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'BRING IT ON'

Labour and Lib Dem candidates welcome Rishi's July 4 election

Asthma alert over smoking tip

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Potholes 'have to be 5cm deep' to qualify for fixes

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Street scared by stabbing



Four attempted murder arrests

By Eleanor Burleigh

HIGH Wycombe residents say they are scared to leave their homes after a stabbing on their road left a man fighting for his life.

Thames Valley Police were called to Tilling Crescent late last Friday, after reports of a stabbing. Officers found a man in his 20s in critical condition.

Four men have been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder: Two, aged 29 and 32, were arrested on Saturday. A 40-year-old and a 26-year-old were also arrested and all four were later bailed.

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Sport

Golf enthusiasts enjoy show

Isabella Perrin

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A SHOW for golf enthusiasts exhibited over 100 vendors at Wycombe Air Park.

The British Golf Show boasts variety, catering to all golf lovers.

Event organisers took pride in displaying premium golf goods and services, focusing on cutting-edge equipment, technology and travel.

Visitors on Friday, May 17, could test their swing at the driving range and simulators.

As one of the few dedicated golf shows in the UK, the organisers aim to “increase and strengthen the profile of the sport to a new and wider audience,” while also meeting the needs of existing fans.

Interestingly, the show was co-located with The Elite Events London, a distinct lifestyle showcase offering visitors access to 150 luxury lifestyle brands and over 30 experiences, ranging from supercar test drives, helicopter flights, to beauty and wellness treatments.

The British Golf Show continues to inspire golf lovers throughout the UK right in the heart of Bucks.



Sport

SPORT

Funding provides trackers for rugby teams

BUCKINGHAM Rugby Football Club (RFC) has received a financial boost from a new sports fund backed by ex-England cricketer Darren Gough.

The £75,000 Gigaclear Rural Sports Club Fund supports teams in rural areas within Gigaclear's full fibre network, which extends across 26 counties.

Mikey Clark, Head Coach of Buckingham RFC, said the investment has helped the club acquire GPS trackers for players.

He said: "Whilst

predominantly purchased with our women's teams in mind, the trackers are also being utilised by the men.

"They enable us to monitor player performance and make real-time decisions during matches.

"This performance-based tool gives us a live data feed on the number of metres covered by individual players, their speed and whether they're fatiguing.

"It's a great way to track how the players are performing so we can

make the necessary adjustments as well identify areas where we can focus training and player development."

The fund's ambassador, Darren Gough, is pleased with the impact the fund is already making.

Gough said: "Since launching the fund, it has gone from strength to strength, providing valuable support where it is needed most.

"It's great to see so much kit and equipment being sent out to rural sports clubs such as Buckingham RFC."



BOWLS

Looking ahead to the future in 2026

CRAIG Bowler has proposed a radical multi-host solution in a bid to avoid the potentially 'devastating' loss of the Commonwealth Games.

Olney native Bowler, 45, won para-bowls bronze at Birmingham 2022 but his chances of a second Games appearance have been cast into doubt with uncertainty over the future of the event.

"Victoria pulled the plug on hosting in 2026 and with a new home yet to be determined, Bowler is an advocate for spreading events across different cities if it means the Games can go ahead.

"It would be absolutely devastating to lose the Commonwealths," said Bowler, speaking ahead of Bowls' Big Weekend 2024.

"With the Olympics and Paralympics you have that separate window for abled and disabled people, but with the Commonwealths it's all together.

"It could be that the Games is spread across different countries who host different sports, fingers crossed it carries on."

Euro 2020 set the standard for multi-city events as the first pan-European football tournament, offering countries an opportunity to stage a global event they might not otherwise receive.

To some extent, Bowler experienced a Games of this ilk in Birmingham.

"Lawn bowls was held 30 miles down the road from the thick of the action in the heart of the second city and Bowler says he never felt like he had missed out.

"We stayed at Leamington, so we were away from the village and the atmosphere anyway," he added.

