

# Bucks Free Press

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## Storm Darragh leaves a trail of destruction

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## Countryside build fears



PAGE 7

# Nurse died from sepsis after wait in own hospital

### Woman, 28, not seen in 12 hours due to 'staff shortage', doctor says at inquest

A 28-YEAR-OLD student nurse who died from sepsis after waiting 12 hours in A&E wasn't seen because the hospital was short-staffed, a doctor has said.

Zoe Bell, from High Wycombe,

**By Timothy Edgley**

died at Stoke Mandeville Hospital after complaining of a sore throat.

Dr Kaniz Afrin, who worked in emergency medicine at the hospital, said: "In our department it

was busy. We were short-staffed we should have seen more patients but as always we didn't have enough doctors to see all the patients."

**Full story: Page 5**



## Actor Aaron on how town 'kept me grounded'



PAGE 5



## Six property pages inside

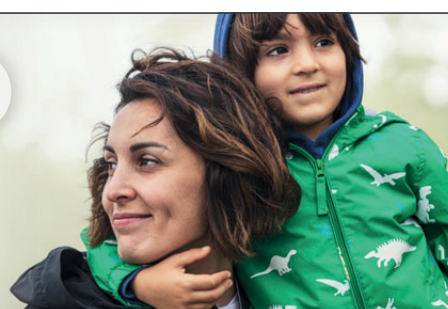
**£250 PRIZE GIVEAWAY IN PUZZLES SECTION: PAGE 53**

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## Sport

## FOOTBALL

## Windsor edge out Langley in a storm

WINDSOR'S trip to Langley was the only Combined Counties Division One to survive Storm Darragh last weekend, with the Jacks triumphing 2-0 at Honeycroft.

Both sides have been on a decent run of form of late, but Langley must have had reasonable expectations of adding to their tally of 10 points in the last 4 games.

It looked like either a mistake or a moment of quality

would be needed to break the deadlock. Windsor conjured up the latter in the 30th minute. Dai Mitani's lofted free kick from the halfway line found Troy Williams on the edge of the box whose deft knock down was half volleyed into the roof of the net by the incoming Ollie Saunders on the slide.

As the weather gradually worsened, it was grit and determination more than outright skill

alone that looked most like winning the day. And so it was with 73 minutes gone that Nicholas Fraser chased down a ball sent from the halfway line that looked like running out for a goal-kick, before stretching to put in an exceptional cross to the far post that Williams nodded in past Ryan Hopping in the Langley goal.

Windsor travel to Penn and Tylers Green on Saturday (3pm ko).



Windsor celebrate victory. Credit: Trophy Photography

## FOOTBALL

## Chesham exit FA Trophy at home to Salisbury City

By Andy Westlake

CHESHAM United exited the FA Trophy at the third round stage following a 3-2 defeat to Salisbury on Tuesday, writes Andy Westlake.

The home fans at the Meadow were delighted to see Zac Joseph back on the bench for the first time this season, but it was Callum Watts and the visitors who had the first good chance on 16 minutes when he struck a pure shot from range that was saved at full stretch by Chesham's Oliver Steinke.

However, it was Chesham who scored first after Avan Jones' cross found Karl Oliyiide in the box who calmly sets the ball to Bradley Clayton whose shot was well saved but not well enough to stop Alex Lafleur from finishing under the keeper.

Salisbury managed to find an equaliser on the counter-attack just on the stroke of half-time courtesy of Callum Watts who found the corner from range.

A second goal just four minutes into the second half from Noah Coppin put Salisbury in front and they grabbed another on 74 minutes as Coppin converted from a penalty.

Chesham got back into the tie with 12 minutes remaining as Connor Roberts delivered a fantastic corner into the six-yard box which Connor Stevens headed home but it was not to be and Salisbury progress to the fourth round.

Returning to National League South action on Saturday, Chesham travel to fourth-place Boreham Wood (3pm ko).

\*Chesham United Women



Connor Stevens heads home to make it 2-3. Photo Neale Blackburn

earned an important three points on Sunday, winning 1-0 at London Seaward on Sunday.

