

# Bucks Free Press

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Covering Wycombe, South Bucks, Chilterns and Aylesbury since 1856

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PAGES 8&9

## Tears at 1D star Liam's funeral

Family and famous friends mourn tragic singer



# Taxi drivers banned over sex and knife crimes

FULL STORY: PAGE 5

More than 50 cabbies had applications for permits blocked



DOZENS of taxi drivers have been banned from picking up customers in Buckinghamshire amid reports of sex crimes, knife possession and serious assault.

More than 50 cabbies have had their applications for

By Charlie Smith

permits blocked, newly published annual figures show.

During the period, 26 drivers had their licences revoked including for motoring offences,

such as using phones at the wheel and driving under the influence of drugs.

Violent offences, including one murder investigation and arrests for assault and criminal damage, were among the other reasons given.

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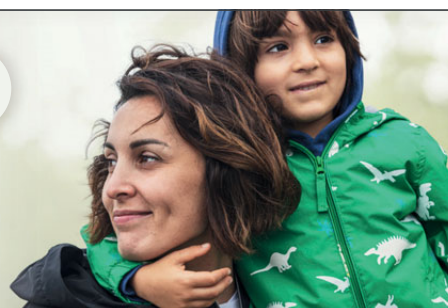
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## Sport

## FOOTBALL

## Reds Survive Late Scare To Win Again

Flackwell Heath continued their impressive Southern League Division One Central season with a second away win in five days, this time winning 3-2 against Biggleswade.

On the 15-minute mark, the deadlock was broken by the in-form Jamie Ayres following a superb delivery by Ryan Avery.

Chances came and went for both sides until the 45th minute when the supremely impressive Wiktor Makowski notched his 14th goal of the season.

The second half began as the first half ended, with poor play by the home side ultimately capitalised upon by Michael Harding, who ran clear and coolly dispatched his sixth league goal of the campaign.

Under such circumstances - comfortably leading in the scoreline, confident and controlling possession - the greatest danger is often to sit back.

This is, to a certain extent, what happened, with Biggleswade's Daniel

Bond heading home just after the hour mark from two yards out.

A final aerial attack by the home side was misjudged by Dennison, seeing the ball deflect into his net.

Flackwell made it two wins in four days on Tuesday, beating Thame United 2-0 at Wilks Park. Matt Ayres and Makowski did the damage.

The Heathens currently sit in third, with the potential to overtake Berkhamsted on Saturday if they can defeat 'The Comrades'.



Match winner Michael Harding. Picture: Glenn Alcock

## FOOTBALL

## Chippenham defeated for second time in FA Trophy

CHESHAM United rested a few first-team regulars but still managed to defeat Chippenham Town at home for the second time in a month, this time winning 2-0 in the FA Trophy.

Chippenham had plenty of possession but lacked firepower up front, and the first hour of the game didn't offer too much to the fans at The Meadow. However, once Nathan Minhas netted Chesham took control of the game and ultimately ran out comfortable winners.

Chesham made a quiet start, and the visitors had most of the possession but without creating any clear-cut chances. The home's team's first moment of note came on 21 minutes, when Minhas shot from distance and keeper Will Henry dived to turn the ball round the post.

Bradley Clayton took the resulting corner which Connor Stevens headed goalwards but Henry saved comfortably. Shortly afterwards a low cross from Samson Esan was cleared away from Bradley Clayton, and the ball came to Jack Connors who controlled and shot over. In stoppage time Ben Goode was called into action when Luke Spokes shot but Goode parried and the ball was cleared to safety.

The opening fifteen minutes of the second half passed without incident, but just after the hour mark the course of the game was changed when Chesham opened the scoring. Minhas controlled a long clearance from Ben Goode with his back to goal, turned and fired into the net past Henry's left hand. Chesham then began to play with real confidence and added

By Andy Westlake

a second ten minutes later. Following a neat build-up down the left Joe Grant squared the ball to Nathan Minhas who slid in to convert at the far post.

