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# Bucks Free Press

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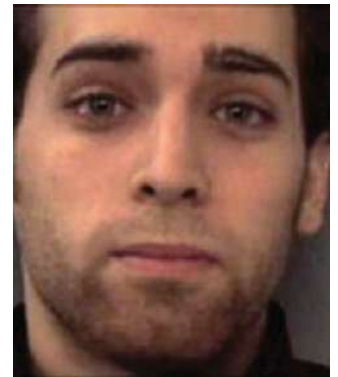
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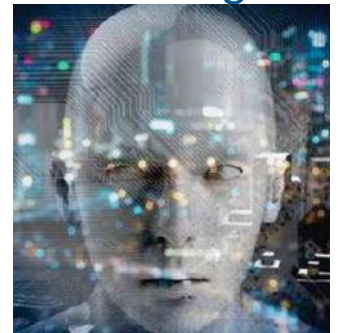
# 'BEST PLACE TO LIVE'



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## SPORT

Looking back as fixtures are out

NOW we know that Wycombe will begin the new season at home to Exeter City, let us look at how the Chairboys have fared on the opening weekend since the start of the century.

In the previous 23 years, Wycombe have incredibly played 16 fixtures on the first day of the campaign at Adams Park.

This includes a run of six straight consecutive games between 2003 and 2008, which saw the club only lose one of those fixtures.

That was against Accrington Stanley in the latter year.

Here is a list of the Chairboys' previous opening day encounters:

2022/23: Wycombe Wanderers 3-0 Burton Albion

2021/22: Wycombe Wanderers 2-1 Accrington Stanley

2020/21: Wycombe Wanderers 0-1 Rotherham United

2019/20: Wycombe Wanderers 2-0 Bolton Wanderers

2018/19: Wycombe Wanderers 0-0 Blackpool

2017/18: Wycombe Wanderers 2-2 Lincoln City

2016/17: Crawley Town 1-0 Wycombe Wanderers

2015/16: Wycombe Wanderers 3-0 York City

2014/15: Newport County 0-2 Wycombe Wanderers

2013/14: Wycombe Wanderers 1-0 Morecambe

2012/13: York City 1-3 Wycombe Wanderers

2011/12: Wycombe Wanderers 1-1 Scunthorpe

2010/11: Wycombe Wanderers 2-0 Morecambe

2009/10: Charlton Athletic 3-2 Wycombe Wanderers

2008/09: Wycombe Wanderers 1-1 Morecambe

2007/08: Wycombe Wanderers 0-1 Accrington Stanley

2006/07: Wycombe Wanderers 1-1 Wrexham

2005/06: Wycombe Wanderers 1-1 Carlisle United

2004/05: Wycombe Wanderers 2-1 Cambridge United

2003/04: Wycombe Wanderers 1-0 Stockport County

2002/03: Notts County 1-1 Wycombe Wanderers

2001/02: Cardiff City 1-0 Wycombe Wanderers  
2000/01: Stoke City 0-0 Wycombe Wanderers

This year will make it the seventh year in a row that Wanderers would have played their on the opening day at Adams Park, with the previous games resulting in four wins, one draw, and one loss.

The last time they played away from home was in 2016 when they fell to a 1-0 defeat at Crawley Town.

Additionally, there have only been two occasions since 2000 that the club have shipped in multiple goals in the season curtain raiser.

They were in 2009 and 2017.

# Eze on England debut vs Malta



**Eberechi Eze (left) replaced James Maddison (right) to make his England debut on Friday, March 16 (PA)**



**A good weekend for Bucks as they defeated Staffordshire last week (Pixabay)**

FORMER Wycombe Wanderers winger Eberechi Eze has stated that his England debut 'has been a long time coming' and that he 'thanked God' for the opportunity.

The 24-year-old, who turns 25 at the end of this month, played the final 20 minutes in the Three Lions' 4-0 away victory over Malta in a Euro 2024 qualifying match.

His inaugural appearance for Gareth Southgate's side comes just six years after he made his professional league debut for the Chairboys during the 2017/18 season, whilst on loan from Queens Park Rangers.

