley tomorrow afternoon.



Beaconsfield take on Real Bedford. Omage: Arran White

A mixed bag for both teams in the town

SLOUGH Jets cruised into the semi-finals of the South 1 (Britton) play-off semi-finals by beating Cardiff Fire 11-2 on aggregate.

They now face Invicta Dynamos this weekend, with the away leg in Gillingham on Saturday and the return at the Montem Lane rink on Sunday, both games starting at 5.45pm.

Lukas Smital's league-winning stars predictably proved far too strong for the lowest-ranked Cardiff last weekend.

In the away leg, they took a 2-0 lead in the opening period with Conor Redmond and Christian Mohr on target.

Jack Goodchild netted a hat-trick in the middle frame, with Ed Cave-Humphrey and Ollie Hemmings-Maher taking the final score to 7-0. Seb Mohr, Dylan Holicka, Lewis English and Ben Ealey-Newman got the goals in the 4-2 win in the return leg.

Berkshire Bees held their awards evening last weekend. Netminder

Max Wright was named the coach's player of the season, while Dan Rose won the players' player award and Ty Cathcart the most improved player.

Will Stead was named forward of the year, and skipper Stuart Mogg was the top defenceman.

SLOUGH Hockey Club have finished bottom of Women's Division 1 South.

Already relegated, they swapped places with Wimbledon 2nd after losing 3-0 to them last weekend.

Slough were beaten 4-2 at Bourne-mouth in South Central Men's Premier Division 1 and finished 10th in the table

Division 2 North champions Windsor men drew 2-2 with Phoenix Reading, while the women finished eighth in Division 1 North.

Stoke Green ended up third in Division 1 Thames behind champions Wallingford 3rd and Wycombe 3rd after drawing 1-1 at Newbury & Thatcham.

Dodds: 'The most frustrating game I've been involved in'

MIKE Dodds believes his side's 0-0 draw against bottom-of-the-table Shrewsbury Town was the most 'frustrating game of professional football' he has ever been involved in.

Wycombe bossed the encounter at Adams Park as they mustered up 32 shots on goal but only seven were on target.

Two attempts from Xavier Simons caused Jamal Blackman into two good saves, whilst Jack Grimmer, Garath McCleary, Alex Lowry, Cameron Humphreys and Sam Vokes all went close.

But Shrewsbury, who have had four managers this season, defended for their lives and left Adams Park with a point.

The result means it's the third season in a row they have taken something away from South Bucks following two wins and a draw.

For Wycombe, they remain third, three points behind second place Wrexham who sit in the automatic promotion places, after they drew away at Cambridge United.

Speaking at full-time, Dodds said: "I don't know how we haven't won - I can honestly say I don't think I have been involved in a game where one team has been that dominant and not got three points.

"I have told the players that I can't fault them and when I watch it back, I'll be very proud of the stuff I asked them to do.

"If you play that game another 10 times, there will only be one result and I'll



Mike Dodds was frustrated after his side drew 0-0 to Shrewsbury Town. Image: Mike Egerton/PA Wire

be honest with you, I'm lost for words.

"I feel for the group as they deserve a lot more than what they got.

"It ended up being one of those evenings where the ball wasn't going to end in for us, but the fans stuck with us in what turned out to be a frustrating evening.

"It could have been a low evening in terms of performance, but I think 95 per cent of fans have recognised that this is a group

that has tried.

"And as long as we keep turning up and putting in those performances, we'll achieve what we want to achieve.

"When we perform at that level, I can't question them as we were boss it from start to finish and I can't criticise them.

"It is probably the most frustrating game I have ever been involved in."

Shrewsbury sit 13 points from safety with seven

games left after picking up just their second point in their last nine outings.

Boss Michael Appleton, who was only appointed last week after Gareth Ainsworth's sudden departure, was proud of his side's defending.

"It was one of them tonight," Appleton said.

"On Saturday (against Birmingham), I wanted us to play braver with the ball.

"I know that we played

a top team with a huge budget and very good players, but I thought we could have been braver and we did that tonight in abundance.

"What people don't realise is that they were trying to be expansive in the first half and that's taxing on your bodies.

"But we defended really well and we coped with what they threw at us and man-for-man, I thought we were great."

FOOTBALL

'It wasn't vintage' - but it's a victory

WYCOMBE Wanderers head coach Mike Dodds has admitted that his side's 1-0 win over Lincoln City 'wasn't vintage', but will 'enjoy the moment' as the Chairboys continue to push for a place in the League One promotion places.

The Adams Park side sealed their first Saturday win the division since January as they registered back-to-back triumphs in the division since November.

Cameron Humphreys' seventh strike of the season, which was his third in 10 games, was all that separated the two teams in South Bucks.

In a game of very few chances, Xavier Simons and Josh Scowen fired over for Wycombe in the opening period, before Adam Reach's deflected attempt was tipped onto the crossbar by George Wickens.

The second half saw Erik Ring force Will Norris into a good stop before the deciding moment came on 65 minutes.