"It wouldn't bother me (to host the Commonwealth Games across multiple cities), as long as all the countries are together in the bowls, then I'd be quite happy with that."

Games organisers have announced their intention of naming a new host this month and Bowler will be a relieved man when a resolution is identified.

"The Commonwealth Games was one of the biggest events for our sport in terms of getting it out there," he said.

"I think about 10,000 people signed up for the sport after that, so if there is no Games to showcase our sport, it's harder to change that stigma around the sport being an old person's game.

"Last year when I was on BBC, Sky News, and just trying to promote the sport, that made a big impact on a lot of people, so if we lost the Commonwealth Games and the platform that gives people it would be a major blow for our sport."

Bowls' Big Weekend, partnered with Aviva, is back for its fourth year and bigger and better than ever, with clubs across the country holding open days to encourage new players to give the sport a go.

With over three million people watching Bowls' Big Weekend on national television last year, and over 560 clubs on board, bowls will be taking over England from 24 - 27 May for the 2024 event.

SPORT: FOOTBALL

New opponents next year for Wycombe Wanderers

NOW that all 24 teams for the 2024/25 League One season have been confirmed, let's look at when Wycombe Wanderers last took on the seven new sides who will compete in the third tier of English football.

BIRMINGHAM CITY - 2020/21 season

The Chairboys have only taken on the Blues seven times in their history, but the most recent encounter was three years ago when both sides were in the Championship.

The first meeting in November 2020 saw Wanderers come from behind to defeat Birmingham 2-1 at St Andrew's, to secure their first-ever away victory in the division.

They met three months later in February 2021 at Adams Park, which ended 0-0.

CRAWLEY TOWN - 2017/18 season

The Red Devils are back in League One for the first time in nine years, as their promotion means the up-and-coming fixtures against the Chairboys will be first time the two sides will meet in the third tier.

Prior to that, both Wycombe and Crawley only faced each other when in League Two.

The last match saw Wanderers beat the West Sussex side 3-2 at Broadfield Stadium in March 2018.

HUDDERSFIELD TOWN - 2020/21 season

Wycombe's previous bout with Huddersfield Town will go down as a classic in the Chairboys archives.

In February 2021, Wanderers were 2-0 down inside 41 minutes at the St John Smith Stadium before strikes from Anis Mehmeti, a Joe Jacobson penalty, and a very late Josh Knight strike, secured one of the best league comebacks in Wycombe's recent history.

The reverse fixture three months earlier at Adams Park was an incredibly lacklustre 0-0 draw.

By James Richings

MANSFIELD TOWN - 2017/18 season

A potential bogey team for Wycombe as they have only beaten Mansfield once out of their last five matches.

The good news is that when they last met, Wanderers were promoted, so a potential omen for the Chairboys?

The previous encounter saw Wycombe lose 2-1 at Adams Park to the Stags in December 2017.

ROTHERHAM UNITED - 2021/22 season

The side to have faced Wycombe most recently, Rotherham will be back in Wanderers' league after a two-year absence.

Both games during the 2021/22 season ended goalless, and incredibly, 14 clean sheets have been kept from the 21 games played between the two teams.

STOCKPORT COUNTY - 2010/11 season

It's been 13 years since Wycombe last face Stockport County in any capacity, and that ended in a 2-0 victory for the Chairboys at Adams Park back in April 2011.

That year, Wanderers won promotion to League One, whilst Stockport finished bottom of the table, and were therefore relegated to the National League.

WREXHAM - 2007/08 season

It's been close to nearly 20 years since the two teams last met, with Wanderers winning the most previous clash - a 2-1 win at Adams Park in March 2008, with Scott McLeish scoring the winner.

Wanderers' previous trip to the Racecourse Ground was in November 2007, which ended 0-0.

The new season will start on August 10.



Wycombe last played Rotherham in 2022, but the fixture at Adams Park was the Chairboys' first in the Championship back in 2020 (PA)

SPORT: SWIMMING

Coach is 'proud' after championships



The coach was pleased with how things turned out

THIS month, the Swimming South East Regional Championships have taken place for swimmers aged between 11 and 18.

