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Bucks Free Press

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- Page 3



NEW LEASE OF LIFE

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CRACKDOWN ON DRIVERS

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Page 18



POLITICS

MP's apology for 'pain' of Brexit



Page 4

YOUR SAY

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Page 3

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Story Page 2

INSIDE • Planning roundup 24 • Nostalgia 40-42 • TV 43-49 • Sport 62-64

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SPORT

New era for the Rams

BEACONSFIELD Town FC have confirmed the appointments of Neil Baker and Jon Underwood as the club's new joint managers.

They replace the outgoing Gary Meakin who left his role on February 21.

Baker and Underwood arrive at Holloways Park following their departure from Slough Town in November.

In a club statement, Beaconsfield said: "Neil & Jon have a proven track record in management and their experience in the National League is what stood out for us when considering who to entrust with the next steps forward for this club."

"The directors are extremely proud of the club's achievements over the past five years, but we are making this appointment to reflect our ambition to sustainably progress to the National League, at the forefront of our minds."

The Rams, who currently sit in 12th in the Southern League Premier Division South, have also appointed Trent Phillips as their goalkeeper coach.

Phillips spent 10 years in Berkshire working with Baker and Underwood at Slough.

Calling all sports clubs!

SPORTS clubs, volunteers and players are invited to write in to share their news stories and match reports with The Bucks Free Press.

It comes as the newspaper is seeking to expand and improve its sports coverage and would like people in the local sporting community to get in touch.

Editor Katie French said: "Our patch is filled with numerous brilliant clubs and we are keen to ensure we are providing a platform to as many clubs and organisations as possible."

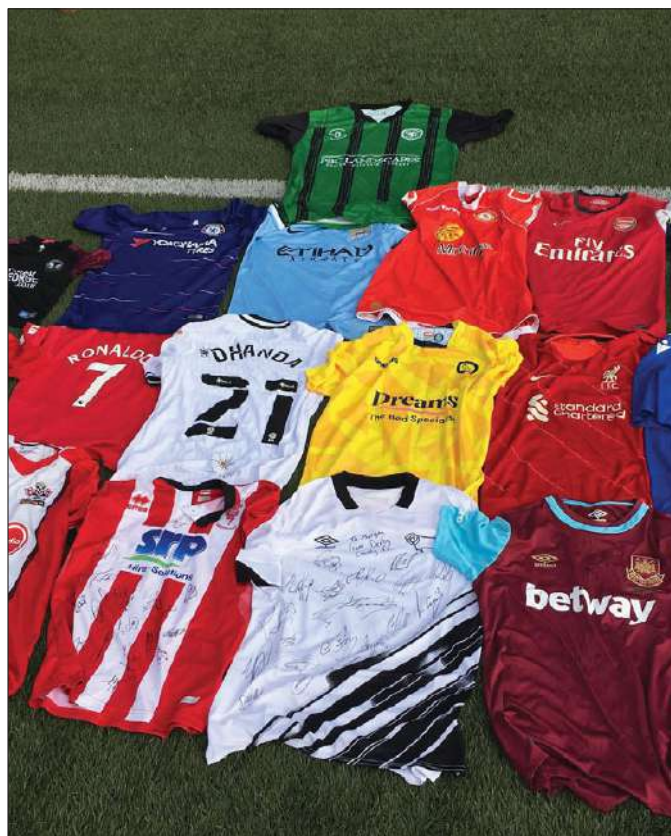
"We are inviting anyone in the sporting world locally to get in touch with us directly to ensure that we are covering as much local sport as we can."

As well as sports clubs, individuals who have sports news stories to share are welcome to get in touch.

Email katie.french@newsquest.co.uk or bfpnews@london.newsquest.co.uk.

Helping out five-year-old Morgan

By James Richings



Just some of the shirts that have been donated to Morgan's Army
Image: Newsquest

A group of football fans from Aylesbury have come together to help a five-year-old boy from Swansea who is fighting cancer.

The footy fanatics, who play for the charity team Green Machine, featured in a fundraising game at the Aylesbury Vale Academy on February 19 to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer, in aid of Morgan's Army.