A mistake by defender Sean Roughan allowed Humphreys in, who went around Wickens and tapped home the winner.

Paudie O'Connor was then sent off in the final moments as Lincoln finished the game with 10 men.

Speaking at full-time, Dodds said: "Was Rotherham vintage? No. Was Lincoln vintage? Probably not, but my job at the moment is to win football matches and that's what we have done and I'm very pleased.

"I have been here for the best part of two months and it was the first time I could feel anxiousness around and my responsibility at this moment in time is to be calm and clear in what we want to achieve.

"We have got back-to-back wins which is something we haven't done in the league since November and that was prior to my time at the football club.

"A couple of players mentioned it when I joined so it's been stuck in my head.

"I was really conscious about putting back-to-back wins together and it's taken a bit longer than expected but we have done it.

"If we stay focused and relaxed, we'll put a run of games together and we're going to enjoy today.

"Is it how I want it to look? No, but I want Wycombe to win so we can get out of this league."

Lincoln boss, Michael Skubala, said he was 'disappointed' but admitted his team 'didn't do enough' to win the match.

He said: "I didn't think we created a lot in the first half and in the second half, I thought we came out the better team.

"Overall, I'm disappointed." "I don't we did enough to win it as I don't think we did enough with the ball, but, I don't think we deserved to lose, but Wycombe are a top side."

FOOTBALL

Humphreys scores Wycombe's winner

CAMERON Humphreys' second-half strike has kept Wycombe Wanderers' automatic promotion chances alive following a 1-0 home win against 10-man Lincoln City.

The home side had several promising moments in the opening stages with Adam Reach and Luke Leahy working well on the left-hand side, where they found main man Richard Kone on numerous, but to no avail.

The first 45 saw both keepers in Will Norris and George Wickens have little to nothing to do as either team struggled to get any clear-cut chances away.

For the Chairboys, Josh Scowen and Xavier fired over from range, whilst Reeco Hackett went close for the Imps, but his effort went wide of the mark.

The best chance of the half fell in favour of Mike Dodds' side as a Reach deflected cross was tipped onto the crossbar by Wickens.

The second half looked like it was going to

be another frustrating afternoon for the Adams Park faithful, as their push for a place in the automatics seems to be slipping away following a run of inconsistent form.

But on 65 minutes, they managed to break the deadlock thanks to Humphreys' seventh of the season.

Reach's backheel on the touchline found Leahy, who decided to play a long ball into the box.

Lincoln's Sean Roughan missed kicked his clearance and stumbled which allowed the on-loan Ipswich man through on goal.

He then rounded Wickens and slotted home his third in 10 games.

And in the final few seconds, Lincoln captain Paudie O'Connor was shown a straight red card for lashing out at Joe Low.

The result means Wycombe have now done the double over the Imps for the first time since the 2004/05 season - a run that has stretched 20 years.



Wycombe Wanderers' Cameron Humphreys



SPORT

Wycombe Wanderers' push for promotion stutters



Wycombe Wanderers' Jasper Pattenden

WYCOMBE Wanderers mustered 32 shots on goal but could only draw 0-0 to bottom-of-the-table Shrewsbury Town at Adams Park.

The Chairboys went into the match hoping to achieve their third league win in a row, a feat they hadn't achieved since November, as they dominated the opening half.

Top scorer Richard Kone went close on two occasions

but he dragged his shot wide while a header from a Jasper Pattenden cross missed the target.

Mike Dodds' team continue to turn the screw but the basement team held their own to keep the Adams Park side at bay.

Ex-Wycombe keeper Jamal Blackman was called into action to brilliantly deny Xavier Simons' bending effort from range, while Garath McCleary and Cameron

Humphreys fired wide.

For Shrewsbury, they had to huge chances to take the lead and they both fell to George Lloyd, but his shot and header went wide.

The second period saw Wycombe throw the kitchen sink, as McCleary, Cameron Humphreys and Kone all went close, but to no avail.

Simons was once again denied by Blackman while Sonny Bradley, Sam Vokes, James Berry and Jack

Grimmer caused mayhem in the Salop box, but again, Michael Appleton's team defended for their lives.

The result means Wycombe remain third, three points behind second-placed Wrexham who drew at struggling Cambridge United, while Shrewsbury remain bottom, but move onto 29 points.

Despite the 30 attempts at goal, Wycombe had only seven on target.

Manager gives update on three injured players

WYCOMBE Wanderers head coach Mike Dodds has provided an injury update on three players ahead of this weekend's Thames Valley derby with Reading.

Striker Bez Lubala, winger Kieran Sadlier and fullback Finn Back have missed large portions of the season and are expected to miss the clash between the two clubs at Saturday lunchtime.

Back, who joined on a permanent contract from Nottingham Forest in January, has only played one game for his new side.

This came in the 2-0 win over Bristol Rovers on February 18, where he started the fixture but was withdrawn after 67 minutes.

