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NEWS

It was an evening to remember as Long Crendon took on Wycombe

By James Richings

IF you would have told me that nearly 2,000 people were going to attend a Wycombe Wanderers match, I would not have batted an eyelid.

But, if you would have told me that nearly 2,000 people were going to attend a Berks and Bucks match between the Chairboys and a Non League outfit at a neutral stadium in Oxfordshire, I would have questioned your statement.

Despite going out of the competition, the tie will be one to remember for the Green and White army as 1,904 attended the match, making it their highest attended fixture in their 136-year history, smashing their previous record of around 800.

The game itself saw fans of not just Crendon and Wycombe arrive, as there were supporters of Arsenal, Chelsea, Blackburn Rovers, Tottenham Hotspur, Norwich City,

Wolverhampton Wanderers and Oxford United to name just a few wearing their team's colours, whilst supporting a local game of football.

Notable attendees included Ollie Bayliss from the BBC Three Counties Show, 'The Non League Show', who told the BFP that the match felt like an 'FA Cup first round tie', along with Wanderers' owner, Rob Couhig, who stood and spoke with supporters.

Fans from both teams were singing, and even though goals from Ali Al-Hamadi, Jack Young, Olly Pendlebury and J.B Fischer sent Wanderers through to the semis, it was very much Long Crendon's night.

Speaking after the match, Mr Couhig said: "It was fantastic.

"It was great to see a great community come together to watch a sport that they love, and for us, it was good to see some of our youngsters out there and really play well.

"It shows that the play-

ers, coaches, and staff are really about building this sport within the community.

"I am so proud of the players as they treated the game with so much respect, along with the players, and do you know who I am most proud of? Our staff.

"If you talk to those at Long Crendon, they will tell you that our staff went out of their way to help them and if we can put some money into them, it's good for us.

"What goes around comes around.

"I'm a believer in karma.

"We have been a very fortunate team and it doesn't hurt to be friendly.

"I think people have got to know myself, Missy and Pete and we're pretty friendly people and we've come into a pretty friendly club.

"It's a natural mix and tonight has been a beautiful night."

Up next for Wycombe is a home match against Cheltenham Town on Saturday.



A crowd of 1,904 watched Wycombe play Long Crendon at the ASM (@Ollie_Bayliss)

Point rescued on the road for the Green Army

HOLMER Green drew 1-1 away at MK Irish in what was their first visit to Manor Fields this century.

The game started fairly evenly with Holmer having a decent chance to go 1-0 up inside the opening moments, but Kudzai Chunga couldn't capitalize.

However, on 30 minutes, a mix-up in the middle of the park allowed the home side to go 1-0 up which was against the run of play, and after that MK dominated the rest of the first-half.

The second 45 minutes saw Holmer improve greatly, and with Alex Dimtrijevic causing problems for the MK backline, they managed to get their equaliser with 22 minutes remaining, thanks to a beautifully bending strike by Kudzai Chenga.

Both teams tried to find that winner but the points were shared in this Spartan South Midlands League Premier Division fixture.

The result means MK move into 12th whilst Holmer Green remain in the relegation zone.

The Greens are in 19th place on 19 points for the season.

They have only won four of their league matches so far this campaign.



Long Crendon manager Ryan Davis and Wycombe boss Gareth Ainsworth (@CattingCarl on Twitter)

Club grateful over Wanderers' gate receipts

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed that they have given their share of the gate money to Long Crendon following their Berks and Bucks tie.

The Chairboys defeated the Non League outfit 4-0 at Thame United's ASM Stadium on February 15, with Ali Al-Hamadi, Jack Young, Olly Pendlebury and JB Fischer all getting on the scoresheet.

Speaking after the defeat on the kind gesture, manager Ryan Davis said: "It's brilliant and it's no more than what I would have expected from Wycombe, having dealt with them over the course of this tie.

"Every single one of their staff members, without fail, has been unbelievable.

"They have shown us the utmost respect, they have treated us like a professional club

and so to make that gesture, that is life changing for us. We will be careful to invest. I don't think we will start throwing it around on players of things like that, as there are lots of stuff that we would like to put in place.

"People know that we don't have our own ground at the moment, so this could go a long to securing our future."

Beaconsfield beaten by the stunning Stags

JORDY Mongoy marked his Walton Casuals debut with a goal either side of half time as the Stags ran out comfortable 3-0 winners over Beaconsfield Town last weekend.

Despite winning the toss and electing to play with the strong wind at their backs, the Rams never came to terms with the blustery conditions at a windswept Elmbridge Sports hub.

Despite the supposed advantage they struggled to sustain any pressure and created only one clear goal scoring opportunity of note but good goalkeeping kept them at bay.