Chances then fell to Grant, and Minhas looking for his third but both players couldn't convert. Chippenham came back and Alex Bray crossed to sub Matt McClure whose header was pushed away by Ben Goode diving to his left, but the visitors were looking like a beaten side.

Chesham are now 10th in National League South with two games in hand on the teams around them.

\*Chesham's 1st team women were away at Penn & Tylers Green in the quarter-final of the Berks & Bucks Senior Women's Cup on Sunday afternoon. Chesham made a sluggish start and courtesy of a Penn penalty were 1-0 down at half-time. However, after a half-time reset the FAWNL side showed some dominance running out 1-4 winners with goals from Tasha Smith, Gemma Fraser (2) and Becky Fraser. They go in to the hat for the semi-final with Reading FC, Maidenhead United and Newport Pagnell also in the draw.

Chesham United FC are back in action this weekend as they travel to Truro on Saturday, November 23 and then start a run of five consecutive home games starting on Tuesday night (7:45) against Hampton & Richmond Borough. Chesham's women are away at Dulwich Hamlet on Sunday, November 24.



Nathan Minhas (left) celebrates scoring. Photo: Neale Blackburn

## IN BRIEF

## Jitender scores stunner for SGHC

Stoke Green Hockey Club hosted Eastcote 5 HC in a top against bottom clash, running out 4-2 winners.

The visitors started the game with a high press putting SGHC under pressure using their youngsters high energy to force SGHC to drop deeper. However composed play by the experienced SGHC defence of Jassi Benawara and Sardara Dhoot transferred the ball through the press and allowed SGHC to counter attack. The deadlock was broken, by Hanish Daggar from a training ground penalty corner routine after 21 mins.

Both sides had chances in an open game, but it was SGHC who extended their lead with an excellent individual goal from Amandeep Singh after 33 mins.

The second half started with SGHC looking to extend their lead but were thwarted by a resolute Eastcote defence and experienced midfield.

Eastcote were undone, when Hanish fired a cross through the Eastcote Penalty circle that was turned in with an sublime diving deflection by Jitender Singh on 21 mins to claim his 1st goal for SGHC and winning SGHC Man of the Match nomination.

Eastcote got back into the game almost immediately with a goal from a penalty corner, only to concede another goal scored by Yuvraj Singh on 24 mins, assisted by Gurpreet Saini.

Eastcote pulled another goal back in the dying moments of the game, giving SGHC a 4-2 victory.

SGHC remain unbeaten this season and at the top of Thames Div One.

Next week SGHC travel to Bracknell to face South Berkshire 5.

## Rangers edge out Burnham

Risborough Rangers earned a much-needed win against Burnham on Saturday, edging a narrow 1-0 scoreline.

A 58th minute goal by Christian Johnson was enough to secure victory in Combined Counties Premier Division North, keeping the hosts in 16th but moving upwardly.

Rangers' Man of the Match went to Kwesi Ntim.

Due to play Reading City on Tuesday, the match was postponed due to the weather.

On Saturday, they travel to Milton United.



# Beaconsfield earn big derby win over their Bucks rivals

BEACONSFIELD beat Bucks opposition Aylesbury United 2-0, in Beaconsfield's best performance of the season, writes Arran White.

Beaconsfield started well, going close to opening the scoring within minutes, as Manu Oke – William saw a header saved. Beaconsfield again went close this time through Josh Marcon who saw his shot go just wide of the post. More efforts for Beaconsfield went agonisingly close. They were well on top as the game hit the half hour mark, but once again were just lacking that clinical last touch.

Perhaps the best chance of the half fell to Eli Grant just before the break, as his shot look destined for the back of the net only to be denied by an excellent clearance off the line. The game entered the break finely poised at 0-0, but with The Rams well on top in terms of effort and chances.

