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Bucks Free Press

Friday, November 18, 2022

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SPORT

Moving up the league table?

FOLLOWING Wycombe Wanderers' 2-0 win over Forest Green Rovers on November 12, the Chairboys have moved up to 10th in the table on 25 points.

They sit just three points off the play-off spots and have only lost one of their last seven league games.

However, despite being one of the inform teams in the division, manager Gareth Ainsworth has admitted that his side's recent results feel as if they are not 'good enough'.

The victory in Nailsworth was the club's first in four matches in all competitions which has preserved their 100 per cent winning record over the West Country side in the Football League (three games, three wins).

This is off the back of defeats against Walsall in the FA Cup and Cambridge United in the league, coupled with draws against Port Vale and Morecambe respectively.

Speaking to the press after the match, Ainsworth said: "We have picked up 14 points from the last seven league games which is promotion form, yet, it feels like we are not good enough at the moment."

"I don't know why that is.

"Maybe it's the way people look at it but as it stands, we are a few places off the play-off places.

"If you look at the teams in League One, we just cannot match the budgets of some of the teams in this division.

"We just can't.

"You've got some teams paying £1m for players, we can't do that.

"At the end of the day, we are one of the smallest clubs in this league that is outdoing what the size of our club is.

"But Rob Couhig has given me his backing, and I got a text from Rob saying well done to everyone and it has been a good week."

Wycombe have won seven and drawn four of their 18 league games this season.

In that time, they have defeated Thames Valley Rivals Oxford United and Milton Keynes 1-0 away from home, as well as putting Peterborough United to the sword 3-1 at home.

These three victories all came in consecutive games.

The Chairboys have also enjoyed important wins over Burton Albion and Barnsley by 3-0 scorelines, along with a 1-0 triumph against Accrington Stanley at Adams Park back in September.

Stepping in the right direction?



Garath McCleary and Josh Scowen performed well in Wycombe's win over Forest Green Rovers which was their first in the league since Oct 22 (PA)



Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth has masterminded three away wins in a row for the club for the first time in five seasons (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth believes his squad is 'now taking shape' following a 2-0 win over Forest Green Rovers.

Strikes from David Wheeler and Garath McCleary gave the Chairboys all three points in the West Country which ended a run of four games without a win.

Ironically, the victory in the West Country was Wanderers' third in a row on the road in the league, which is the first time they have achieved this feat since March 2018.

Gareth and Garath face the press.

The last time the Chairboys did this in the third tier of English football was in March/April 1999.

One of the teams they defeated in that latter run was Manchester City at Maine Road.

Speaking on the victory at the New Lawn Stadium, Ainsworth said: "We put a plan in place, we 'worked on it all week and we blew Forest Green away in the first half.

"We could have been three goals up as we had chance after chance, and we knew that they would come at us in the second half as they also had a few efforts, but I am pleased with the result as we deserved that.

"The energy that the boys showed was brilliant and I was really up for this one and vocally, I hope people could hear that as I never stopped shout-

By James Richings

ing - I've done my throat in!

"I wanted them to press and put it on Forest Green and they did that in the first half and that was a result with the goals.

"Garath's was a sublime finish and that's why he is so highly regarded and with David Wheeler, he was brilliant and he has always been solid for me.

"He deserved his goal, Josh Scowen coming back was big for us, and even on the bench, we had Lewis Wing, Daryl Horgan, Sullay Kaikai, and Brandon Hanlan could have come on too.

"We have got strong people on the bench and we are getting more players back from injury too.

"So the squad is taking shape how I wanted it even though we haven't got Chris Forino, Curtis Thompson and Dom Gape and D'Mani Mellor also missed out."

Up next is another away trip to the West Country, as Wycombe take on Cheltenham Town on November 19.

Wycombe's next four fixtures:

Nov 19: Cheltenham Town (away)

Dec 4: Portsmouth (home)

December 10: Lincoln City (away)

December 17: Ipswich Town (home)

Stunning away win stat after victory over FGR

FOLLOWING Wycombe's 2-0 away win over Forest Green on November 12, Gareth Ainsworth was told a stat that not only surprised him, but others in the press area.

The victory in Nailsworth meant the Chairboys had won three consecutive away league games for the first time since February/March 2018.

However, the last time they won three on the bounce in the third tier of English football, you will need to go back to March/April 1999.

Speaking on the record, Ainsworth said: "It's a nice record

to have.

"It's deserved so I don't understand why it felt so bad as we've been on a great run!

"We'll try and make it four next week but we're in a good place to be.

"Just because we didn't beat Morecambe, Cambridge, and Port Vale, people are saying we're doomed but it's a long season and we're around a third of the way in.

"I have always said to be patient. "We are three points off fifth which is brilliant and it feels like it has been a poor season but we're in a healthy position in League One."

Goal of the Season?



