



Burton Albion Website Match Report

TEN-man Albion fought their way to a hard earned and deserved 2-1 win over Wycombe Wanderers at the Pirelli Stadium.

Dale Taylor and Joe Powell struck in eight first half minutes with excellent finishes to grab the game by the scruff of the neck and could have been three up through Charlie Kirk before the game threatened to get away from them when Deji Oshilaja was red-carded on the stroke of half time. Wycombe spurned a good opportunity to get back into the game when skipper Joe Jacobson missed from the penalty spot before Jay De Barr set up a tight finish five minutes from time.

Looking for a positive reaction to the result at Ipswich Dino Maamria made three changes for the first of two important home games this week. Zac Ashworth returned to the left wing-back role as Tom Hamer switched back to the right and John Brayford moved into the back three, Conor Shaughnessy dropping to the bench to make way. The midfield four remained the same but the attack was refreshed with Josh Walker returning to the side and Charlie Kirk given a first start after a number of strong appearances from the bench. Jonny Smith and Mark Helm moved to the bench. Amongst the substitutes there was a return for Academy graduate Ciaran Gilligan after an injury absence.

Wycombe started briskly but their first real chance was nullified when referee Lee Swabey penalised Sam Cokes for handball as he controlled and shot for goal. Albion responded and Deji Oshilaja headed over on five minutes when a Tom Hamer long throw caused problems for the Chairboys defence.

Jokes had a clearer chance on nine minutes getting in behind when a through ball evaded the defence and although Jasper Moon seemed to get a vital block in referee Swabey gave a goal kick. Within a minute Albion were ahead. Hamer's long ball was helped on by Walker and TAYLOR did well to hold off the attentions of Chris Forino before calmly slotting beyond Max Stryjek in the Wycombe goal.

Things got even better for Albion with a second goal eight minutes later. Zac Ashworth capitalised on good work from Walker with a low cross that was half cleared to POWELL on the edge of the box and he measured a superb curling effort that left Stryjek clutching at thin air as it flew into the top corner.

Forino tried his hardest to get Wycombe back into the contest on the half hour with an acrobatic effort inside the box as a second ball from a free kick came to him but his audacious attempt comfortably cleared the bar.

It was the start of a spell of pressure for Wanderers and Albion had to defend with discipline, Craig MacGillivray coming off his line smartly to deny David Wheeler at close quarters and

John Brayford making an important block to prevent Joe Jacobson's cross causing more problems.

Albion held the visitors off and looked set for a third goal on forty minutes with Forino making a crucial block as Kirk looked to sweep the ball home after more excellent work inside the box from the excellent Walker.

Garath McCleary, isolated and without any support inside the box was forced to try his luck with a shot across the face of goal that MacGillivray watched go wide as Wycombe tried hard to halve their deficit before the break.

A minute before the break Albion had another chance when Powell's free kick tempted Stryjek from his goal and Brayford, under pressure looped a header just wide.

The game took a key turn in these moments before the break when Oshilaja went in with a strong challenge on Wing and referee Swabey saw it was dangerous enough to pull the red card from his pocket leaving the Brewers forty-five minutes to compete with ten men.

Half Time: Burton Albion 2-0 Wycombe Wanderers

When the sides emerged for the second half Albion made two changes. Kirk and Ashworth did not come out and were replaced by Conor Shaughnessy and Helm as The Brewers changed shape to contend with the man disadvantage they were not at.

Brayford saw a close range header saved by Stryjek as Hamer's long throw caused problems for Wycombe before the visitors hit back by hitting the post through Nick Freeman's strike from outside the box.

Taylor scuffed a shot tamely at goal after superbly taking in a cross from Helm as Albion continued to look for a decisive third with Hassan Ahadme now in the action in place of Walker as well.

Wycombe made a couple of changes too and Josh Scowen quickly lashed a rising effort over the bar before fellow sub Tjay De Barr stooped to head an excellent chance wide with the goal at his mercy.

Brayford was close again to adding to the Albion's tally with a hooked shot on target that Wing fortuitously managed to deflect over the goal.

Wycombe were handed a lifeline on 79 minutes when Moon was penalised for his aerial challenge on Forino handing the visitors a penalty. Joe Jacobson wastefully fired his effort over the bar to the relief of all those of an Albion persuasion inside the Pirelli.

Wing then whipped a shot over the bar, rippling the net as it dipped to try and provide a grandstand finish from the visitors. A Wycombe goal did come shortly after as DE BARR headed home from Garath McCleary's corner to set Albion nerves jangling.

Albion showed all their defensive strength and resilience to compose themselves and see out the game for a precious victory in the battle against relegation.

DINO Maamria hailed a “huge win” for his Brewers team after they secured a vital three points with a 2-1 win over Wycombe.

Goals from Dale Taylor and a screamer from Joe Powell gave Albion a 2-0 lead but a red card for Deji Oshilaja gave the visitors a lifeline.

Wycombe missed a penalty and grabbed a late goal, but the Brewers were well worth the victory.

Maamria said: “We have seen everything today starting with a terrific first half. One minute we are disappointed not to be 3-0 up then we get a red card and have to make big changes to go to a back four from a back five that had been serving us well.

“We had a tremendous second half for different reasons – real defensive solidity, resilience. It was disappointing to concede from a corner, and we should do better, but overall it was a huge win for us. It has been a good week on the training ground and we have come a long way and believe in these games that we can play on the front foot and take the game to teams chasing the play offs.

“I said in midweek that these are two big games (Wycombe today and Peterborough on Tuesday) against teams aspiring to get in the top six and two or three months ago we wouldn’t have won these type of games. It was a tremendous performance and our fans were magnificent from start to finish.

“We need our fans with us, especially at home and I thought the Pirelli was bouncing today. Our lads responded really well to that and it was a huge three points.”

Maamria hailed great performances throughout from his team.

Maamria said: “There are so many top performances today. Joe Powell took it to another level and scored a tremendous goal. Sam Hughes has not trained all week as he has been ill but he and John Brayford were at their best. Jasper Moon defended really well after picking up an early yellow card.

“I had no complaint with the red card. I have been really big on discipline, and it has improved greatly from the first eight games. We lost it there and I didn’t want to lose Deji for three games and it could have cost us the game. We have to learn from that.”