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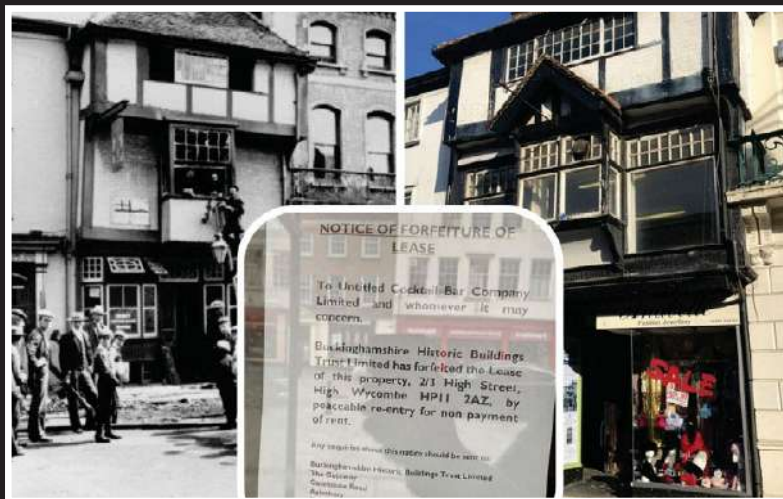


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SPORT

Goals on the mind for Grimmer



Jack Grimmer (left) (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers right-back Jack Grimmer hopes to add more goals to his tally as the season opener edges closer.

The 28-year-old, who is now in his fourth campaign with the club, has only bagged two strikes in 96 games for the Chairboys with both of his goals coming this calendar year against Bolton Wanderers and Morecambe respectively.

These goals are part of the nine he has so far bagged in his career, and after he broke his Wanderers duck against the Trotters in January, the former Scottish Under 21 international is looking forward to trying his luck in increasing his tally.

His told the Free Press: "I think it is something that by the time I had scored my first goal, it felt like a burden on me at times.

"It is something that I enjoy doing and have enjoyed doing at other clubs and it took me so long to get that first goal I certainly want to add to that and even though it's not my job, I think it's important that everyone chips in when they can."

Young's aim for the season

WANDERERS midfielder Jack Young is hoping to be a regular name in the Wycombe starting line-up as the new season gets closer.

The 21-year-old only made two appearances for the club last season whilst on loan from Newcastle United, but he has since signed a permanent contract with the Chairboys.

He missed latter half of the back of last season due to a foot injury, but now fully-fit, the central midfielder is looking ahead to the match against Burton Albion on Saturday.

Speaking to the Free Press about moving from the North East to Buckinghamshire, he said:

"Initially, there was an adjustment period to the style play with new players in a new league, but now, I feel like I'm getting to grips with it and I'm ready to kick on."

Pattenden's plans for the season ahead

By James Richings

FROM playing Non League football to being signed by one of the most talked about Football League clubs, the last few weeks have been quite something for Jasper Pattenden.

The 20-year-old joined the Chairboys in June this year from Worthing after impressing Gareth Ainsworth and Sam Grace in several training sessions.

Now a member of the club's development team, the fresh-faced winger is hoping to make his mark at his new home, as the season opener against Burton Albion edges closer.

Speaking exclusively to the Bucks Free Press at the club's training ground on July 26, he said: "I am enjoying it and I have no bad words to say.

"It's not just about moving to a new club - it's also about exploring a new area.

"I've lived down south in Brighton for all my life and now it's all about getting to grips to a new environment such as not being five minutes away from the sea.

"Jumping in one of the ice baths is probably the closest I'll get to the sea from here! But I've settled in really well and the boys have been magic."

One of the things the new recruit has noticed since moving to Buckinghamshire is the 'sharpness and consistency' in training sessions.

Transitioning to the standards and requirements of what the Football League brings compared to what the Non League offers will no doubt be a world away for the young attacking midfielder, but he is keen to not only adapt to a higher level of intensity, but he is also eager to change his style of play when necessary.

And this adaptation when crossing over that white line is something that Pattenden is excited to develop as part of his game.

He continued: "The preparations were one of the things I thought about the most when making the move.

"You see many players making the



Jasper Pattenden (speaking to Wanderers TV following his signing in June) spoke to the BFP on July 26 ahead of the new season (Wanderers TV screengrab)

jump from Non League in to the Football League and some of them have made the jump into the Premier League.

"I spoke to a few boys who I know who have done that and I think the main difference is the sharpness and the consistency.

"In training, everyone is on it and it's all about making small tweaks to your game as it depends on who you are play-

ing.

"You can't play the same in every game as teams will come to us and they'll set up a special way against you, and there are some top quality players in this league and above.

"And I know it's not going to be easy, but I have enjoyed the challenge so far."

And on playing under Ainsworth, he added: "The best compliment you can

have is when the manager is saying good things about you, and I really appreciate that and I think for me personally, it's nice to hear and it drives me on.

"It's never a case of job done once I've heard good comments, it's all about bettering yourself and the team."

Pattenden will wear the number 31 shirt, which was last worn by Adam Przybek.