The second half saw Beaconsfield on top once again. They didn't need to wait long for a goal this half, when Eli Grant showed a great burst of pace and skill to beat 2 defenders and play the ball across the box, it was knocked onto Troy Silveira who smashed the ball into the back of the net to give The Rams a thoroughly deserved lead.

Aylesbury had chances, with a free kick in a great position being well gath-



Josh Marcon celebrating the Rams' second goal. Picture: Ben Cousins

ered by Ed Brearey in The Rams goal. Beaconsfield also had chances to extend their lead, as Josh Marcon saw his shot fly just wide of the post.

Marcon didn't have to wait long for another

chance, this time he found space and fired an effort low into the far corner to give The Rams a 2-0 lead.

Beaconsfield saw most of the ball, and chances, in the closing stages of the game. They probably

should have been further ahead as the game edged towards full time but will be more than happy with the performance & score line.

The game ended 2-0, in what was Beaconsfield's

stand out performance of the campaign so far. They will now hope they can build on this, and back up the result on Saturday 23rd November when they travel to Welwyn Garden City.

## HOCKEY

### Marlow firsts have to work for win

MARLOW'S first team might have been expected to win easily over Henley, who had failed to gain a single point so far.

However, it didn't work out that way despite having almost constant possession and their 2-0 victory was hard-earned.

After 20 minutes Josh Morgans, who had been Marlow's main attacking threat, managed to score from a narrow-angle.

It stayed that way for the rest of the game until Cameron Beazley-Clarke deflected the ball into the goal in the last minute.

On Saturday they are at home to Basingstoke at 1.15.

Marlow 2nds were away against Oxford Hawks 3, finding themselves in an unfamiliar position in the league table on the back of four straight defeats.

However, goals from Sam Nicholson and Dan Field secured victory.

The result moved Marlow off the bottom of the league table and into eighth place with a trip to newly promoted Sonning next weekend.

Other results:- the 3rd team beat Henley 2 2-0 away, 4s best Banbury 3 10-3, 5s lost 6-1 to Windsor 2, 6s beat Sonning 4 5-0 away, 7s beat Sonning 5 5-0 away

## DARTS

### Charity darts night raises cash

PRINCES Risborough & District Darts League raised nearly £500 for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in their annual Poppy Pairs charity competition.

Hosted at Chinnor Community Pavilion, 48 pairs battled it out for their respective charities.

The Crown Chinnor pairing Chas Martin & Mark Amos came out on top winning 3-1 in the final against Rivets pairing Simon White & Dave King

Highest Checkout Trophy went to Adam Mould of Bledlow Village Cricket Club with 138

A total of £491 was raised on the evening.

## HOCKEY

### Marlow Women hockey held at Swansea

MARLOW Women 1sts drew 1-1 at Swansea on a long away trip.

Starting well and creating opportunities which they were unable to convert. Swansea capitalized on an early opportunity and dispatched the ball past keeper Alys Ramm with a powerful strike.

Marlow had a great opportunity in the second quarter when Rachel Clarke put a great ball into the circle which the Swansea keeper got a stick to before the Marlow strikers could score. Marlow's equalizer came minutes before halftime when Lauren Hilditch deflected the ball over the keeper at a penalty corner.

Marlow continued to look dangerous in attack with some great pieces of skill and determination from the midfield, especially Martha Goodridge who caused numerous problems for the Swansea defence.

The Women's 2s were away against Oxford 2 and put in a fantastic team performance

running out 3-0 winners.

Kerri Smith opened the scoring midway through the first half. Izzy Fuggle doubled Marlow's lead when she reacted quickest to the loose ball when the opposition goalie parried Jazzy Elsdon's flicked effort.

Oxford started the second half with increased intent but couldn't convert their corner and were caught out by a swift Marlow counter.