Amersham SC had 36 swimmers qualify and 30 accepted, the highest club entry for several years.

Races took place over three weekends at three different venues, challenging swimmers to rise to the occasion and give their best each time.

In the age group events ASC had 23 top 8 finishes and two medals from Grace Findley (1500m freestyle silver and 200m freestyle bronze).

At the Youth Age Group our remaining 12 swimmers raced over the four-day bank holiday, again with a great PB success rate, 8x top 8

finishes and Michael claiming bronze in the 50m breaststroke.

Overall we also had numerous 4th place finishes including Grace F 800m Freestyle, Neve 50m Breaststroke, Josh 1500m Freestyle and Ollie 200m Fly.

Head coach, Gemma Jones, said: "It's been a hugely successful championships and I'm so proud of all the swimmers, and their coaches."

Do you want to contribute to our sports pages?

Let us know what's going on by sending in your sporty bits via the 'Send Us Your News' section via our website.

It's free to do and you can add as many images and text as you want!

It can also be on any sport event in the Buckinghamshire area!

FOOTBALL

Matching last year's successes

STREET 2 Pros Under 9 Football academy matched last years Under 8s Junior Premier League National Championship success by making the final again in 2024.

This time they faced the best 11 non academy teams from around the country and after only conceding one goal all tournament they sadly would go on to lose to penalties in the final.

Following this seasons success of National Finalist in the Junior Premier League as well as winning against full time Academy's such as Luton Town, Stevenage, Fulham, Reading and Liverpool in a recent tournament in which they would go on to lose to Chelsea in final 16.

This success has meant they caught the eye of a touring Juventus team resulting in Street2Pro being invited to Turin to compete against Juventus, Roma, Ac Milan, Fiorentina and others European teams in late September in the City of Settimo Torinese Cup formally (Gruppo Tempocasa) Cup Given this academy is only in its third year this is a success story of some very talented local youngster.

CHAIRBOYS

Friendly pencilled in at Adams Park for the Chairboys

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed who they will play in their only home friendly this summer.

The Chairboys will take on Championship side Watford at Adams Park on Tuesday, July 30.

It'll be the second time in three seasons the two teams will meet in a non-competitive manner, with the Hornets defeating the South Bucks side 4-1 in behind-closed-doors match in July 2022.

The last time the two sides met in a competitive manner was during the 2020/21 season.

The first encounter finished 1-1 at Adams Park which secured their first point in the Championship in October 2020, before they lost the return game 2-0 at Vicarage Road five months later.

SPORT: MATCH COULD BE CALLED OFF

Finding support for local charity football fixture

A Wycombe Wanderers fan who has arranged a charity match next month has admitted the event 'is in doubt' due to a lack of support.

George Gutteridge, who is the man behind the popular 'Wycombe Way' X account, has planned the fundraisers to take place at Holloways Park, the home of Beaconsfield Town FC on Saturday, June 8.

The proceeds from the family-fun day will be donated to the PKD Charity – a cause close to the 23-year-old's heart.

However, he admitted he has set a 'deadline' to try and increase numbers in both ticket sales and sponsors by next Tuesday [May 28].

Otherwise, the match will be called off.

He told the Free Press: "I'm stuck on 23 players, with no-body buying a spectator ticket so far.

"I've had no word from potential sponsors I've spoken to and haven't been able to get in touch with ex-pros [who could play].

"With that said, the aim is to

have two games.

"One kicking off at 3:30, the second at 5:30.

"Then from 7 o'clock onwards, there is a social event in the bar at the stadium including a raffle and auction."

"The price to play in one of the two games is £20, £5 to enter the ground to watch the football.

"Entry to the bar in the evening is free although a donation is suggested.

"I'm on the lookout for donations for the raffle and auction, although, I have been unsuccessful so far."