Lubala has been absent since the 1-1 draw at Peterborough United where he played the final 15 minutes, whilst Sadlier has not featured in any capacity since the start of October.

His last outing was as a stoppage-time substitute in Wycombe's 1-0 home victory against Crawley Town before he had an operation on a hernia.

He has since missed Wanderers' last 36 games in all competitions.

Dodds said: "Finn and Bez are back in light training and they'll be back in the group sooner rather than later. "Kieran Sadlier has been training with the group and is looking sharper.

"I had a conversation with Sads earlier in the week as he has had a significant time out as we're at the stage of the season where games are in the

James Richings

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balance and have a lot of pressure.

"It's just about getting the balance right.

"He's only back been in training for about a week so he's not a million miles away."

The Chairboys will make the short journey to Berkshire on Saturday lunch time off the back of picking up seven points from their last three games as they continue to push for a spot in the League One automatic places.

They currently sit third, three points behind Wrexham but the Adams Park side do have a game in hand, which is against Huddersfield Town next Tuesday.

Speaking ahead of the derby, Dodds added: "It's a really important game in terms of our journey between now and the end of the season.

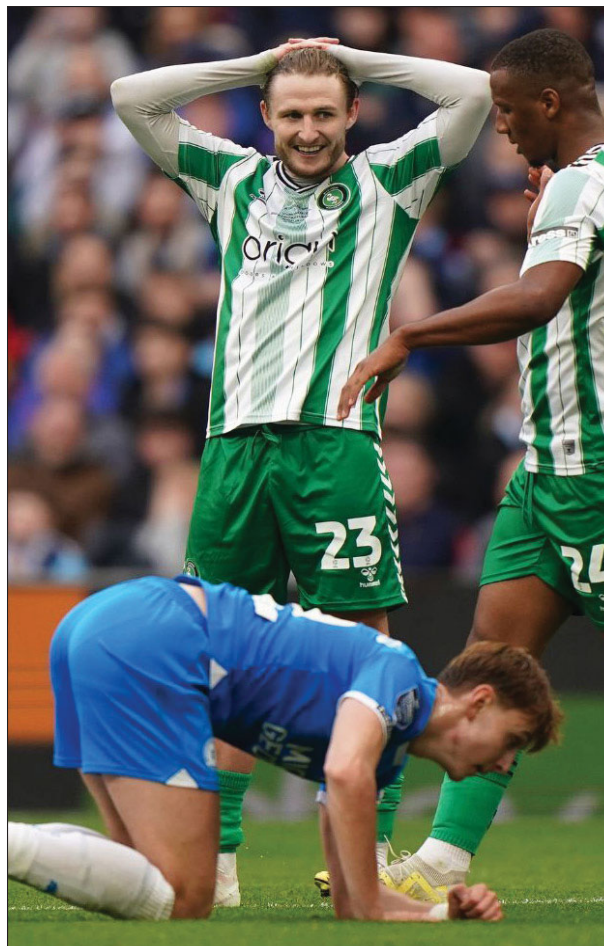
"The emotions from Tuesday night are now seeping away as we know we should have won [against Shrewsbury].

"But we can't dwell on it as there were many positives and we need to take that into Saturday.

"These are the games that we as a club want to be a part of, so we won't be running away as we know we have got the quality to do that.

"We just need to take the hand break off and I do believe we don't fear anyone going into these last few games.

"I have a 100 per cent belief in this group."



Kieran Sadlier is 'looking sharper'

Fixture change for the Chairboys

WYCOMBE Wanderers' last away game of the season has been moved to a 12.30pm kick-off.

The Chairboys will travel to Leyton Orient on April 26 for what was supposed to 3pm start, but it has been moved to a lunchtime start.

It will be the seventh time in the league this season that Mike Dodds' side would have had an early beginning to the weekend, eight in all competitions.

The earliest kick-off time was at 11.30am when Wycombe took on Wealdstone in the FA Cup back in November.

Wanderers will go into the contest five unbeaten against the O's, with the London side's latest victory over the Chairboys coming in January 2016.

This was in a 2-0 defeat for Wycombe with Jay Simpson and Calaum Jhraldo-Martin getting the goals for the side from the capital.

Wycombe's remaining games of the season are as follows:

April 5: Reading (A)
April 8: Huddersfield (A)
April 12: Stevenage (H)
April 18: Bolton (A)
April 21: Charlton (H)
April 26: Leyton Orient (A)
May 3: Stockport (H)

In the previous encounter between Wycombe and Orient back in October, Wanderers cruised to a 3-0 at Adams Park.

Two first-half strikes from Fred Onyedimda and Dan Udoh put the Chairboys, who were under the stewardship of Matt Bloomfield, put them ahead, before Cameron Humphreys made it three on the hour mark.

In the 22 matches between the two teams, Wycombe have won an incredible 15 times compared to Orient's five.

There have only been two draws - one was in the previous match between the two at Brisbane Road in December 2023, with the encounter finishing 0-0.