Slick passing through midfield and then into space on the right. Fuggle ran into the D and smashed a shot from an angle into the roof of the net. With 10 minutes remaining, Marlow's keeper harshly received a yellow card and the Reds played the next five minutes with just the 10 outfield players. Marlow saw out the remaining minutes and the three points took them to second in the league and overtaking Oxford in the process.

Other results:- the 3rd team beat S> Berkshire 2 2-1, 4s beat S. Berkshire 3 2-0 away, 5s drew 0-0 with Newbury & Thatcham 3, 6s lost 3-1 to Wycombe 4 7s beat Sonning 5 5-0



Lauren Hilditch scored Marlow women's 1sts' goal



## Sport

## FOOTBALL

## Chairboys stars head back to the classroom

**YOUNGSTERS** at Carrington Junior School in Flackwell Heath were treated to a visit from Wycombe Wanderers star players, Ryan Tafazolli and Bez Lubala, last Wednesday.

The Year Four pupils were taking part in a new Wanderers Learning initiative developed by Phil Catchpole, head of TV and broadcasting at Wycombe Wanderers and Wycombe Wanderers Foundation.

The class were split into two teams, 'Team Taff' and 'Team Bez', to undertake a series of maths challenges,

all based on football.

After a very competitive afternoon, the winners were decided through a 'keepy-uppy' competition between the two players.

'Team Taff' emerged as the winners.

To end, both players took part in a question-and-answer session, answering many questions on all aspects of their lives, not just football.

Bez Lubala said: "I was very privileged to support the Wycombe Wanderers Learning project, with Ryan Tafazolli this week.

"The children were

brilliantly engaged and showed a real appetite to learn.

"Football is a fantastic vehicle to bring people together, have fun and develop yourself socially."

Year Four teacher, Paul Withams, added, "By using the power of sport, and football in particular, maths is brought alive.

The children have had a great time using and developing their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

Wycombe Wanderers continue to play a fantastic role within our community,"



Bez Lubala and Ryan Tafazolli with Paul Withams

## FOOTBALL

## Brilliant away win for the Chairgirls

THE Chairgirls made it three wins on the bounce after an action packed second half away at Winchester City Flyers saw them beat their opponents 4-0.

Eman Kassem secured her second hat-trick in two weeks to send Wycombe ahead, with Danielle Puddefoot and Jess Watkins combining their efforts and adding to the day's tally.

A fairly quiet first half posed opportunity for both sides to gain the lead, however, strong defensive performances from either team denied the chance for an opener in the first 45.

The Chairgirls came close various times in the half, with the first coming in the 12th minute as Ailish Carolan intelligently intercepted a pass from the Flyers, to set up Kayla Potter to make a dangerous run down the left wing, taking her past the host's back line. Potter edged her way into the box to square the ball across to Jess Watkins, who was situated near the right post, but her shot was blocked by a Winchester body in front of goal.

The Flyers came close only minutes later as a long cross from the left made its way into the box and to the feet of a Winchester attacker to the right of the goal. Her strike looked close to netting in the far post, but a well-timed block from Ashleigh Harte denied the chance and put the ball out for a corner.

The even contest in the first half saw both sides go into the break square with a 0-0 scoreline.

Despite the lack of conversion in the opening half, the Chairgirls came back out with a bang as player of the match, Eman Kassem, hammered home in the 46th minute. Assisted by Potter's gorgeous looping assist from the edge of the box, Kassem executed an outstanding right-footed volley which floated seamlessly into the back of the net, sending Wycombe 1-0 up in stunning fashion.

Kassem made it two for the visitors in the 76th minute as she found herself on the receiving end of Molly Carter's cross from the right flank, allowing her to send in an on-target header, which was palmed into the goal by Winchester's keeper.

It took only three minutes from the Chairgirls' second before they claimed their third, as Danielle Puddefoot stepped up to take an in-swinging corner from the left. Her hit looked certain to have directly netted at an acute angle but was helped across the line by Watkins to extend Wycombe's lead to 3-0.