His spell at Adams Park only lasted half a campaign where he featured in 22 games and scored five goals, but his performances helped Wanderers achieve promotion to League One at the end of that year.

Speaking to Sky Sports, the one-time Chairboy, said: "It's a big moment, I'm happy to get the opportunity and it's been a long time coming."

"I've been working hard for it and I'm happy that's happened."

"[When I came on] I do what I usually do and that is pray."

"I thank God for bringing me here and putting me in this position, and I'm grateful for it."

"I've put in a lot of work and it's been a long journey."

"If you keep applying yourself, these opportunities

**By James Richings**

come."

Additionally, former Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth described the winger as the best player he worked with during his time at the club.

Speaking to the Free Press back in September 2022, the ex-manager said: "I had also signed someone else from QPR that season [Jack Williams] but I was told to have a look at him [Eze]."

"I had to really convince his agent to allow him to come here because he thought he was better than League Two, but he hadn't played anywhere else."

"And when I saw him in training I could see the agent's point."

"Wow, and I mean wow."

"He was a phenomenal talent for us in the games, in training and those two goals against Cambridge just wow."

"He's a great man, a humble person and it's great to see him do so well."

After returning to QPR in January 2018 from Wycombe, he would go on to score 20 goals in 112 games for the club, before joining Premier League Crystal Palace for £17m.

He has since featured in 93 games for the Eagles, scoring 15 times.

This includes 10 strikes last season.

## Victory is secured for team Buckinghamshire

BUCKS recorded their first win in this season's National Counties Trophy when they beat Staffordshire by 26 runs on the DLS system in a rain-affected Group 4 game at Moddershall and Oulton on Sunday.

Staffordshire, who chose to bat first, reached 259-9 from their 50 overs. At 129-1 after just 17 overs, the hosts seemed set to score well in excess of 300. But a brilliant spell of 5-44 in ten overs from Harefield leg-spinner Stephen Croft, well supported by young Gerrards Cross left-arm spinner Teddy Fleming (2-45) held them back.

Bucks won by 26 runs on DLS.

The victory was not enough for Bucks to qualify for the group - Wiltshire and Dorset go through.

Bucks entertain Wales NL in their final Trophy game at Slough this Sunday, starting at 11am.

Bucks squad (v Wales): T

Hampton (High Wycombe) capt, A Woodland (High Wycombe), E Cox (Buckingham), C Marrow (Gerrards Cross), A Kervezee (Halesowen), R Richardson (Gerrards Cross), E Casterton (High Wycombe), E Bragg (Halesowen), H Ramanadanpulle (Buckingham), M Payne (Amersham), S Croft (Harefield), T Fleming (Gerrards Cross), T Weymes (Tring Park).





Fallon Sherrock received the MBE in the King's Birthday Honours List (PA)

## Fallon feels fantastic

A professional darts player from Milton Keynes has been named in the King's Birthday Honours list. Fallon Sherrock, 28, received her MBE on June 16 for her services to the sport.

She became the first woman to win a match at the PDC World Championship in 2019, beating Ted Evetts and Mensur Suljovic on her way to the third round at Alexandra Palace, earning the nickname 'Queen of the Palace'. Two years later she became the first woman in darts history to reach the quarter-finals of a major tournament as she again beat Suljovic en route to the last eight of the Grand Slam of Darts.

She told [www.pdc.tv](http://www.pdc.tv): "To have received this level of recognition

for my contribution to the game I love is beyond my wildest dreams.

"I never considered that I would ever receive such an esteemed honour and I am beyond grateful.

"I have been fortunate to hear of the widespread impact that my success has had in getting more people watching and playing darts, and particularly in inspiring girls and young women to take up darts and other sports.

"That makes me incredibly proud and excited.

"I am looking forward to visiting Buckingham Palace to receive this honour, which I regard as a reflection of the enormous popularity of darts and as a symbol of hope and possibility for aspiring darts players and sportswomen."