Chesham really dominated the first half without producing the quality in the final third to convert their chances. However, Chesham's job was perhaps made slightly easier on 38 minutes when Seaward's Chloe

O'Brien was sent off for a second bookable offence and the visitors went into half time at 0-0. 20 minutes into the second half, a wonderful ball from Tasha Smith found Becky Fraser in space and she made no mistake sliding the ball past the keeper into the bottom left corner.

Seaward pressed further and further up the pitch as the game went on looking for an important equaliser, but time ran out for them and Chesham held on to their lead for an important three points.

Next up, they welcome bottom of the table Ashford Town to The Meadow at 2pm on Sunday.

## HOCKEY

## Marlow Hockey Results and Round-up

MARLOW Hockey men's first team hosted Staines men's first team in their final game before Christmas at Pound Lane, knowing a win would keep them in the race for promotion going into the Christmas break, winning 3-0.

The first half was a tale of patience with both teams cancelling each other out, but Marlow had the lion's share of the chances.

Captain Sam North put Marlow one up from a penalty corner 10 minutes before half-time and were 1-0 up at the break.

Marlow hit form, despite the weather conditions early in the second half with some of the most fluid hockey seen at Pound Lane in recent years from a men's team.

On 42 minutes, David Harding worked his way up from left half and found space to get a shot away which found the backboard to extend the lead to 2-0.

Marlow controlled the game from then on, with some incredibly fluid hockey being played both on and off the ball. On 62 minutes Cam Beazley-Clarke broke into the circle on the right and had a deflected shot that fell to Josh Covus a yard out and he tapped in to make the final score 3-0.

The second team were away to Oxford Hawks seconds and lost 2-1. They have had a run of very close matches as this was, and hope for an upturn in fortune when hockey resumes in January.

**Other results:-** the 3rd team lost 3-1 away to Staines 2, 4s beat Oxford Hawks 5s 3-2, 6s beat Maidenhead 3s 2-1 away.

## Women's results

THERE was no fixture for the Women's first team this week, but the second team had a decisive win against Thame firsts 4-1.

The third team beat Wycombe seconds 3-0, the fours' match was postponed, the fives lost to Wallingford thirds 6-1 away.

The sixes beat Sonning fours away and the seven's lost to Wallingford fours 1-0 away.

## Indoor hockey

MARLOW Girls Under 18s have qualified for the National Indoor Finals.

To get there they beat two top clubs, Reading 6-3 and Trojans 2-0.

The finals are to be played in Derby in January.



# Royal Grammar School are into rugby cup semi-final

Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe's James Honeyben savoured every minute of a hard-fought tactical battle following his side's victory against Kingswood School in the RFU Continental Tyres Cup quarter-finals.

The Buckinghamshire school overcame Kingswood 20-15 in the U18 National Cup quarter-finals in a showcase that brought out the best of schoolboy rugby, with both teams determined to play ambitious, attacking rugby amidst difficult weather conditions.

And after watching his side put his philosophy into practice by securing a place in the semi-finals, RGS head of rugby Honeyben could not contain his delight.

"It was a really hard-fought game, the weather conditions were poor; which made everything heavy underfoot and it was a really good tactical battle between two sides still trying to play with ambition in difficult weather," he said.

"It was a bit of back and forth in terms of scoreline and we had to grind out the second-half. Kingswood managed to take the lead early in the second half and we just tried to do the simple things really well and thankfully we ended up on the right side of the scoreline.

"Their fly-half is an England U18 fly-half and ours [James Kucera] is one of our co-captains so that tactical battle was really at the forefront of everything in terms of the kicking game and managing the pitch and so on.

"Whenever you get to these rounds it's always going to be a tight contest so sometimes it's a bounce of the ball, a referee



Royal Grammar School, Wycombe

decision or an unforced error here or there but thankfully we stuck at it and showed a hell of a lot of resilience especially playing into the wind in the second half."

The RFU Continental Tyres Cup is foundational to age-grade rugby in England, enabling students from across the country to compete against one another and against the best the game has to offer at schoolboy level.

Having overcome Kingswood School last time out, RGS' re-

ward is a place in the National Cup semi-finals as one of the four best sides in the country and Honeyben said he can't wait for what comes next in a competition that has already provided RGS with so many memorable moments.

He added: "As a school it means a lot to get to a semi-final. We haven't been there for a number of years so we're just looking forward to the opportunity to see how we do in the next round.

"It's a fantastic opportunity.

