

Bucks Free Press

Friday, March 22, 2024

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PAGE 9

Road sealed off after man 'stabbed'



Café that people drive two hours to reach



PAGE 47

'Criminal' loss of hospital services

£100 DIY spend to win



PAGE 32

Club boss investing in nightlife



PAGE 16

Trust says Wycombe will shut in five years



A CAMPAIGN group to 'save' Wycombe Hospital is calling for urgent action amid the withdrawal of services from a tower block that is no longer fit for purpose.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust said last month that the tower at Wycombe Hospital will "not be fit for clinical use" within five years.

By Eleanor Burleigh

A spokesperson for the trust told the Local Democracy Reporting Service services were already being removed from the eight-storey 1960s building ahead of expected deterioration.

The trust has reportedly asked the government for up to £200 million to

fund a purpose-built planned new care centre for the town.

But campaign group Save Wycombe Hospital has raised concerns about how this could leave a gap in healthcare services before an appropriate replacement facility is found.

Full story: Page 2

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Sport

RUGBY

Beaconsfield continue to batter opponents

BEACONSFIELD made it a quite stunning 19 wins out of 19, and secured promotion to Level 6 rugby next year, with a crushing victory away at Reading Rams, writes Richard Gomme.

On a heavy pitch, that perhaps favoured the much heavier home team, the first half was, initially, a fairly even affair, with little between the sides. However, hard work by the relentlessly scavenging back horn of Barney Gücklehorn, Rhys Amos and Callum Saganowski secured

increasing possession for Beaconsfield's irrepensible human eel at 9, Alex Spring, to unleash the backs. Right winger Tyson Evans-Peters was first to score, with a powerful long range effort from 70 metres out. Left winger Dan Lofthouse-Smith [pictured] was not to be outdone, and soon also scorched in from his own 22. Captain, and mercurial centre, Henry Revill was next up, from a perfectly executed training move, strolling in unopposed under the

posts to take the score at half-time to 0 – 19.

The writing was now on the wall, as Beaconsfield's superior fitness, and much stronger bench, came into play. The hardworking Henry Revill was to score again soon, this fourth try securing the bonus point. The floodgates then opened, and Beaconsfield's trademark ambitious commitment to width, and attacking from anywhere, lead to a further eight tries, including two more for Evans-Peters.



Dan Lofthouse Smith. Pic Richard Gomme

WANDERERS

Safe and sound at HP12

WYCOMBE Wanderers' Adams Park has been named as one of the safest stadiums to visit in the UK.

Conducted by experts at Live Football Tickets, boffins compared the average number of spectators at each football ground yearly with the reported incidences of crime within a 1 km radius of each venue, to unveil which stadiums provide the safest and least safe matchday experience.

Their results concluded that the home of the Chairboys is the eighth safest in the country with a mean estimated crime events per 100 spectators per season of just 0.35.

It shows that between 2021 and 2023, Wanderers had an estimated 116,644 people visit HP12 in that time, with 412 incidents being reported to the authorities.

A spokesperson from Live Football Tickets said: "Wycombe Wanderers fans can proudly tout their home stadium as Adams Park Stadium the eighth safest of all 86 venues studied.

"Despite hosting an average of 116,644 visitors annually, crime figures are relatively low in its vicinity averaging 0.35 incidents per 100 spectators."

MOTORSPORT

Kirsty cruises her way to the Middle East this year

A High Wycombe woman will be one of the first people to take part in the inaugural Formula Woman Nations Cup event later this year.

Kirsty Mansell, 24, will be one of 50 females from 26 different countries to head to the United Arab Emirates from December 13 to 15.

The diverse roster has been curated through a rigorous selection process right out of the Formula Woman Driver's Academy.

A training school launched in 2003 has seen thousands of female drivers hone their skills and conquer the ranks in the racing world.

And at the first event of its kind, what will truly distinguish the Formula Woman Nations Cup weekend is "The Summit".

Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with prominent female speakers, participating in thought-provoking panels and live discussions.

Albeit a racing competition, "the Summit" represents the initial stride of Formula Woman Nations Cup in breaking down gender barriers across media, business and sports, with the overarching goal of enabling women to realise their ultimate potential.

Who is Kirsty Mansell?

The High Wycombe racer fell in love with racing after her dad regularly competed.

First came indoor karting, then tested outdoors, where she was scouted by a Rotax Kart Racing team (ADX Racing), where she currently competed in a Rotax championship.

She said: "I grew up with deaf parents, my dad used to compete in many series so I was always at tracks by his side where I fell in

By James Richings

love with racing!

"I started indoor karting, then tested outdoor which is where I was scouted by a Rotax kart racing team (ADX Racing).

"I then applied to Formula Woman in the hopes of gaining some testing track days in cars. I passed my car racing license where I met the CEO of Formula Woman.

"He then selected me to represent England this year in Dubai for the first ever female Nations Cup race.

"I also have the opportunity to compete in GB4 / GB3 Championship but all the support from England and sponsors would really help my racing career."

Over the last century, women in motorsport have lived in the shadows of their male counterparts. It was not until the last decade when the racing industry have begun to action platforms that are determined to change the reality and level the playing field.

Formula Woman Nations Cup being the first-ever female-led global GT motorsport competition, forges ahead to shift the gender narrative on the racing track.

The highly anticipated weekend will prove to be a catalytic force to the movement.