He continued: "This is to raise money for PKD Charity, a special cause for the family.

"Mum has just had a successful kidney operation, and having the disease myself, will one day need the same treatment."

To sign up or to help sponsor the event, contact Mr Gutteridge via X (@TheWycombeWay), or donate to the charity by visiting <https://www.just-giving.com/page/thewycombe-way-pkd2024>.



The Wycombe Way charity match in 2023 was a great success, but , the 2024 edition may not take place

Under 9s success leads to invite abroad

The Street 2 Pros Under 9 Football academy has reached the final of the Junior Premier League National Championship for the second year running.

The talented youngsters from Aylesbury met the top 11 non-academy teams from across the UK and yielded only one goal before losing in penalties in the final.

Their impressive performance earned them invitations for fixtures against Luton Town, Stevenage, Fulham, Reading, and Liverpool, though they'd eventually lose to Chelsea in the final 16 round.

The success of Street 2 Pros, despite it only being its third year since inception, did not go unnoticed by a touring Juventus team, culminating in an invite to compete against Juventus, Roma, Ac Milan, and other international clubs at the Settimo Torinese Cup in Turin in late September.

Yet being a private academy, fundraising and sponsorship is crucial to support the determined young footballers and curb costs.

Street 2 Pro is encouraging local busi-

nesses keen on aiding the talented nine-year-olds to visit the academy's website.

The plea for aid reads "If there are any businesses that would like to get involved with supporting and helping this talented set of 9-year-olds."

Street 2 Pro is organised and conducted by Adam Morris and Liam Hickey, who both came together to create Street 2 Pro after many years in the coaching industry in the Bucks area.

Adam is a UEFA B Football coach with over 15 years experience in coaching chil-

dren, working at Wycombe Wanderers Football club and for the Football Association.

Liam is an FA Coach with over 10 years experience in coaching football for all ages from three-year-olds to Adults. He has worked for Maidenhead United and Chelsea FC Foundation. He has lots of experience in grassroots football running two age groups as well as providing professional coaching during the week ranging from after school clubs to Advanced Development Centres.

SPORT

0963-2336



Helping out a local club in a very unique way



Micklefield Judo Club are hoping

ON May 26 2024, Kev Thomas-Wilkinson will be doing The Ride London Mile Bike Ride raising money for Micklefield Judo Club.

This is a 100 Mile Bike Ride that Kev has put himself forward for to raise funds for the local Judo Club that his son visited many years ago and his daughter has been a member of for at least two years.

Established in 1973, Micklefield Judo Club has been committed to making judo accessible to individuals of all ages, abilities,

and backgrounds.

Despite being run by volunteers, the club has exceeded expectations, boasting a roster of Olympic, Paralympic, World, European, and British medallists among its current and former members.

With their recent growth, the club is now seeking assistance in raising funds for a new tatami (judo mat) and additional training equipment. These new resources will enable players of all skill levels at the club to reach their

utmost potential.

The family-focused club in Hazlemere is experiencing rapid expansion and requires assistance to meet the escalating demand from the local community.

Micklefield Judo Club is raising funds for the club, so Kev is taking on this great fundraising activity. You can find out more about Kev's progress and journey here; www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/kev-thomas-wilkinson-2.

If you are interested in sponsoring the club and would like to discuss further, please contact micklefieldjudoclub@gmail.com.

A section of their JustGiving page reads: "Despite being run by volunteers, the club has exceeded expectations, boasting a roster of Olympic, Paralympic, World, European, and British medallists among its current and former members."

So far, £345 has been raised for their £400 target.

Stockdale looks back on his Wycombe days

GOALKEEPER David Stockdale has revealed how he nearly 'stopped playing football' before he joined Wycombe Wanderers.

The 38-year-old, who was recently at York City in the National League, played 76 times for the Chairboys across three spells between 2018 and 2022.

He initially joined the Chairboys on a six-week loan in the autumn of 2018 from Birmingham City, but was recalled after playing just two matches.