You go to these competitions to get these moments and to play against these teams so our lads are really excited. There's obviously a bit of time between now and the semi-final so hopefully the squad gets a good rest over Christmas but you play these games to get these opportunities and to get these moments.

"Reaching the final would be fantastic. It'd be an amazing day out for our players but as far as we're concerned, it's one game at a time and we're just

focusing our time and energy on the semi-final but we're already really proud of the squad and what they're achieving and what they're doing."

The Continental Tyres Schools Cup is an important part of the age-grade rugby landscape in England, with schools' rugby often where players fall in love with the game for the first time. For more information visit the Continental Tyres Schools Cup section of the England Rugby Website.

## FOOTBALL Heathens progress in senior cup

Flackwell Heath continued their impressive recent run of form by progressing comfortably past fellow Southern League Division One Central rivals Aylesbury United in the BBFA Senior Cup, writes Glenn Alcock.

In front of a crowd of 112 on a bitterly cold night, the Heathens were victorious through goals from Jamie Ayres and the consistently impressive Lewis Patrick. The first goal of the night game through Ayres in the 43rd minute, following a stray pass from a Ducks player. Patrick then doubled the home side's lead in the second half, capitalising on an effort which rebounded off the post to send the Heathens through in the competition.

The next round of the BBFA Senior Cup will be drawn on Friday, as the Heathens eagerly await their next opponents with the opportunity to now face the likes of near neighbours Wycombe Wanderers.

Reading and MK Dons also enter teams at the quarter-final stage, with the League One Royals' Academy side the current reigning champions after beating Marlow in the 2023/24 final.

## DARTS PRDDL results

### Division 1

BVCCA 6-5 Chinnor Pavilion A  
Chinnor Pavilion B 6-5 The Crown Royals  
Thames Snooker Club 5-6 The Bull A

The Crown Jacks 4-7 Bradmoor Farm Warriors  
Whiteleaf Cross B 4-7 Rivets

### Division 2

Bradmoor Farm D 7-4 The Bell Chinnor Pavilion E 2-9 Bay 19  
New Zealand 9-2 Aylesbury Vale FC

The Black Horse A 5-6 BVCC B  
The Plough 4-7 Bradmoor Farm B

The Three Horseshoes 8-3 Golden Cross  
Wendover RBL 6-5 Chinnor Pavilion C

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## FOOTBALL

# Beaconsfield youngsters progress in cup

A Beaconsfield team full of young stars ran out 3-2 winners against Thatcham Town in the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup, writes Arran White.

The opening 15 minutes was an even affair, with both teams cancelling each other out and neither team creating much in the way of scoring opportunities. Beaconsfield broke the deadlock in the 19th minute through new signing Cheyce Grant, after a great clipped pass from Eli Grant found Manu Oke - William who went round the Thatcham goalkeeper before squaring the ball for the new man to tap home.

It wasn't long before the visitors found a way back into the game, as a quick move ended with Thatcham's Harvey Flippance chesting home to square the game in the 31st minute. Beaconsfield immediately came back when Akiel Raffie put Oke - William through for him to smash the ball home to restore Beaconsfield's lead. Beaconsfield

keeper Tommy Dymott made a fine save to keep the hosts lead intact just before the game entered half time.

The second half gave Thatcham plenty of opportunities, penning Beaconsfield back on the edge of their penalty box several times. The visitors found a way back in the 75th minute when they again levelled the game after a great cross was headed home by Mo Ceasay.

Beaconsfield appeared to be preparing for a penalty shootout as the game entered added time. Late pressure paid off however when Eli Grant showed great feet to get past defenders and play in Oke - William who made no mistake from close range smashing the ball into the back of the net to give Beaconsfield a late winner, and a place in the next round of the cup.

Beaconsfield return to league action tomorrow with a tough test at Holloways Park when they face Real Bedford.



Beaconsfield celebrating the winner. Picture: Ben Cousins



## Sport

## WYCOMBE WANDERERS 1-1 READING

## Boss confirmed one day ahead of derby

READING FC announced their new manager one day before they took on Wycombe Wanderers at Adams Park.

The Royals, who are in their second season in League One following their relegation to the third tier two years ago, confirmed on Friday, December 6 that popular boss Ruben Selles had left for Championship side, Hull City.