## Phil earns podium place in Germany



Phil with his medal from Berlin

A MAN from Buckinghamshire has won a silver medal at this year's Special Olympics World Games.

Phil Palmer, from Aston Clinton, who represents Special Olympics St Albans, competed in the Dressage Equestrian event on Tuesday, June 20 at the event in Berlin.

Special Olympics GB is the largest provider of year-round sports training and competition for children and adults of all abilities with intellectual disabilities in the UK.

This year, it has 82 athletes representing 17 sports at the Games, the world's largest inclusive sporting event in 2023 with more than 7,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities competing across 26 sports over nine days.

Colin Dyer, CEO of Special Olympics GB, said: "We are absolutely thrilled for Phil.

"This is a remarkable achievement, from an exceptional athlete and person.

"They have undoubtedly brought immense pride to themselves, their family and their nation."

## A year to remember for the Under 13s

MARLOW Youth U13's finished a fantastic 2022/23 season by winning Division 1 of the East Berks Football Alliance.

The club also went through the entire league campaign without suffering a single defeat.

Coached by Graham Buckle and Gary Knight, Marlow also finished runners up in the League Cup.

Graham commented "What a team. "There is so much passion, desire, and self-belief, individually and in each other to go and win football matches."

This success means that Marlow Youth are also looking for new players for the upcoming season as U14's. The trials are at Cox Green School on June 25 between 9am to 11am.

Contact Graham at [Grahambuckle70@gmail.com](mailto:Grahambuckle70@gmail.com) for more.

# Jubilant Joanie wins first-ever tournament



Joanie Melady with her prosthetic left limb. She won her first competition earlier this month in Halton (PA)

A NINE-YEAR-OLD tennis player who was born with a congenital limb difference has won her first-ever tournament in Buckinghamshire.

Joanie Melady, who is from South Oxfordshire, has an arm deficiency as left limb did not fully develop before birth.

However, she has stated that she is 'very confident' on the court after a prosthetic was made to help her serve the ball.

Created by the company, Koalaa, the tool been made in Joanie's honour, as this aided her become victorious in her inaugural tournament at Halton Tennis Club earlier on in the month.

Joanie's dad, Alan, said: "It's been incredible.

"She's been interested in tennis since she was about five.

"It was clear she had this natural ability, but obviously with the whole serve thing, and then when the guys at Koalaa sent this, it was just incredible.

"You watch her now and there's no difference between her and any of the other players.

"Her confidence has just shot up.

"She's playing a lot more and she's always happy when she's playing tennis."

Joanie has been using a variety of Koalaa's prosthetics tools for three years.

As well as providing her with a tool to help her surf, the team have also given Joanie a pros-

By James Richings

thetic to help her play the guitar, which is equipped with a pick at the end.

Joanie and her family started to build a relationship with the team at Koalaa and met with them several times.

She said: "I know I'm able to do it.

"It helps me to serve by tossing up the ball, it's improved my game.

"Before, I wasn't that strong with my hits, and I wasn't very confident.

"But now I'm very confident because I know I'm able to do it, I know I'm able to win and not do it on my second serve, and lose the second serve."

On her doubles win, she added: "I was really nervous and scared because I've never played a tennis tournament before, and it was just after six nights of camping, so I was really tired," Joanie said.

"I lost two and won two, but when I lost them I felt really upset, and I felt like I was going to give up, but I shouldn't give up, because I shouldn't give up something I love so much."

The Joanie tool is now available for other tennis players and fans of the sport of all ages.

To read more sports stories on the Bucks Free Press website, go to [www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport](http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport) or follow James Richings on Twitter (@James\_BFP).



# SPORT



The match will take place on August 8 (PA)

## A local encounter with a League Two side in the Carabao Cup

WYCOMBE Wanderers will take on county rivals Milton Keynes in the first round of the League Cup this year.

The fixture, which will be played the week commencing August 7, is the first between the two sides in the competition.

Additionally, the soon-to-be Buckinghamshire derby will be the fifth cup/knockout

match in the last five years involving the two teams.

The 'Chairboys' record against MK has been somewhat patchy, with Wanderers winning just five of the 18 games since their first encounter back in December 2006.