Jacob Adams plunged low to his right to turn away Olly McCoy's low shot then reacting quickly to block Dan Bradshaw's effort from the rebound.

Mongoy opened the scoring on 35 minutes, turning Wilson Carvahio's low cross at the far post, as Beaconsfield stood waiting for a handball in the build up but referee, Thomas Holden, turned away the appeals on the basis that he did not feel the offence was deliberate.

Mongoy added to the visitors misery immediately after the break as he volleyed home Thomas Bird's deep cross at the far post.

Ansu Janneh completed Beaconsfield's misery, slotting home in the latter stages of the contest.

SPORT

Ending the season with a victory



Another win for the Chairgirls

THE Wycombe Wanderers Women Reserves ended their season on a high as they defeated EB Lions 3-2 away from home.

Eve Savage provided the perfect start on seven minutes, tapping in a Sally Grimm cross that was spilled by the opposition keeper.

The Chairgirls dominated throughout but had to wait until the 70th minute to get their second, as Grimm smashed in a thunderous shot from 20-yards.

EB Lions pulled a goal back with 15 minutes remaining thanks to a free-kick, but Wycombe sealed the win moments later as Naimh Creighton scored from close range.

The home side managed to get onto the scoresheet for a second time in the contest in the final few moments to make it a nervy end for Wycombe, but the Bucks outfit saw out the match with the points.

The victory means Wanderers ended the campaign in third place.

Wanderers' first team are defeated

WYCOMBE Wanderers Women fell to another home defeat as they lost 2-1 against Ascot United.

United broke the deadlock on 30 minutes when one of their attackers scored a brilliant chip, but just six minutes later, the Chairgirls equalised thanks to a well-worked goal from Naomi Tilley.

The second half began as the first had ended with play generally taking place in the middle third of the pitch, but the visitors regained the just seven minutes into the restart.

Wanderers continued to push for the equaliser as the half went on but to no avail, despite peppering the opposing keeper making several important saves.

Ainsworth's analysis following away draw

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has shared his thoughts following his side's 1-1 draw away at Lincoln City.

The Chairboys went a goal down inside five minutes thanks to a well taken Liam Cullen strike, before Chris Forino equalised with an unmarked header with five minutes left.

Wanderers also had Josh Scowen sent off in the final few moments for a second yellow, and whilst the draw moves Wycombe a place higher into fifth, Ainsworth saw many positives, as well as negatives, during the contest.

On Lincoln's goal as well as his side's first-half showing, Ainsworth said: "It took a sloppy set piece to get going.

"Five minutes in with their set piece, we have got to defend that better.

"I was really disappointed in that.

"After that, they had one or two breakaways and right before half-time, their right-back [Brooke Norton-Cuffy] had a great chance after a great run, but on the whole, I thought we had the better chances.

"How we haven't scored in the scramble at the end was unbelievable.

"I thought we had a penalty shout on Josh Scowen in the first-half, as he's been nicked from behind by the boy [Norton-Cuffy] who doesn't know he is there.

"He's got the ball and the boy has kicked him in the box.

"Now, how that is not a penalty, and how is that not a foul? Anywhere on the pitch and that is a foul.

"He doesn't give a penalty and for me, that is a mistake by the referee."



Wycombe Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth spoke on his side's performance as the Chairboys drew 1-1 at Lincoln. Chris Forino scored the equaliser after Liam Cullen gave the Imps the lead in the first half (PA)

On the second half, Ainsworth added: "In the second half, and with the conditions up here which believe me, was unbelievably windy, we knew we would would step it up and put the game on them, and I am disappointed that we didn't score more goals with the chances that we had.

"Their keeper has made a

worldie save, but David Stockdale was called upon and I thought he was magnificent.

"So a share of the spoils isn't a bad thing.

"When you don't play brilliant and you get a point away from home, you take it.

"Now we look forward to the home game next week against

Cheltenham."

Despite a point on the road, the draw has moved Wanderers into fifth position, after Oxford United lost at home to Bolton Wanderers.

Wanderers' last win at Sincil Bank was in January 2011, and their last league double over the Imps was in the 2004/05 season.



Brandon Hanlan started on the bench in Wanderers' draw at Lincoln (PA)

Why was Hanlan on the substitute's bench?

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth has explained his tactical decisions following the 1-1 draw away at Lincoln City.

The 48-year-old made one change to the starting line up from the 0-0 draw against Shrewsbury in midweek, which saw the now fit Josh Scowen return to the squad.

This meant Brandon Hanlan dropped out, which was the first time he hadn't started a match since the 2-2 draw at

Hartlepool United in the FA Cup three months ago.

Speaking after the match at his old stomping ground, Ainsworth said: "Brandon has been carrying a knock and we thought we could offload him just for a game.