Following his departure from the

club, the Berkshire-based team unveiled former midfielder Noel Hunt as their new man in charge.

His first permanent fixture for Reading was away at Adams Park on Saturday, December 7 which finished 1-1.

The Irishman had a brief stint as caretaker at the Select Car Leasing Stadium at the end of the 2022/23 season, following the sacking of Paul Ince. "We are delighted to announce that Noel Hunt has agreed terms

to become the club's new Men's First Team Manager," the club said.

Selles' exit came just 72 hours after he guided the Royals to a comfortable 3-0 home win over Cambridge United, with ex-Wycombe man Lewis Wing scoring twice.

This will add another layer to the clash at HP12 this afternoon, as the fixture is expected to be Wanderers' largest home league crowd of the season so far.



Ruben Selles left Reading one day before they played Wycombe

## CHAIRBOYS SHARE THE SPOILS WITH READING

## Boss 'frustrated' following home draw with neighbours

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield admitted that their 1-1 draw at home to Reading was 'frustrating', but said 'it's a joy' to see his side 'play with such confidence'.

The Chairboys shared the points with their Thames Valley neighbours after Beryly Lubala put the Adams Park side ahead on 18 minutes with his seven of the season.

However, Harvey Knibbs equalised 12 minutes later after a mistake at the back from Joe Low.

The draw means Wanderers remain top of the League One table, level on points on second-place Wrexham.

Speaking at full-time, Bloomfield said: "It was slightly frustrating as we wanted the ball in play and create that momentum, but it was hard to do that with the game stopping so often.

"Reading are a good team, they are in good form, and we knew it would be tough, but we reacted to that well with the principles and the philosophies we have implemented.

"It is a joy to watch seeing the boys play with such confidence.

"I want me, our supporters to really enjoy watching us and of course, we want to win, but we want to win the way we believe in.

"We know we're doing amazingly to be where we are and if the boys keep playing like that, I'll back us to go even further."

The build-up to the match was mainly focused on Ruben Selles' sudden departure as Reading manager, with the ex-Southamp-



Dan Harvie puts his case to the linesman in Wycombe's 1-1 home draw against Reading. Image: PA

ton boss agreeing terms to become the new man at the helm at Hull City.

And just one day before the clash in Buckinghamshire, the Royals announced ex-player, coach, and caretaker manager Noel Hunt as their new man.

When asked if this change disrupted their plans, Bloomfield said: "No, I wouldn't say it did as there wasn't enough time to expect a new manager to implement something different to what they have been doing all season.

"Off the back of their good run, it would be something I wouldn't expect.

"We prepared for the match in the way we thought they would set out.

"I also think Noel is a great guy and he'll do a great job."

## CHAIRBOYS

## Josh Scowen 'back on the grass'

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has provided an injury update on midfielder Josh Scowen.

The 31-year-old has not featured for the Chairboys since the 2-1 home victory against Crawley Town in the EFL Trophy on November 12.

He came on as a second-half substitute for David Wheeler in the contest but hobbled off 28 minutes later.

Scowen has since missed the last five matches in all competitions.

Speaking after the 1-1 draw against Reading on December 8, Bloomfield said: "He is back on the grass which is good.

"I wouldn't say he is imminent [to a return] but he's not very far away.

"We're hoping to have him back as soon as possible as he is a huge player for this club."

The draw against the Royals on December 8 means Wanderers remain top of the League One table, but are now level on points with second-place Wrexham.

Additionally, Wycombe are now on 40 points for the season after 18 games.

The Chairboys had to wait until game week 35 to hit that target last season.

This was achieved on March 9, which coincidentally, was against Reading.

Bloomfield added: "It's a great milestone to hit at this stage of the season.

"We got through the 30s quite quickly, and if you had offered me this back in August, I would have taken it."

Finally, the manager was very impressed with the performance of Tyreeq Bakinson in the draw versus the Royals.

The ex-Bristol City and Sheffield Wednesday man made his first league in just over a month and was impressive in breaking up Reading's play.

He was taken off with 15 minutes remaining after picking up a yellow card earlier in the contest.

Bloomfield concluded: "It was a frustrating end for Tyreeq [against Reading], as he was booked, gave away another foul, and I thought at that moment, it was the right time to take him off the pitch.