Kassem made it two hat-tricks in two weeks for herself as she smashed home Wycombe's fourth and final of the game, making work of a lofted hit by Ellen Wardlaw from the Chairgirls' own half, and taking herself away from the Flyers' back line to cross it into the bottom of the far post in the 85th minute.

## FOOTBALL

## Three more points for the Greens as they win at home

A TOPSY-TURVEY encounter at Watchet Lane saw Holmer Green beat RB Kensington 4-2

A Martin Lancaster corner found Connor McGinty towards the near post after only eight minutes.

His first effort was blocked, but he was alert enough to follow up and force the ball home.

His first goal in Holmer's green was added to on 21 minutes, when he benefitted from a poor RB touch forty yards out.

He ran at the retreating defence and placed a low shot just inside the right-hand post from outside the penalty area.

James Jarrott got in behind the RB defence a few minutes later, but failed to find the target.

On 36 minutes, an Aaron Bryan run produced a cross, which was well defended before two Holmer attackers could profit.

Three minutes later, Lloyd Majaya was presented with what looked like a simple task to score, but his shot came back off the post from close-range into the 'keeper's arms.

But RB scored moments into the second period, when a corner-kick was forced in feebly at the near post.

Holmer had not started the half at all well, and the opposition had their tails up.

Two more good chances were offered up by sloppy Holmer marking but not taken by the visitors.

A gilt-edged chance for the Greens to restore the two-goal margin on came on the hour.

An interception by McGinty 25 yards out quickly laid off to James Saxby, who set up Barrowcliffe with the goalkeeper out of position.

Unfortunately, the young forward who had played well without too much good service thus far put this shot wide of an inviting goal. This

By John Anderson

miss looked costly five minutes later when another corner, this time to the far post was headed home.

Majaya immediately set up Theo Alexander at the other end, but his good shot was tipped over the crossbar.

Barrowcliffe was now replaced by Peck, and after RB has surprisingly substituted their giant striker Saxby cut in.

His shot unfortunately can best be described as well off-target.

Another Yellow Card for the visitors to stop a breakaway, and Callum Gray coming on for Jarrott who is being reintroduced carefully after injury indicated that the steam may have gone out of the visitors' come-back. On 79 minutes a double piece of brilliance from skipper Lancaster put The Greens ahead again. First his well-played free-kick evaded the 'keeper but came back off the crossbar.

Getting to rebounding ball first but again outside the 18-yard line, Lancaster chested the ball sideways and struck a perfect half-volley low across the goalkeeper into the far corner. A goal worthy of any class of football.

On 79 minutes Holmer did give away a free-kick at the other end in a dangerous position, but the effort went straight at Sam Bell. The final 15 minutes were much more comfortable for the home side.

On 88 minutes Alexander pushed forward from midfield and found Gray overlapping on the right.

The cross to the nearer half of the goal was superb. Under pressure from both Saxby and Majaya, a defender could only head to ball past his own 'keeper.



It was an important win for Holmer Green



## FOOTBALL

# The Ding sell out Wycombe's away end



Reading will travel to Wycombe on December 7, with the match kicking off at 3pm

READING have already sold out their ticket allocation for when they face Wycombe Wanderers next month.

The Royals visit Adams Park on December 7 in what will be the first meeting between the two clubs since the Chairboys unsuccessfully tried to purchase their Bearwood Training Ground in March.

Since then, Wanderers have acquired the facilities at Harlington in Hayes, which used to belong to five-time Premier League champions, Chelsea.

Additionally, ex-Wycombe chairman Rob Couhig, who sold his 90 per cent stake of the club in May to the Georgian-Kazakh billionaire Mikhail Lomtadze, tried to purchase Reading in the summer from disgraced owner Dai Yongge to no avail.

The clash in less than a month will see 1,848 Reading fans enter the Hillbottom Road

venue.

Tickets for the match were made available on Tuesday [November 12] to season ticket holders and sold out within 72 hours.