"As it happened, I am glad that we got away with a point and not having to destroy Brandon so that'll be fresh for the next game and I can't want for that.

"I just had to change it up a bit.

"People will look at team selection and think 'why is he doing that' or 'why is not doing that, but if you train with us every day and come in from nine to five with me, you'll see why we do these things.'"

Despite no wins in four league matches, Wycombe have moved up a place and are now fifth in the League One table.



How did the youngsters who are out on loan away from the Adams Park outfit do over the weekend in the Non League? (PA)

Update on youngsters

FOLLOWING Tjay de Barr's move to Eastleigh of the National League on loan for the next month, how did the Gilbertian international do?

The 21-year-old made his debut for the Spitfires on February 12, one day after signing for the Blues, where he came on as a second-half substitute in their 0-0 home draw against Yeovil Town.

In his 28 minute run out, he picked up a yellow card.

He will be at the club until the middle of March.

Prior to moving out on loan, De Barr played eight times for the Chairboys, scoring once.

Elsewhere, Malachi Linton

played 53 minutes in King's Lynn 1-0 home defeat against Altrincham in the same division, whilst Adam Leathers was on the bench for Dulwich's defeat to Billericay.

Connor Parsons didn't feature for Bromley, while Hungerford - where Max Ram and Andre Burley are on loan - didn't have a game.

Up next for Wycombe Wanderers is Long Crendon in the quarter-finals of the Berks and Bucks cup.

The match will be played at the ASM Stadium in Thame, Oxfordshire, and so far, 1,300 tickets have been sold for the game.

First team goals for young forward



Ali Al-Hamadi

ALI Al-Hamadi believes training with the Wanderers first-team will help his chances of becoming a regular squad player.

The striker made his debut in the 4-0 win over Long Crendon on February 15, where he also got on the scoresheet.

He is yet to make his league debut for the Chairboys, but with big name players giving him advice, he believes that day may be sooner rather than later.

He said: "To train with the likes of Vokesy, Brandon and other first team players, you learn a lot and to be in that environment every day is one of the reasons why I wanted to come here.

"I want to get into the team but I know that is not going to happen straight away.

"I have got to be patient, but as long I am doing the right things and learn from the boys, I'll put myself in the best position possible.

"With the likes of Chris [Forino], Anis [Mehmeti] and Olly [Pendlebury] at the start of the season, the opportunities are here but you need to be ready for it."

Another victory for the Chairgirls

A STUBBORN and spirited performance from the Wycombe Wanderers Women Under 18s, as they defeated Sandhurst 3-1 away from home.

The win has cemented their place at the top of the table.

The Blues got their first goal of the contest when Jorja-Louise Bray struck on five minutes, after she latched onto a Jess Fuller through pass, to smash the ball across the six-yard box and into the goal.

On 40 minutes, defender Georgia Price hit a long ball for the returning Brooke Sanders who put the ball past the Sandhurst keeper from just inside the box.

A rare gift and error at the back gave Sandhurst hope 10 minutes into the restart, but the Chairgirls sealed the win, as Char Hill scored a penalty.

Should the red card rules be changed?



Wycombe manager Gareth Ainsworth believes appeals should be made for when someone has picked up two yellow cards (PA)

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth believes the 'rule should be changed' following Josh Scowen's sending off in their 1-1 draw against Lincoln City.

The midfielder was booked on 20 minutes for a late tackle, before he was shown a second yellow in the final few seconds of the contest.

After Jack Grimmer was penalised for a foul in the middle of the pitch in stoppage time, Scowen seemingly jogged up to the referee, Ollie Yates, and questioned the decision.

He was booked for his protest, but it seemed that both the midfielder and the man in the middle forgot about the previous booking.

After realising his error, Yates went up to Scowen to brandish the second yellow card and then the red, much to the dismay of the Wanderers players.

And as it was two yellow cards that were issued rather than a straight red, the sending off can not be appealed.

This means he will miss the home match against Cheltenham Town at Adams Park next weekend.

Speaking on the sending off, Ainsworth said: "With Josh getting sent off, I truly believe the referee did not realize that he had already booked him in the game, and it sours us as we lose Josh for a game.

"And we can't appeal it which is crazy. You can appeal reds but

By James Richings

you can't appeal a second yellow.

"Surely that rule should be changed because we would be appeal it.

"He didn't run aggressively.

"He just jogged over to the ref, he hasn't sworn and the referee was said there was no foul language was used, but he said he was super aggressive with the way he ran at me, and I can't understand how he's given him a second yellow.

"But, we just have to take that.

"It is a tough job being a referee and I have always said that and I wish he was available for the next game as we're going to miss him."