"We had Lukey ready to go and he has been a huge influence for us over the last 18 months.

"I thought Ty was good.

"He got going after a few good touches, and we know there is a big player in him.

"We're pleased with his day's work.

Up next in the league for the Chairboys is an away trip to Shrewsbury Town on December 14.

It will be the first time that former Wycombe manager Gareth Ainsworth will be up against his old club since leaving for Queens Park Rangers in February 2023.

## POINTS ARE SHARED

# Hunt's comments after Wanderers draw



Noel Hunt took charge of his first game as Reading boss against Wycombe. Image: PA

NEW Reading manager Noel Hunt believes 'every little decision went the way of the home team' following their 1-1 draw at Wycombe Wanderers.

The Irishman, who also spent several years as a player with the Berkshire-based team, as well as a coach and as caretaker, took charge of his first permanent game at the helm following Ruben Selles' sudden departure to Hull City 24 hours before the fixture at Adams Park.

The Chairboys took the lead on 18 minutes thanks to a well-taken Beryly Lubala strike, but poor defending and goalkeeping from Joe Low and Franco Ravizzoli respectively allowed Harvey Knibbs to equalise 18 minutes later.

The all-Thames Valley clash was a very stop-start affair with referee David Rock

giving 21 fouls during the match.

He said: "I thought it was a tough game for us.

"I thought maybe every little decision went the way of the home team but that can happen, and you can feel a little hard done by.

"It was a tough condition to ref.

"It looked like a penalty to me [Sam Smith] and even the Chem [Campbell] had a case.

"We defended like warriors- their strong point is putting balls into the box.

"If you look at how many games they've won in the last four or five weeks, I thought we defended really well."

Reading will next play Wycombe in April.

## CHAIRBOYS

# Blooms on Robins defeat

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield admitted that his players were 'not at the levels' he set out during Tuesday night's 2-1 home defeat to Swindon Town in the EFL Trophy.

The Chairboys were eliminated from the competition that they finished second in last season with Billy Kirkman and Kabongo Tshimanga getting the goals in each half.

Rosaire Longelo was given a straight red card on the stroke of half-time for a late tackle on Luca Woodhouse, with the score at 2-0, but Wanderers rarely threatened.

Beryly Lubala scored in injury-time to give the Chairboys hope, but Wanderers were defeated for only the fifth time this season.

It was also their first home loss in nearly three months.

Speaking at full-time, Bloomfield said: "My first emotion is of sadness and disappointment as I hate losing.

"I hate losing football matches and even though it hasn't happened for a little while, it doesn't make it easier.

"We weren't at the levels we set ourselves as a group and we need to make sure we're at it on Saturday.

"There were some good bits as I don't want to be too negative, but we weren't at the normal standards that we set ourselves as we didn't have the same fluidity."

Bloomfield, in what was his 100th game in charge of the club, made nine changes to the team that drew 1-1 against Reading on Saturday, with Dan Udoh and Tyreeq Bakinson being the only two who kept their place.

The defeat against the Robins saw players such as Jason McCarthy, Ryan Tafazolli and Nathan Bishop all make rare starts.

For Bishop, it was only his fourth appearance for Wycombe since moving on loan from Sunderland.

He said: "As a player, when you're playing regularly with the same players around you, you build those relationships and have that telepathy and when you don't play regularly, it's hard to turn it on for the night.

"The thing about this competition is that there was always going to be changes, and I take that on board but I believe in the group."

It was Wycombe's first defeat at home in this competition since losing 5-0 against Burton Albion in November 2021.

Former Chairboys striker Aaron Amadi-Holloway scored a hat-trick in that fixture.

## SPORT: WYCOMBE WANDERERS 1-1 READING

# Chairboys stay top after a home draw with the Royals

WYCOMBE Wanderers made it 16 consecutive league games without defeat despite playing out an edgy 1-1 draw against Thames Valley neighbours, Reading.

In the first meeting between the two sides at Adams Park in just over a year, the visitors started the better.

Former Chairboy Lewis Wing tried his luck from range on two occasions, but to no avail.

Sam Smith, Charlie Savage and two-time Wanderer Chem Campbell also had half-chances, but nothing to test Franco Ravizzoli.

And very much against the run of play, it was Wycombe that took the lead on 18 minutes.