Wycombe Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth (PA)

Ainsworth's message for the supporters

GARETH Ainsworth has thanked everyone connected to Wycombe Wanderers in helping the club spread its profile across the country and world.

Last season saw record some of the crowds at Adams Park on a consistent basis, with some spectators being first time visitors to the club.

More than 20,000 also attended the League One play-off final against Sunderland in May, with supporters flying from all corners of the world to get behind the Chairboys.

And with a new season just a couple of days away, the 49-year-old is hoping to see more faces inside at AP as the campaign goes along.

Speaking to the press on July 28 ahead of the Burton fixture, he said: "We want you and need you so much.

"I was driving yesterday [July 27] and I happened to go past one of

these summer soccer camps that are going on and as I was stationary in the que, I looked over and there were several kids wearing Wycombe shirts.

"Seeing that meant the world

because when I took over 10 years ago, it was Chelsea, Manchester United, Arsenal, all the big teams.

"There were no Wycombe shirts and some were the new shirts as well, so they're proper fans!

"So to see these new quarters in these camps proves to me that we're doing something right.

"We've got this younger generation coming through, along with the older generation who were here during the Loakes Park days and I'm really proud of what the club has done."

Let's raise De Barr

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Tjay De Barr is hoping to hit the ground running as he prepares for his second season with the Chairboys.

The Gibraltar international, who played eight times and scored once for the club, was loaned out to Non League Eastleigh for the latter half of the previous campaign.

However, after four games in which three were starts, the forward picked up a season-ending injury and returned to the Adams Park club for his rehabilitation.

He has since signed a new deal with the Chairboys and is chomping at the bit to help Gareth Ainsworth's men to promotion to the Championship.

Speaking to the Free Press, the

22-year-old said: "This is my second session coming back from injury and I'm feeling good, fit and strong so I'm looking forward to the season ahead.

"My loan spell was good, but it was also quite short as I got injured so I'm just looking forward to getting started again with the team.

"I'm always looking to get my head on the end a good ball so I'm looking forward to try and score a few goals and perform for the team and do my best.

"I'm hoping for the best for the season ahead."

His only goal for the club came against Stevenage in the League Cup in August last year, which was an injury-time header to take the cup tie to a penalty shootout.



Tjay De Barr (pictured playing for Gibraltar) has so far played eight times for Wycombe (Simon Galloway/PA Wire)

Alan Parry's preview for 2022/23



The season starts on July 30

If Wanderers are to go one better than last season's play off final and clinch automatic promotion to the Championship, they will have to finish above some of the biggest clubs in English football.

The line up in League One this coming season is arguably stronger than it has ever been before. No fewer than eight clubs that is a third of the division have played at the highest level, six of them in the Premier League era.

Barnsley, Bolton, Charlton, Derby, Ipswich, Oxford, Portsmouth, and Sheffield Wednesday have all enjoyed time in the top division alongside giants of the sport like Liverpool and Manchester United.

Indeed, four of Wycombe's promotion rivals Sheffield Wednesday, Portsmouth, Ipswich Town, and Derby County have been crowned English champions in their illustrious past.

Now, some will argue that history counts for nothing when the first whistle blows, but I disagree.

The historic status of these clubs is a major factor in attracting huge support and with it the finances that enable them to acquire better quality players.

Smaller crowds have a direct impact on the chances of success, leading to a smaller wage bill for players and a less intimidating atmosphere for visiting teams.

All but one of the clubs I have mentioned attracted average crowds of between 13-23,000 last season, the exception being Oxford (8,400).

Wycombe's home games were watched by an average of 5,662 spectators, an improvement on some previous seasons but still way below their rivals.

If you draw up a League One table for last season based on average crowds, Wycombe would have finished a lowly 17th and four of the six clubs below them in the attendances table were relegated.

Given the disadvantage they face in this respect, it is quite remarkable that Wanderers have challenged for promotion in three of the last seven years.

There are odd exceptions - Wycombe being one of them - but it is no coincidence that the best supported, and therefore the richest clubs in English football, are also the most successful.

So, get down to Adams Park and encourage everyone you know to join you, because your support really does matter in more ways than one.

All things Wycombe with the new captain



Joe Jacobson (pictured scoring against Sunderland in January 2022) signed a new deal with Wycombe this summer (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers captain Joe Jacobson has revealed that leaving the Chairboys was 'never on his mind', as he penned a new deal to remain with the club.

The Welshman was out of contract with the Adams Park side this summer, but he exclusively revealed to the Bucks Free Press that staying a part of Gareth Ainsworth's squad was never in doubt.

His decision to remain at Wycombe means this will be his ninth season as a Chairboy, and his first full campaign as club captain, following Matt Bloomfield's retirement in February this year.

Jacobson, who has played 351 times for Wycombe, said: "It's my ninth season but I'm as hungry as ever and I want to play as many games as possible.

"In the summer, I didn't even speak to my agent about talking to other clubs.

"That was never on my mind and the guys wanted me to say and that was pretty much it.

"We've achieved so much with the club in that time with two promotions and three play-off finals, a relegation and a few great runs as well, as it's gone by really quickly."