Garath McCleary has scored 18 goals since moving to Wycombe in 2020 following his release from Thames Valley rivals, Reading (PA)

WYCOMBE winger Garath McCleary has reflected on his stunning goal in Wanderers' 2-0 away win at Forest Green Rovers.

After David Wheeler gave the Chairboys the lead on 14 minutes, the former Jamaican international scored an incredible strike on the outside of his right foot from 20-yards out.

The goal just before the half-hour mark even got some of the home fans on their feet applauding as McCleary bagged his third of the campaign.

Amazingly, out of the 54 league goals he has bagged for Nottingham Forest, Reading, and Wycombe, only three have come away from home in League One fixtures.

The first was for Forest in their promotion-winning season of 2007/08, when he scored the second in a 2-0 victory at Carlisle United in April 2008.

The second was 14 years and four days later when he bagged the fourth in a 4-1 win at Cambridge United for Wycombe, with the third away goal coming against Forest Green.

He said: "I have been told that it was cross to the far post, but I definitely meant it!

"It was good to get the goal, but it was more important to get the win.

"The last few games that we have played, we haven't got the results that we have wanted, even though in a few of the home games I thought we did well.

Alan Parry's Previews: Cheltenham on the road



Wycombe take on Cheltenham

AFTER a troubling time for Wycombe on and off the field, the relief gained from last week's victory at Forest Green Rovers was plain for all to see, and next comes another trip to Gloucestershire to face Cheltenham Town on Saturday, November 19.

Disappointing results at Adams Park recently, followed by the news that the club has financial problems, led to an outbreak of doom and gloom among some fans, but Wanderers have taken fourteen points from their last seven league games, and that is promotion form.

A win at Cheltenham would keep them in touch with the leading teams in League One, and they are unbeaten in the last nine games against the Robins.

The first meeting between the clubs was in Round One of the FA Cup in 1974 when Wanderers were still non-league playing at their old home, Loakes Park.

The Chairboys won 3-1, then disposed of Bournemouth in Round Two to set up one of the most famous cup ties in their history.

The date was January 1975; the visitors First Division leaders Middlesbrough, managed by England World Cup hero Jack Charlton, and including a young Graeme Souness in midfield.

It was a special game for me because I was among the capacity crowd of 12,000 reporting on the 0-0 draw for BBC Radio, the start of my love affair with Wanderers that stretches back 48 years.

But I digress!

The last five meetings have produced a remarkable average of five-goals-per-game, including two 3-3 draws, and the last time they clashed saw one of the most extraordinary games ever witnessed at Adams Park.

Cheltenham's Alfie May opened the scoring but strikes by Jordan Obita (2) and Brandon Hanlon gave Wycombe a 3-1 lead at half time. It became 3-3 when May and Kion Etete brought the visitors level early in the second half.

Sam Vokes then struck two goals in a minute to make it 5-3 to the Chairboys, but not to be outdone, May scored twice more to take his personal tally to four in a ten-goal thriller.

More of the same on Saturday, please – but with a different outcome this time!

Magic McCleary in West Country win



Garath McCleary scored a stunner as Wycombe defeated Forest Green Rovers at the New Lawn (PA)

GOALS from David Wheeler and a screamer from Garath McCleary helped Wycombe Wanderers end their four-game winless run with a 2-0 away victory at Forest Green Rovers.

Gareth Ainsworth's side knew that a flaccid performance in the West Country could not be an option after four consecutive disappointing results at Adams Park.

On top of a packed-out away end against the struggling newly-promoted side, the Chairboys had to be on form if they wanted to get back to winning ways.

And they came out of the traps as soon as the first whistle was blown as Joe Jacobson, Josh Scowen, and Nick Freeman all came close inside the first 15 minutes.

Forest Green responded as Max Stryjek forced a save from Kyle McAllister's header, whilst Connor Wickham was making his presence known in the Wanderers box.

But the first goal of the contest fell to the visitors, and it was deserved based on the balance of play.

A Jacobson corner was swung into the box and Wheeler was on hand to smash home his third of the season from eight-yards.

His shot gave Lewis Thomas in the Rovers net no chance as he scored his first goal since August.

The strike helped Wycombe increase in confidence as they started to pile pressure on Ian Burchnall's team.

Alfie Mawson's header went just

By James Richings

over whilst Freeman and Anis Mehmeti saw their efforts force the keeper into some vital stops.

But Thomas was helpless on 27 minutes as McCleary scored an incredible strike to give Wycombe a comfortable cushion.

Wanderers' build-up play stretched the Rovers defence apart and after Jack Grimmer acted as a decoy which gave McCleary the space, he unleashed a perfectly connected strike on the outside of his right foot from 20-yards.

The shot flew into the top left-hand corner and the strike was so good that even some of the Forest Green fans took to their feet to applaud the effort.

It was McCleary's third of the campaign and his first on the road this season.