Moments after Aaron Morley fired over from distance, Jack Grimmer's low and fizzing cross was converted by the Congolese forward, Beryly Lubala.

It was a very well-taken finish by the 26-year-old, as he bagged his second in three

games, and his second in consecutive fixtures against the Royals.

He got the winner when Wycombe defeated Reading 2-1 at the Select Car Leasing Stadium in March.

But the lead only lasted 12 minutes as Reading equalised.

A mistake at the back from Joe Low allowed Sam Smith through, and though he was denied by Ravizzoli who was off his line, there was Harvey Knibbs to tap home from close-range.

The second period was a cagey affair with the heavy wind and rain playing havoc.

For Reading, Wing went close with a free-kick, whilst Tyreeq Bakinson was inches wide.

Former Royals favourite Garath McCleary meanwhile, saw his attempt get tipped over by Joel Pereira.

Wycombe remain top of League One, but are now level on points second placed Wrexham.

Reading remain sixth.

Attendance: 7,651(1,843 away)



Beryly Lubala celebrates putting Wycombe ahead in the first-half with his seventh of the season. Image: PA

# A century of Chairboy fixtures in charge

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield hopes for 'many more' games after he recently took charge of his 100th game for the club.

The milestone was in the Chairboys' 2-1 home defeat to struggling Swindon Town in the EFL Trophy, which was the Adams Park team's first loss in any capacity in nearly three months.

Coincidentally, this weekend's match at Shrewsbury Town will be

the 101st game of his reign – the same location as his first nearly two years ago.

In that time, he has won three Manager of the Month awards (April, October and November 2024), secured two top 10 finishes, as well as an appearance in the EFL Trophy final last season, where Wycombe narrowly lost to Peterborough United.

He said: "It's been an incredible first 100 games and I hope many

more will come.

"It has been a real rollercoaster but a huge amount of work has been done in that time, but we are relishing for our game on Saturday.

"Shrewsbury will be well organised and they will have a huge desire to get the win."

Speaking on his latest Manager of the Month award prize, he added: "I'm not paying lip service when I say this, it's about the play-

ers and the backroom staff.

"The amount work everyone puts in away from the lights is what is about.

"We get in early, we prepare, we're match ready and it's a huge thank you to them because it's not about what I do, it's about everyone else around me.

"We're one big team.

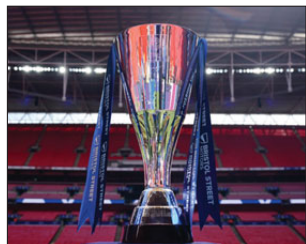
"Without the backroom staff and the players' input, it wouldn't happen."



# SPORT



## Wanderers exit EFL Trophy to struggling Swindon



Wycombe lost their first EFL Trophy game at home since 2021

MATT Bloomfield's 100th game in charge of Wycombe Wanderers ended in defeat as the Chairboys lost 2-1 to Swindon Town in the EFL Trophy.

A well-taken fifth-minute strike by Billy Kirkman and a tap in from Kabongo Tshimanga sent the Robins through and succumbed Wanderers to only their fifth defeat in 27 games in all competitions this season.

The Adams Park side made nine changes to the 1-1 league draw against Reading 72 hours prior with Dan Udoh and Tyreeq Bakinson keeping their place.

There were rare starts for Jason McCarthy, Ryan Tafazolli and goalkeeper Nathan Bishop, but the day very much belonged to the Robins.

After five minutes, Ian Holloway's side took the lead thanks to a brilliant goal by Kirkman.

He connected a Rosaire Longelo cross incredibly well to smash home his first-ever professional career since.

The 20-year-old began in the Welsh leagues with TNS and Aberystwyth before crossing the border this summer.

It was also Kirkman's full debut for Swindon, having spent the last few

months on loan at Weston-Super-Mare.

Wycombe just didn't get going and rarely tested Daniel Barden in the opposition goal, with the Chairboys failing to register a single shot on target in the opening 45 minutes.

But they were given a lifeline on the stroke of half-time as Longelo was shown a straight red card for a terrible challenge on Luca Woodhouse.

Wanderers began the second period a lot more livelier than the first, as David Wheeler, Udoh on two occasions and McCarthy went close, but Tshimanga's tap-in with 20 minutes remaining from a

Joel McGregor cross sealed the cup win for Swindon.