Speaking on the future, the 35-year-old also revealed that he has been impressed with the attitudes of the new players who have come into the squad.

So far this summer, D'Mani Mellor, Jasper Pattenden, Jack Blunkell, Christie Ward and Jack Young have all joined the club, and with players all being under the age of 25, the captain believes their hunger and desire will help Wycombe going forward.

Exclusive By James Richings

He continued: "They have done really well.

"Most of them are young so they are really hungry with some coming from bigger clubs, others the Non League and it's great to see that regardless of where they come from, they have got that hunger and desire to succeed.

"I think Wycombe has got this reputation of bringing in younger players from clubs where they are not necessarily worked out for them, and have helped them progress.

"A part of that is with the development squad that Sam Grace has got we've seen what's happened with the likes of Anis Mehmeti and Chris Forino, and every young player wants to be that next player.

"They have come in and have shown what they can do which is great and I look forward to seeing them do that on the pitch."

Finally, on being club captain, he concluded: "There are huge boots to fill regarding Matt Bloomfield and I'll never be able to give to the club what Matt has done over the years, and the fact that he is still around here just proves how big of a part he has around here.

"There are loads of things that I still go to him for and he is my first port of call with a lot of things, and for me personally, I'm hugely proud to be given the title and it's something that I won't be taking lightly.

"I want to improve things, make sure standards are high and set an example to everyone, just like Blooms did."

SPORT

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The boss is ready for Burton at home



Wanderers striker Sam Vokes (PA)

Sam is searching for success

WYCOMBE Wanderers forward Sam Vokes has stated the importance of having a pre-season as the Chairboys get ready for the new season.

The Welsh international, who scored 17 goals in 50 games for the club in his debut campaign, joined the Adams Park side just before season began and therefore was not part of any pre-season preparations.

Despite this, he was the club's top scorer and won Wanderers' Player of the Season award.

Speaking to the Bucks Free Press, he explained: "I'm really looking forward to the start of the season.

"Joining last year, I didn't have much of a pre-season and I didn't get any minutes under my belt.

"So this year to have a full pre-season and be with the boys with the whole time has been good and I'm raring to go."

Goalkeeper signed on free transfer for Wycombe

WYCOMBE Wanderers have signed goalkeeper Josh Blunkell on a free transfer following a successful trial period with the club.

The keeper, who turned 19 last week, played in several of the Chairboys' friendly fixtures this summer and has been training with the team prior to his move to Adams Park.

Previously of AFC Sudbury in the Non League, Blunkell played for the Suffolk side on several occasions, and had a trial with Colchester United of League Two in the autumn of last year.

He also represented the England Colleges FA Men's National Team, and was part of the Sudbury team that reached the first round of the FA Cup proper during the 2021/22 season.

He follows Jasper Pattenden, D'Mani Mellor and Christie Ward as the new arrivals this summer.

To read more about Wycombe Wanderers and what's going on in the Non League within Buckinghamshire, follow James Richings (@James_BFP) on Twitter.



Wycombe Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth is now in his 10th year in charge of the club. He took over the role in September 2012 (PA)

By James Richings

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth believes the competition in this League One season will be 'very, very tough' due to several 'big clubs' being in the third tier.

Derby County, Peterborough United and Barnsley were relegated to the division from the Championship, whilst Bristol Rovers, Exeter City, Port Vale and Forest Green Rovers were promoted out of League Two.

These teams, along with Ipswich Town, Oxford United, Milton Keynes and Sheffield Wednesday, who are also some of the favourites to be in and around the play-offs, could make the

2022/23 League One campaign one of the most competitive in recent seasons.

Speaking ahead of Wanderers' opening day match against Burton this weekend, Ainsworth, who is now in his 10th season with the club as manager, said: "With Rotherham and Sunderland going up, they are two big clubs that have played in the Championship before, but they have been replaced by other big clubs.

"Derby are a huge club and they have had so much investment it's ridiculous and I think they are going to be right up there.

"Ipswich have spent phenomenally again, and Sheffield Wednesday are also another big

club.

"Some big clubs went up last season such as Rotherham and Wigan, but they are not as big as your Derby's, Ipswich's and Sheffield Wednesday's so this season is going to be very, very tough.

"Bristol Rovers as well and even the likes of Shrewsbury as they have spent well and have brought in some good players.

"It's going to be very, very tough and we need to keep up with the pack."

The opening day fixture against the Brewers will be the club's 18th time in 23 years that they would have started a league season at Adams Park.

And with Wanderers only losing two of those home fixtures (against Rotherham United in

2020 and Accrington Stanley in 2007), Ainsworth is feeling confident going into the new campaign.

He continued: "Either way, you've got to do 23 at home and 23 away but I think being at home for the first game is nice as sometimes, travelling for an away game can be a bit more difficult.

"But with that being said, we have had some good starts to a season away from home.

"I remember we beat Newport County away 2-0 with goals from Peter Murphy and Paris Cowan-Hall, and that was great.

"I'll always remember that was that was a massive moment for me after the terrible season before.

"However, either way but I being at home for the start of the season is nice."