Last season, Adams Park was the scene of exuberant celebrations for Reading as they picked up their first away victory in the league for 378 days, winning 2-1 last November.

Former Wanderer, Lewis Wing, scored Reading's winner.

However, Wycombe got revenge four months later when a stunning Nigel Lonwijk overhead kick, and a last-minute penalty by Bez Lubala gave the Chairboys their inaugural win away at Reading.

Geographically, this is the closest opponent for both clubs in League One this season.

The match on December 7 will kick-off at 3pm.

## FOOTBALL

# Ainsworth opens up on podcast

FORMER Wycombe Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has reflected on the club's 2013/14 season where the club avoided relegation to the Non League.

Speaking on Undr the Cosh podcast with former footballers Jon Parkin and Chris Brown, along with comedian Chris Brown, the 51-year-old admitted that if the Adams Park side had dropped into the National League, it would have been 'the end' for the club.

Wycombe had spent the vast majority of that year near the foot of the table in what was Ainsworth's first full year as manager, having spent the previous season as player-manager.

Despite their poor season, which included a run of one league victory in 17 matches, the Chairboys managed to avoid relegation with a 3-0 win away at already relegated Torquay United.

This, coupled with Bristol Rovers' 1-0 home loss to Mansfield Town, meant that Rovers were demoted into the fifth tier of English football for the first time in nearly 100 years.

Ainsworth also admitted that after the season had ended, he knew that he had to 'separate' himself as manager to the rest of the players.

Ainsworth also admitted that after the season had ended, he knew that he had to 'separate' himself as manager from the rest of the players.

He said: "Gary Waddock was the manager when I signed and one thing I'll say about Gary Waddock is that he probably knew, and this is a testament to the guy that he is because he's a top guy, he probably saw me as the next manager."

"I came in purely as a player as I had no intention of anything [becoming Wycombe manager], but he made me first-team coach and it went pretty bad that year [2012]."

"The team let him down, the team weren't great."

"Me included as I was part of that squad and he got the sack, but the trust owned Wycombe and we had absolutely no money at all. "We were in real trouble but they gave me the caretaker manager job and I never looked back but I had a bad first [full] year."

"We stayed up on the last day at Torquay and that is a famous game for Wycombe, as we were three points adrift from Bristol Rovers who were playing Mansfield at home."

"We win our game 3-0 at Torquay, who were already relegated, but Mansfield turned up to Bristol and had forgotten their kit."

"So I'm thinking, they're not taking this seriously, but Mansfield beat Bristol Rovers in Bristol Rovers' away kit and we stayed up."

When asked by Parkin what would have happened to Wycombe if they were relegated, Ainsworth simply said: "End."

"I'm telling you now, that club was in a tough, tough, place."

## FOOTBALL

# New date is confirmed for Huddersfield Town at home

A NEW date has been confirmed for Wycombe Wanderers' home match against Huddersfield Town.

The Chairboys had been due to play the Terriers at Adams Park on Saturday, November 16 but this was called off after three players at the Yorkshire-based team received international call ups.

Town requested to the EFL that the match should be called off, which was granted.

The new date for the match is now Tuesday, January 7, with the fixture kicking off at 7.45pm.

Coincidentally, Wycombe's last two home meetings against Huddersfield have both been played during the week.

The previous encounter, which ended 0-0 at Adams Park on November 24, 2020, in the Championship, took place on a Tuesday night.

Before that, the Terriers' 6-0 away thumping of Wan-

derers at Adams Park was played on Friday, January 6, 2012.

The latter was in front of the Sky Sports cameras, as Jordan Rhodes fired in five for Huddersfield.

That year, Wycombe were relegated back down to League Two whilst Town were promoted to the Championship via the play-offs, defeating Sheffield United 7-6 on penalties, following a 0-0 draw at Wembley Stadium.

Additionally, the Chairboys will also find out who they will play in the next round of the EFL Trophy on Friday evening.