Morgan, five, is fighting a rare form of cancer after being diagnosed several years ago.

In a spirited 11-a-side encounter, the Greens took on Berryfields at the secondary school and defeated their counterparts 7-3.

Over £600 was raised for the charity, along with several football shirts.

Hayden Brown, who works as a PE teacher at a special needs school, said: "We saw Morgan's story online and we thought we should do something for him and his family."

"We've done the match and we are trying to get a football shirt from each of the 92 teams across the Football League to give to Morgan."

"This is to show solidarity between all clubs that we can beat this disease."

"We are a competitive bunch but we're here to help the charity."

Neil Harding, who helped co-found Green Machine FC in 2017, added: "This is a great cause to try and help a five-year-old boy with cancer."

"We have had 35 players that wanted to play for us, both male

and female, and it's great to see so many players that want to help for charity."

The donated shirts included Arsenal, Manchester United, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City, Southampton, Portsmouth, and Peterborough United.

A signed Derby County shirt, Lincoln City shirt, and West Ham United shirt were also given, whilst matchworn tops from Wycombe Wanderers and Swansea City were also donated.

The gifted Chairboys shirt was a yellow away kit from the 2020/21 season when the club were in the Championship.

It was worn by former midfielder Alex Pattison (now at Harrogate Town), during a pre-season friendly.

The shirt was donated a few hours before Wanderers defeated Derby 3-2 at Adams Park on February 11, in a wonderful show of kindness.

The top, along with several unsold away kits from the 2019/20 and 2020/21 seasons, were made available to purchase at the stadium for only a few days.

Incredibly, after Hayden had explained his aim with the shirts to a member of the public at Adams Park, a Wanderers fan overheard the conversation and bought the kit for the cause.

The tops will be turned into a blanket for Morgan with the signed shirts being framed.

Morgan is a Swansea City fan.



Jesse Chraniuk in action Image: Sam Chraniuk

Judo whiz kid shines in comps across Europe

A High Wycombe Judo student earned a fifth place finish along with a bronze medal at two separate tournaments in February.

Jesse Chraniuk, who is coached by his mother, Sam, competed at the Naples European Cup in Italy in the middle of the month.

Going into the competition as a first seed, Jesse had a first round bye before he convincingly defeated Italian and French opponents.

In round three, the teenager faced a strong French counterpart who he was unable to defeat.

However, after being pulled back into the repechage, Jesse used his resilience to secure wins against

Slovakian and Italian participants.

He was eventually eliminated in the next round, finishing in the fifth spot.

A week later after his exploits in Italy, Jesse was once again in action as he partook in the Fuengirola European Cup in Spain.

His displays earned him a bronze medal after he defeated opponents from Portugal, France, and Italy.

After being ranked 62nd best in the world in December, Jesse is now number one in the British Cadet rankings and 14th in the World Cadet rankings.

The teenager is also looking for sponsors.



Wycombe have not won the Berks & Bucks Cup since 2012. They also lost 2-0 away at Bracknell in a pre-season friendly back in July 2022

Defeated by Bracknell

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield believes his side's Berks & Bucks Cup defeat against Bracknell Town will be a 'learning curve' for the development players. The Robins beat the Chairboys 2-1 at the SB Stadium on February 28 in the quarter-finals, with Joe Grant bagging himself a first-half brace. This included a strike inside the opening 30 seconds. Arnold Matshazi pulled one back for Wycombe with 26 minutes remaining, and despite a flurry of chances to try and take the game to a penalty shoot-out, the night belonged to the Berkshire club. They will now play Milton Keynes in the semi-finals. Speaking to the Free Press at full-time, Bloomfield said: "I thought we

started quite slowly, and going a goal down really early didn't help. "Bracknell came out the blocks quite quickly and looking at it, I think this is a good learning curve for our boys as you have got to be ready from the off. "Unfortunately, they caught us a bit cold as they went 2-0 up. "But the boys didn't give up and it was good to see that we got a goal back and have numerous chances in the second half." On moving forward, the boss concluded: "I think the boys will be disappointed, and rightly so. "We want to win and compete in every game but I hope they learn from these experiences and use them to help them with their careers moving forward."