However, this has improved in the previous as Wycombe have only suffered one defeat in their last four against the

side in North Buckinghamshire, with that solitary defeat being in the League One semi-final second leg.

Ironically, the 1-0 loss was enough to send Wanderers to Wembley via a 2-1 aggregate victory from the first leg.

Previous cup/knockout encounters between Wycombe Wanderers and Milton Keynes.

2021/22: Milton Keynes 1-0 Wycombe Wanderers (League One play-offs)

2021/22: Wycombe Wanderers 2-0 Milton Keynes (League One play-offs)

2021/22: Milton Keynes 2-1 Wycombe Wanderers (EFL Trophy)

2019/20: Milton Keynes 1-2 Wycombe Wanderers (EFL Trophy)

# The fixtures are now out for 23/24

WYCOMBE Wanderers will begin their new season at home to Exeter City on August 5.

This means it's the seventh year in a row that the Chairboys will start their league campaign at Adams Park.

The first away fixture will see them travel to Lincoln City on August 12, whilst the first newly-promoted team to face the Chairboys is Leyton Orient at home seven days later (August 19).

The first Thames Valley Derby of the campaign will be against Oxford United on October 28 at the Kassam Stadium, whilst Reading will visit Adams Park on November 25.

The season will end at home to Charlton.

### August

August 5: Exeter City (H)  
August 12: Lincoln City (A)  
August 15: Leyton Orient (H)  
August 19: Burton Albion (H)  
August 26: Bristol Rovers (A)

### September

September 2: Northampton Town (A)  
September 9: Cambridge United (H)  
September 16: Blackpool (H)  
September 23: Charlton Athletic (A)  
September 30: Carlisle United (H)

### October

October 3: Portsmouth (A)  
October 7: Fleetwood Town (A)  
October 14: Cheltenham Town (H)  
October 21: Peterborough United (A)  
October 24: Bolton Wanderers (H)  
October 28: Oxford United (A)

### November

### By James Richings

November 11: Stevenage (H)  
November 18: Wigan Athletic (A)

November 25: Reading (H)  
November 28: Barnsley (A)

### December

December 9: Shrewsbury Town (H)  
December 16: Derby County (A)  
December 23: Port Vale (H)  
December 26: Exeter City (A)  
December 29: Leyton Orient (A)

### January

January 1: Bristol Rovers (H)  
January 6: Burton Albion (A)  
January 13: Lincoln City (H)  
January 20: Port Vale (A)  
January 27: Fleetwood Town (H)

### February

February 3: Cheltenham Town (A)  
February 10: Peterborough United (H)  
February 13: Bolton Wanderers (A)  
February 17: Oxford United (H)  
February 24: Stevenage (A)

### March

March 2: Barnsley (H)  
March 9: Reading (A)  
March 12: Wigan Athletic (H)  
March 16: Northampton Town (H)  
March 23: Cambridge United (A)  
March 29: Portsmouth (H)

### April

April 1: Blackpool (A)  
April 6: Derby County (H)  
April 13: Shrewsbury Town (A)  
April 20: Carlisle United (A)  
April 27: Charlton Athletic (H)



Wycombe will start the new season against Exeter City on August 5 (PA)



It will begin in Sept (PA)

## Who will Wanderers take on?

WYCOMBE Wanderers' Football League Trophy fixtures have been confirmed for the upcoming season.

The Chairboys will take on fellow League One rivals Stevenage, AFC Wimbledon of League Two and the Crystal Palace U21s.

It'll be the fourth time in five years that Wanderers will take on Stevenage in a cup fixture, with the two teams meeting in the same competition in the 2019/20 and 2022/23 editions of the competition respectively.

They also met in the 2021/22 League Cup which Wycombe won on penalties.

Additionally, this year will also see Wanderers face the original Dons for the first time in the competition.

Wycombe have played Wimbledon 15 times since 2008, with the Chairboys only winning two of those fixtures.

This year's edition will begin the week commencing September 4, with the final being played on April 7, 2024.