Wycombe progressed to the knockout stages for the second season in a row, after defeating Crawley Town in the final group match earlier on this month.

The draw will be made on November 22, with Wanderers either playing Northampton Town, Swindon Town or Reading in the round of 32.



The match will now take place on January 7, 2025 at Adams Park

# Ducks seen walking in the name of charity

ON November 9, an intrepid flock of Aylesbury United supporters conquered the challenge of walking 15.5 miles to our game versus Leighton Town.

The walk was in aid of our charity partner Youth Concern, and to raise awareness of #BringTheDucksHome and our quest to return to playing home games in Aylesbury.

A total of £2,027.50 (including GiftAid contributions) has been raised for Youth Concern.

Andy Martin, Director at Aylesbury United and Chairman of 21st Century Ducks, Aylesbury United Supporters' Trust, said: "I would like to thank everyone who took part as it was a huge effort resulting in some very tired and aching bodies, mine included."

"To raise such a great sum of money for an excellent local charity is amazing, so thank you to all those who have donated."

"It is hugely appreciated by the club and the charity."

Hannah Asquith, CEO at Youth Concern, said: "Youth Concern has been embedded in Aylesbury Vale for 45 years and being chosen by Aylesbury United as the club's long-term charity partner really demonstrates that. On behalf of Aylesbury Vale's 13-25 year olds, thanks to everyone who walked and to everyone who sponsored them."

Those who took part were Stuart Andrews, Lee Cotton, Oliver Davis, Paul Gardner, Oscar Gardner, James Hogg, Richard Lloyd, Ian Lowe,

Andy Martin, Bev Mills, Bob Moody, Carly Morley, John Newman, Laura O'Callaghan, Graham Read, Jamie Spencer and Rob Waller.

A special thank you goes to Oliver Davis, aged 16, who plays for the Aylesbury United Pan-Disability team, and Oscar Gardner, aged 11, who both completed the walk. Oliver not only walked to the game but on Sunday also played for the Pan-Disability team competing in the Bobi League.



# SPORT



## A unique mixture that led to several successes



Ainsworth spoke to the Undr the Cosh podcast this week

**EX-WYCOMBE** Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has revealed that the unique mix of younger players and older professionals helped him gain success at the club.

Speaking on the Undr the Cosh podcast this week, the newly appointed Shrewsbury Town boss spoke to Jon Parkin, Chris Brown and Chris Brown about his time at Adams Park.

In all, he managed 550 games for the Chairboys, winning 219 times.

A large part of his successes in South Bucks, which saw him achieve two promotions, was the fact the club

'couldn't afford players aged between 23 and 28.

Instead, relying on those who were in their late teens/early 20s, or in their 30s.

He explained: "I never got the middle bit which were 23 to 28 year-olds who were in the prime of their career.

"You couldn't afford them at Wycombe.

"It was either the ones that had been let go at 18 and they had something but just didn't make it, or, the others who I could afford were 30 pluses.

"But I had to be careful as I wanted to

sign the ones that were still hungry and had great attitude, because at 30 plus, some might come just for the pay package to see their career out.

"So the blend worked really well, as these old lads got the younger lads through.

"Adebayo Akinfenwa is the prime example.

"Joe Jacobson, Matt Bloomfield was still there, Marcus Bean who I got from my old club QPR.

"Sam Saunders, Nathan Tyson and Craig Mackail-Smith...mixed with Alfie Mawson, Dom Gape, Aaron Pierre and

Eberechi Eze all learnt from those boys.

"I just never had that middle section as they cost as that; how we made a go of it.

"We just had this buzz at Wycombe and that's what we had."

He left the club to join Queens Park Rangers as their manager in February 2023, but was let go in October of that year after winning just five of his 28 games in charge.

After taking a year out from the game, he was appointed as the new boss of Shrewsbury Town earlier this month.