It was Yates' first Wycombe match of the season, and his first since the 1-1 draw away at Fleetwood Town in August 2019.

The sending off was also Wycombe's second of the season.

Their first was Anthony Stewart's red card in the 1-0 defeat away at MK in September, which was ultimately rescinded.

Since returning to Adams Park last summer after six-and-a-half years away, Scowen has so far played 26 times for the Chairboys.

He was a regular starter until the FA Cup defeat against Hartlepool in November in which he got injured, before he made his return in the league loss away at Ipswich Town.

SPORT



Nearly 60 shots in two league matches



Ali Al-Hamadi scored on Tuesday

Goal on debut for Al-Hamadi

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Ali Al-Hamadi believes his Chairboys debut in the Berks and Bucks Cup win over Long Crendon 'was a good experience', as he hopes to break in the first-team squad.

The Iraqi international, who joined at the back end of 2021, scored his first goal in the 4-0 victory over the Non League side, which was watched by 1,904 at the ASM Stadium in Thame.

The attendance is the highest in Crendon's history, as well as the biggest ever at the ASM.

Speaking after the successful quarter-final win on February 15, Al-Hamadi said: "It was nice to get that first goal even though it was a bit scrappy but I happened to be in the right position.

"We did really well tonight [Feb 15] and respect to Long Crendon as they were really good as well, but it was good to get the win and it was a good experience for everyone involved."

World Cup to the Berks and Bucks

WYCOMBE'S Ali Al-Hamadi has opened up on his recent international call up for the Iraqi national team.

The 19-year-old, whose family moved to England from the Middle East when he was just a year old to avoid the conflict, has played four times for the Lions of Mesopotamia's first team.

This included their recent draw against Iran in a World Cup qualifying match at the end of January.

Just two weeks later, he made his Wanderers bow in front of nearly 2,000 people against Long Crendon.

He said: "It was a mad experience! 'Of course, it was not ideal getting injured but that's football and you've got to get on with it.

"The call up was a surreal experience and to play against Iran, which is a neighbouring country to Iraq, was mad.

"The whole fanbase is crazy about football and that gives me a good kind of pressure which spurs me on as I'm ambitious."

And on the Long Crendon clash, he added: "I was honestly surprised by how many people turned up, and well done to Long Crendon and it is a great occasion for them to be involved in this."



Despite their recent drop in form, Wycombe Wanderers are currently in the play-off places on 54 points (PA)

By James Richings

IN the last two matches against Shrewsbury Town and Lincoln City, Wycombe Wanderers have mustered up an incredible 54 shots on goal.

Yet only one chance has been converted which was a Chris Forino header in the Chairboys' 1-1 draw away at Sincil Bank on Saturday.

And whilst Wycombe are now winless in four league matches since defeating Oxford United at Adams Park a month ago, the quality of their attacking arsenal is evident to see.

Brandon Hanlan, Garath McCleary, Anis Mehmeti and Sam Vokes have all performed superbly well so far this season, as the four-

some have scored 23 league goals between them this campaign.

But is the lack of scoring goals in recent games a cause for concern?

At the time of writing, Wycombe are the only team in the top six of League One to score less than 50 goals so far this league season.

They have also scored just three or more goals on just five occasions.

Three of these occasions came in victories against Cheltenham (a 3-1 win in August), Morecambe (a 4-3 win in October) and Plymouth (a 3-0 win in November), whilst the other two times Wanderers bagged a trio came in 3-3 draws against Fleetwood (in October) and Sunderland (in January), respectively.

Speaking after the draw against Lincoln, Wanderers boss Gareth

Ainsworth said: "We've had chances, so maybe our finishing needs a bit of practice but I am pleased we are creating chances.

"We've out possessed, out passed and shot Lincoln but we could only get a point.

"It's a great result for an away team. 1-1 so we take a point.

"When you don't play brilliant and you get a point away from home you're semi happy.

"We could have got all three but it's a tough place to come.

"I played here for a long time, I lived here and I know how tough it can be when the fans get behind you, so it was nice to be back at Sincil Bank but we moved onto Cheltenham next week.

"[The table] is tight, but I've not long seen Rob [Coughig] in the tunnel

and just said 'well done, there are plenty of games to go' and he's right.

"There are plenty more twists and turns to come yet and with the group of players we've got, the coaches, and the club as a whole, with those fans behind us, we have got a real chance this season."

And on the goal that was scored by Chris Forino, he added: "The goal was fantastic.

"We got the ball, switched the play to stretch their defence and we play in the final third.

"That is what I want to do.

"And I'm so pleased we have got him [Forino] at Wycombe. He has been a diamond of a find.

"He is going to go onto big things, believe me, and I thought he marshalled somebody with the stature of John Marquis very, very well."