The second period saw Wanderers continue to dominate as they nearly wrapped up the win on 53 minutes, but Mehmeti's shot from seven yards went wide.

On the hour mark, Rovers started to get some life and began to get into the game as Connor Wickham saw his shot blocked on the line.

It was a nervy ending at the New Lawn but Wycombe held on to record their first win of the month.

Up next is another trip to the West Country, as Wanderers go to Cheltenham on November 19.

Attendance: 2,468 (571 away)

SPORT



Tjay De Barr (left) and Sullay Kaikai (right) (PA)

International duty for attackers Tjay De Barr and Sullay Kaikai

WYCOMBE Wanderers' Tjay De Barr and Sullay Kaikai have been called up to their respective country's upcoming international matches.

De Barr, who has played four times for the Chairboys this season, will be in the Gibraltar squads to face Liechtenstein on November 16 and Andorra

on November 19, whilst Kaikai has gone away with the Sierra Leone squad.

The African side are on a training camp and will play two friendly fixtures.

So far this campaign, Kaikai has only played seven times since returning from injury in Sep-

tember.

Overall, he has featured in 29 matches and has scored twice following his move to Wanderers from Blackpool in the summer 2021.

Speaking ahead of his country's two final matches of 2022, which will be Gibraltar's final games at their Victoria

Stadium home, De Barr said: "It's going to be very special to play these two games at home."

"To be playing in these two games in a stadium for the final time until the rebuild will be very special for all the fans that will come and watch."

The two will miss the trip to Cheltenham.

Melee leads to FA penalisation

FOREST Green Rovers and Wycombe Wanderers have both been charged by the FA following their recent match on November 12.

The Chairboys won the contest 2-0 at the Bolt New Lawn Stadium with David Wheeler and Garath McCleary scoring two wonderful goals inside the first 27 minutes.

However, with 23 minutes remaining, a scuffle broke out between both sets of players after Josh Scowen was fouled by Regan Hendry in the middle of the mark.

The tackle, along with Hendry's verbal tirade towards the stricken midfielder, saw several Wanderers players step in to defend their teammate.

The fracas lasted for around five minutes with referee Sam Purkiss showing yellow cards to five players.

Those individuals were Hendry, Harvey Bunker, and Josh March for Forest Green, whilst Jack Grimmer and Anis Mehmeti were booked for Wycombe respectively.

Alfie Mawson was also cautioned in the match (unrelated to the scrap), which was his fifth of the season.

This means he will miss the away trip against Cheltenham on Saturday.

If he had received this yellow card after Wycombe's 19th league match of the season, then the suspension would have been void.

The caution against Forest Green was in Wanderers' 18th league fixture this cam-

By James Richings

paign.

The FA's statement also revealed that club captain Joe Jacobson has been charged with allegedly committing a violent conduct offence in the melee.

The FA Spokesperson's Twitter account said: "Forest Green Rovers FC and Wycombe Wanderers FC have both been charged with a breach of FA Rule E20.1 following their EFL League One fixture on Saturday, November 2022."

"It is alleged that both clubs failed to ensure their players conducted themselves in an orderly fashion and/or refrained from provocative behaviour in the 57th minute.

"The clubs have until Friday, November 18 2022 to provide their responses."

In a separate statement regarding Jacobson, the FA added: "Wycombe Wanderers FC's Joe Jacobson has also been charged with a breach of FA Rule E20.1 following the same fixture."

"It is alleged that the defender's behaviour during the 57th minute, in an incident not seen by match officials but caught on video, constitutes violent conduct."

"He has until Wednesday, November 16 to provide a response."

Jacobson has played 379 times for Wycombe since moving to the club in the summer of 2014.



Wycombe defeated Forest Green 2-0 at the Bolt New Lawn Stadium on



Jasper Pattenen (left)

Pattenen moves to Dorking

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed that utility player Jasper Pattenen has joined Non League Dorking on a two-month loan deal.

The 20-year-old, who signed for the club from Worthing back in July, has featured in seven of the Chairboys' matches this season, which includes two appearances in League One.

His move to Surrey will see Pattenen team up with manager Marc Beard.

The two worked together when they were both at Brighton & Hove Albion during the 2010s.

Pattenen said: "It's an exciting opportunity for me."

"It's a club I'm very familiar with in terms of the staff and management - I know Marc and I've got that familiarity with Marc Beard from my time at Brighton, so I understand what the club wants to do."

"When the opportunity came up to join on loan until January, I felt it was one that would be good for me - playing regular minutes at a club that plays fantastic football."

"I'm really looking forward to getting started and helping the boys in any way I can."

Manager Marc White added: "Jasper is someone that we've known for several years as part of Worthing's really successful team and a well-regarded player."

"He's an exciting winger that can play on both sides, an amazing character, and will fit into the club really well."