# Can the Chairboys beat bogey team Lincoln?

By James Richings

AFTER two weeks away, top-of-the-table Wycombe Wanderers are back in action as they take on Lincoln City in the league this weekend.

One of two teams in the EFL that have won 10 games in their respective league so far this season, can the Chairboys keep up their good run, or will the Imps make it five unbeaten against the boys from Bucks at Sincil Bank on Saturday?

### The lowdown on Wanderers

It's great being a Wycombe Wanderers fan right now.

For the first time in two years, the Chairboys are on top of the third tier of English football, and are playing some brilliant stuff.

They have scored in each of their 14 games in the league this campaign [a run that dates back to April when they drew 0-0 at home to Derby County], and with 32 goals scored in 14 matches so far, they are average more than two strikes per domestic fixture.

In fact, there has only been one occasion where they have scored just once in the league since August, and that was in the 1-0 home victory against Crawley Town at the start of October.

It has been a flying start by Matt Bloomfield's boys.

Defensively, they have kept three clean sheets in each of their last three league games [Wigan Athletic, Stockport County and Leyton Orient], and they'll be hoping it'll be four from four by 5pm on November 23.

### The lowdown on Lincoln

Lincoln, who were in the Non League as recent as 2017, could be one of League One's dark horses this season.

They just missed out on the play-offs last campaign, finishing two points off the top six,

despite having a better goal difference than two of the teams above them [Barnsley and Oxford United - the latter of which got promoted].

But they have gone into this season with aim of finally breaking into the play-off places.

The club currently sit fifth with seven wins from their opening 15 matches and are unbeaten in their last four.

You can consider the Imps to be one of Wycombe's bogey teams as the Chairboys, in recent seasons, have had an awful record away to Lincoln.

They have only beaten the former National League team three times on the road from 10 attempts this century, with the last victory occurring in January 2011.

This was in a 2-1 win with Andy Sandell scoring a first-half brace.

The other two occasions were in the 2004/05 and 2005/06 seasons respectively.

Additionally, this is the second time Lincoln will play a team from Buckinghamshire this month, after they took on Chesham United in the FA Cup first round at the Meadow.

They hammered the Generals 4-0 in front of a near sell-out crowd.

### Last five meetings

2023/24: Wycombe 1-1 Lincoln

2023/24: Lincoln 3-0 Wycombe

2022/23: Wycombe 0-2 Lincoln

2022/23: Lincoln 0-0 Wycombe

2021/22: Lincoln 1-1 Wycombe

The match on November 23 will kick-off at 3pm.



Wycombe forward Brandon Hanlan could be in line to make his first league start in over a year at Sincil Back this weekend

## Recruits confirmed as academy takes shape

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the arrival of Kit Brunswick as the academy's new Head of Operations.

Kit joins the club's academy senior leadership team and will be in charge of overseeing its operations on a day-to-day basis.

He will also play an important role in the academy's strategy for future growth as it moves into Category 4 status from the 2025/26 season.

Formerly within Arsenal's academy operations team, Kit arrives with experience as the Head of Academy Operations and Safeguarding and subsequently Assistant Academy Manager at Cambridge United, and has most recently worked at London Sport as a Sport Welfare Officer.

Academy Director Jeremy Sauer said: "We're thrilled to bring Kit on board to lead a wide range of academy operations and be part of the leadership team that will deliver the club's ambitions of establishing a best-in-class Category 1 academy.

"We have taken big steps in a short time, establishing a training group for our new Professional Development Phase squad and recruiting highly qualified and respected coaches, recruitment staff and now a Head of Operations, with medical, welfare and education staff to follow soon."

He began his new role on Wednesday, November 20.

The news comes one week after the club confirmed that Juan David, the founder of Tier1Football, will join as the new Academy Scout for London.

He was instrumental in bringing defender Chris Forino to Wycombe in 2021 and also has experience working as a scout within Derby County's academy and in talent recruitment for Rising Ballers.