Berlyly Lubala pulled one back for Wycombe in injury-time as a consolation.

The result means Wanderers have lost for only the fifth time in 27 matches this season.

Additionally, in the five fixtures between the two teams in this competition, Swindon have won four of them.

Up next for Wycombe is Shrewsbury Town away on December 14. Attendance: 611 (198 away)

## Friends for life, but rivals for 90 minutes

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has admitted it will be 'weird' to be up against his former teammate and boss Gareth Ainsworth this weekend.

The Chairboys, who sit top of the League One table, travel to bottom-of-the-table Shrewsbury Town, who are now under the stewardship of the 51-year-old.

He took over from Paul Hurst on November 13, winning one and losing two of his games so far.

His only victory did come in his first match in charge, which was in a brilliant 3-2 win over promotion-pushing Birmingham City, with ex-Wycombe man Aaron Pierre scoring the opening goal.

For Bloomfield, he will return to the stadium where his tenure as Wycombe manager began in February 2023, where he replaced Ainsworth who had departed to Queens Park Rangers.

It will also be the 40-year-old's 101st game in charge of the Chairboys.

Speaking ahead to Wycombe's trip to Shrewsbury on December 14, he said: "It is going to be weird as we spent so many years together in the same changing room, fighting for the same cause for the same badge.

"I have said this so many times and I will never get tired of saying it, but I will always admire and respect the gaffer [Ainsworth] and Dobbo [assistant manager Richard Dobson] for what they did for our club.

"They are incredible people, and it will be a weird afternoon going up against them, but, we're going to relish it.

"To be on opposite dugouts will be strange, but this game gives you different experiences

and for us, I think it's about how we concentrate on the game.

"It'll be a tough test, as they had that incredible result against Birmingham a couple of weeks ago.

"But the story surrounding it and the outside noise is irrelevant, we need to make sure we turn up with the right identity, style and philosophy that we have used already this season."

Wycombe go into the clash at the New Meadow 16 games unbeaten in the league, as they sit joint top with second-place Wrexham on 40 points.

However, Bloomfield's team are winless in their last three games which has seen the Adams Park team draw away at Exeter City and at home to Reading in the league, before being eliminated from the EFL Trophy to 10-man Swindon Town on Tuesday.

The latter was only Wanderers' fifth loss in 27 games this season.

Wycombe won on their last visit to Shrewsbury back in April.

He added: "Under the gaffer [Gareth Ainsworth], we prided ourselves in being ready and we know Shrewsbury will be tactically and physically ready.

We know they will be tough and they have a good goal threat.

"We know each other inside out so we know we have to be ready for it."

"No game in this league is easy."

The match will kick-off at 3pm.



Gareth Ainsworth (right) with Matt Bloomfield (left) at Adams Park in after Wanderers' win over Plymouth Argyle in April 2022 (PA)

## Another award for brilliant Bloomfield

WYCOMBE Wanderers' Matt Bloomfield has won the League One Manager of the Month award for November.

This comes after the Chairboys had a brilliant spell during the penultimate month of the year, as the Adams Park side won each of their four games in the division by an aggregate scoreline of 10-2.

These victories were against Stockport County (5-0), Wigan Athletic (1-0), Lincoln City (3-2) and Mansfield Town (1-0).

What made this run even more impressive is that the first three fixtures were all away from home. This, coupled with EFL Trophy and FA Cup wins against Crawley Town, York City and Wealdstone means Bloomfield has made it two months in a row without losing.

The accolade means the 40-year-old was won back-to-back Manager of the Month prizes.

He was also nominated for the September award but lost out to Blackpool's Steve Bruce.

Since becoming a manager in October 2022 when he took over at Colchester United, Bloomfield has now picked up four Manager of the Month awards.

These were in January 2023, April 2024, October 2024 and November 2024.

Speaking prior to the announcement being made on December 13, he said: "I'm really chuffed as that's three in a row now but it's all about the boys and the work that they have put in.

"The results we are getting as a football club are not going unnoticed, and I'm grateful for the boys' hard work."

He defeated Stockport County's Dave Challinor, Huddersfield Town's Michael Duff, and Wrexham's Phil Parkinson.