A move back to Adams Park in January 2020 followed where he again played twice for the club, before signing permanently that summer.

Stockdale was part of the squad that achieved promotion to the Championship, and despite not playing a single game for the club in the first-half of the 2020/21 season, he ended the year as Wanderers' number one keeper.

He would then play every second of Wycombe's league and play-off campaign the following year, winning the golden glove with 18 clean sheets.

Before his moves to South Buckinghamshire, Stockdale had spent the 2017/18 season as Birmingham's first-choice keeper, but was banished from the squad for the entirety of the 2018/19 campaign, where he was forced to train with the U23s and then the U18s under the instructions of the club's hierarchy.

Multiple loans to other clubs followed that year, before was brought back to the frame for the 2019/20 season, playing just one game in six months.

Speaking on his spells at Wycombe, Stockdale told the Under the Cosh podcast: "I was probably at one of my lowest points because for the first three to four months [of the 2018/19 season], I still thought I had a chance [to get back into the first team]."

"But it got to six months and I hit a dip, and in that dip, Wycombe rung and said 'we need a loan keeper as our keeper is out.'

By James Richings

"They agreed a weekly fee so I went there [to Wycombe] and I loved it.

"I played the first game which we won, and then for the second game, which is against Accrington Stanley away I got man of the match - I was on fire.

"You've gone from drinking at night on your own to playing again, and I just wanted more of it.

"But then the director went to the manager [Gareth Ainsworth] after the game, and said, 'Birmingham have called Stocks back.'

"My first thought was that they've realised [how well I was playing].

"It turned out that they didn't want to see me doing well when they weren't, and they said Wycombe weren't paying enough.

"Wycombe said 'we agreed six weeks' and they [Birmingham] said it wasn't enough money."

Moves to Coventry City and Southend United followed that year, before he rejoined Wycombe in 2020.

He continued: "I needed to get out of Birmingham.

"I went to Wycombe [again] to get out and Gareth Ainsworth wanted to give me a chance.

"He said that he couldn't guarantee that I'll play, but it wasn't for that, I would have stopped playing football.

"I felt so drained - the [Birmingham] fans hated me and all I did was try and play football.

"Then you go to Wycombe and you've got Gareth Ainsworth going 'whooh!' listening to rock music in the changing room - it was brilliant.

"Even though I wasn't playing [at the time] at Wycombe, I was loving it there.

"I took something like a 90 per cent wage cut to stay there and Wycombe wants what's best for the players.

"Wycombe is a very special club."



David Stockdale played nearly 80 times for Wycombe Wanderers across three spells between 2018 and 2022 (PA)

New players signed at Chesham United

CHESHAM United has welcomed centre-backs Connor Stevens and Jack Cawley to their team.

26-year-old Stevens comes from National League side Barnet.

The defender stated his previous experience in the prestigious FA Cup with former team Boreham Wood.

Before that, he spent four years alongside current Chesham player Dean Brennan at Wealdstone, securing the National League South title in 2020.

Stevens' football proficiency dates back to his time at Watford FC Academy, with a brief break at Oxford City.

Chesham is equally thrilled to bring in Jack Cawley, a 31-year-old centre back with global experience. After a stint at AFC Sudbury, Cawley returns from playing professional football in Australia and New Zealand.

His tenure down under saw him part of the title-winning team at Wellington Olympic in New Zealand's National League before transitioning to Australia's Perth Soccer Club.

Cawley's expertise extends to the country of his birth, where he was a major player in Bromley's FA Trophy win.

He later played with Wealdstone, followed by a recent spell at Maidstone United.

High chances are Cawley would bring the tactical agility honed at Concord Rangers, Maldon & Tip-tree, and his debut club, Heybridge Swifts.

In their statement, Chesham United expressed gratification, "We are delighted to welcome Connor Stevens and Jack Cawley to our ranks.

"Their vast experience will undoubtedly add strength to our side."

These two signings signal a strong season ahead for the Generals.