Alan Parry's Previews: Exeter City awaits



Matt Bloomfield (Carol Mason)

THE prodigal son returns to his spiritual home on Saturday, March 4 when Matt Bloomfield is welcomed back to Adams Park with Wycombe fans of a certain age ready to forgive him for defecting to the old enemy Colchester United. Bloomfield's first home game as Wanderers manager is against Exeter City and comes just five months after he called time on a Chairboys career as player and coach that began almost twenty years ago. He left to manage Colchester, a club still regarded as Wycombe's fiercest rivals by those supporters who remember the 1991-92 season when they pipped Wanderers to the Conference (National League) title on goal difference. It was a feisty rivalry on and off the field, but that was a dozen years before Bloomfield became a Wanderers player and taking the Colchester job was the ideal opportunity to take his first step on the managerial ladder. Now he's back at the club he knows and loves more than any other. 'I've had the pleasure of knowing 'Blooms' for many years and served on his testimonial committee at Wycombe, and I think the Couhigs have made a wise decision to bring him back as successor to Gareth Ainsworth. He has the respect of the players, he knows everyone at the club and importantly he is a thoroughly decent person. He is sure to receive a rapturous welcome before the Exeter game, just as he did for his first game in charge, last week's disappointing defeat at Shrewsbury Town. That was always going to be a difficult fixture after a week of major upheaval for all concerned, can Blooms now get Wanderers back into the winning habit? Exeter sit in mid-table after defeating Cambridge United for their first win in five games. They beat Wanderers 3-1 in the reverse fixture in August last year with David Wheeler getting a consolation goal for the Blues against his former club. However, Wycombe have a superior overall record in matches against them with ten wins to Exeter's six, the other six being drawn. Exeter have only won one of their previous ten visits to Adams Park, on New Year's Day a decade ago.

Bloomfield's first game ends in defeat

By James Richings



The loss was Wycombe's second in 2023 and their first defeat at Shrewsbury since March 2019 (PA)

MATT Bloomfield lost his first game in charge of Wycombe Wanderers as his team fell to a 2-0 defeat away at Shrewsbury Town. The opening 45 minutes saw the Chairboys enjoy a large portion of the ball as they forced Marko Marosi into several stops. After Brandon Hanlan's effort on 13 minutes from a tight angle smashed into the side netting, Garath McCleary saw his low shot from 13-yards go straight down the keeper's throat. Jordan Obita's free-kick was expertly pushed away by the shot-stopper, whilst a Sam Vokes attempt went wide. It was a promising half for Wycombe, but on 31 minutes, they suffered a real sucker punch as they went a goal down through a Jordan Willis own goal. Christian Saydee did brilliantly to get past Joe Jacobson on the left-hand side before he whipped in a terrific cross into the six-yard box. The delivery seemed routine for Max Stryjek to collect, but Willis got onto the end of the cross and tipped it past his own keeper. Wanderers started the second period the better as they again had their fair share of attempts. Hanlan fired over, Lewis Wing was inches away and Obita saw his free-kick narrowly miss the target. Substitute Chem Campbell also saw his shot from the edge

of the box get blocked by Marosi in the Shrewsbury goal. However, the Shrews wrapped up the win in the final five minutes when Rekeil Pyke scored his third of the season from two-yards. It was the hosts' first shot on target in the match. The result means it was the first time since records began that Shrewsbury have completed the double over Wycombe in the league. This comes following the Shrews' 2-1 victory against the Chairboys in August, which was the first time they had defeated Wanderers at Adams Park in the league. Other than this, their only other victory at the home of Wycombe was in October 2008, when they smashed Wanderers 7-0 at in the Football League Trophy. Grant Holt, who would go onto score in the Premier League for Norwich City and Aston Villa, bagged five goals in that fixture. Attendance: 6,918 Wycombe's next fixtures: Mar 4: Exeter (H) Mar 7: Fleetwood (H) Mar 11: Burton (A) Mar 14: Bristol Rovers (A) Mar 18: Barnsley (H) Mar 25: Charlton (A) Apr 1: MK (H) Apr 7: Ipswich (A) Apr 10: Forest Green (H)

SPORT

0963-2336



Matt Bloomfield warming up with Dom Gape (Carol Mason)

Bloomfield's message to the players as Exeter City come to Adams Park

MATT Bloomfield has stated that his message to the Wycombe players is to 'retain our main principles'.

The newly-appointed manager of the club will take charge of his first home game in charge this weekend against Exeter City.

And with Wanderers losing just three times in the league since the start of December,

Bloomfield hopes that his homecoming will be a positive affair.

His inaugural fixture as the Chairboys boss ended in a 2-0 defeat at Shrewsbury Town last weekend.

Speaking to the press ahead of the match on March 4, he said: "There are a few bits that we are working on but we don't want to

give too much away.

"But it's been about going over the principles of play as we see it.

"The lads have been playing well this season and we don't want to lose our identity.

"We want to keep it and retain our main principles.

"This week has been a case of refamiliarizing ourselves

with what we can do and giving those messages to the players.

"Those messages were being said when I was here and no doubt, they would have been said when I was away as well.

"It has been a case of keeping that continuity and making sure that the boys know what we want."

Injury update on Chairboys trio

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has provided an injury update ahead of his side's home match against Exeter City this weekend.

The fixture, which will be the 39-year-old's first in charge of the club at Adams Park, could potentially see some faces return to the squad following the 2-0 defeat at Shrewsbury Town on Saturday.

Jack Grimmer could be in contention, whilst Ryan Tafazolli is making good progress.

On Grimmer, who suffered a concussion in the 1-0 victory over Bolton Wanderers on February 18, Bloomfield said: "I am someone that knows all about concussion protocols given my history in football.

"I like to think that I am understanding about that, so it has been good to see Jack back out on the grass and we will see where he is at for the weekend.

"That will be left to the medicals."

On Tafazolli, who sustained a hamstring injury just 26 minutes into Wanderers' 3-0 win over Port Vale on February 4, the manager added: "Taf has been out for a little while but he is back outside on the grass.

"We are making sure that he is moving freely and safely as he can, as he wants to be involved in the team.

Finally, when discussing Gape, who has only played twice since October, Bloomfield added: "Gapey is OK.

"He is someone that I have

By James Richings

known quite well over the last few years, but I am not sure when he will be back.

"That is tough for me to say at this point, as I don't want to give a timeframe on something when I don't have all those answers.

"We will wait and see but he is making good progress and we want him back sooner rather than later."

The fixture between the two sides at Adams Park will be the first since October 2017, when both clubs played out a 0-0 draw.

Additionally, Wanderers are winless in their last five matches against Exeter with their last triumph coming in October 2016.

Adebayo Akinfenwa scored the only goal with five minutes remaining, as Wycombe defeated the South West club 1-0.

This current winless spell includes the EFL Cup match in August 2021 which the Chairboys won 4-3 on penalties.

The score after 90 minutes ended 0-0, and therefore goes into the record books as a draw.

To read more about the latest news on Wycombe Wanderers, go to www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport.

Alternatively, you can follow James Richings on Twitter (@James.BFP), more additional facts, stats and more that focus on the Chairboys.



Jack Grimmer (top), Ryan Tafazolli (centre) and Dom Gape (bottom) (PA)



Where Exeter play (NQ)

Praise for the away team

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has praised the performances of Exeter City so far this season, following their promotion back into League One.

The South West club earned their place back in the third tier of English football at the end of last season, ending a 10-year stay in League Two.

Their first campaign in the league since 2011/12 has seen produce impressive results, which includes 3-1 victory over Wycombe back in August.

Currently sitting in 12th place, Exeter have won 11 of their 33 league games this season.

Speaking on this weekend's opponents, Bloomfield said: "There is a gap between League One and League Two which I think is obvious.

"So to establish themselves in the league the way they have done this season I think is fantastic.

"They have got some brilliant young players, they have got a good management team in place with Gary Caldwell, as they did with Matty Taylor.

"They have done really well so far this season, and hope to move forward and progress like any football club.

"They have found their feet in no time at all.