To see and read more about Kirsty's life by following her Instagram @mansell.racing.

You can also sponsor Kirsty by visiting www.sponsorsdriven.com/kirstymansell



Kirsty Mansell is from High Wycombe

HOCKEY

Winning is what they do

MARLOW Girls under 12's won the Bucks county hockey championship winning all five matches en-route including a very tense semi final against local rivals Amersham & Chalfont which saw goalie Tilly Royden save three penalties in a shoot out to decide the winner, before edging out an excellent Buckingham team with a 1-0 win in the final, a peerless defensive effort by Molly Keegan and Reina Speirs meant they ended the day having conceded zero goals.

A fantastic achievement by this close group of players who have worked hard all year and now progress to the regional finals.

It is particularly impressive for Emma Blake, Evie Nicholson and Elvie Rayner who have each been key players in Marlow teams who have been county champions for the past three years, Evie Nicholson also finished the day as top scorer.

The event took place on March 17.

To read more about the latest sports stories, go to www.bucksfreepress/sport.

HOCKEY

The taste of defeat for league champions



Marlow won promotion at the start of the month

MARLOW 1sts travelled to Bournemouth knowing that they had already secured promotion to the National League.

Bournemouth opened the scoring within the first two minutes, showing how clinical they are in the attacking circle.

Martha Goodridge equalized minutes later with a shot from a penalty corner.

Lauren Hilditch put Marlow ahead in the 7th minute after some fantastic speed and attacking play.

Both sides looked strong in attack but vulnerable in defence.

Marlow keeper Alys Ramm made numerous saves but could not keep Bournemouth from scoring in the 16th minute to level the scores again.

The home side scored again in the 29th minute to take the lead going into half

time.

Marlow came out fighting in the second half with Hilditch scoring her second of the game in the opening minute.

Bournemouth scored again in the 50th minute to put the pressure back on the Reds.

Rachel Clarke showed great determination to win the ball back and forge forward, finding Hilditch to complete her hat trick to level the score once again.

Bournemouth bounced back and scored to secure all three points.

Other women results:- 2nd team beat Basingstoke 2 2-1 away, 3rd team lost 2-1 to Windsor 1 4s lost 4-0 to Abingdon 1, 5s beat Newbury & Thatcham 3 2-1, 6s beat Wycombe 4 2-0, 7s beat Maidenhead 5 1-0 away.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 2-0 NORTHAMPTON

Brilliant Butcher helps the Blues beat N'ton in Bucks

WYCOMBE Wanderers made it three league wins in a row for only the second time this season as they comfortably defeated Northampton Town 2-0 at Adams Park.

A Matt Butcher brace gave the Chairboys the three points in what was the first league encounter in Buckinghamshire between the two sides since October 2015.

The home team started the better and peppered Louis Moulden in the Town goal with several half chances, as Ryan Tafazolli and Ki-

eran Sadlier both went close inside the opening 15 minutes.

The first real attempt of any note fell to Freddie Potts midway through the opening period, as his half-volley from range was parried away.

Moulden then easily gathered a Sadlier free-kick.

Northampton rarely threatened as Wanderers continued to press, as Gideon Kodua and Bez Lubala both saw their chances go wide of the target.

In fact, the visitors' only shot of

any note was from Marc Leonard, but Nigel Lonwijk blocked his attempt.

The second period was similar to the first as Wycombe piled on the pressure which eventually broke through on 67 minutes.

Sadlier was the provider as his quick throwing to Butcher saw the ex-Plymouth man beat two players and let fly from range.

His shot glided across the turf and into the far-left corner, for his first at Adams Park goal since his move to the club in January.

And he wasn't done there as he got his second in the final 10 minutes which secured Wycombe's third league win in a row.

Again, assisted by Sadlier, his first-time effort from 25-yards looped over Moulden and went in via the post.

The game was effectively over, but Franco Ravizzoli was on hand to produce a huge save to deny Kieron Browne which kept his clean sheet intact in the final few moments.

The result lifts Wanderers into the top-half of the table for the first time since November.



Matt Butcher has scored three goals for Wycombe since moving to the club in January

25. Ravizzoli	8. Butcher
2. Grimmer	28. Kodua
6. Tafazolli	20. Taylor
22. Lonwijk	23. Sadlier
10. Leahy	30. Lubala
19. Potts	

Ballboy gets the credit in home triumph

WYCOMBE Wanderers midfielder Matt Butcher has thanked a ballboy for his impact in the club's recent 2-0 win over Northampton Town.

The Chairboys were struggling to break down the Cobblers at Adams Park with both sides going to the break goalless.

It looked like Wanderers were going to be held at home in the midtable clash, but Butcher's strike on 67 minutes broke the deadlock with the ballboy playing his part.

After Shaun McWilliams smashed the

ball into touch and was off the pitch, the ballboy quickly gave the ball to Kieran Sadlier.

His throwing found Butcher who drove at the Northampton defence before letting fly from range.

He then scored his second of the contest and his third of the season 20 minutes later to secure Wanderers the three points.

Butcher, who joined Wycombe from Plymouth Argyle in January, said: "At half-time, we said that they [Northamp-

ton] were trying to slow the game down and we fell into that a little bit.

"It was quite slow and there was no real tempo, so we tried to improve that in the second-half.

"Sads [Kieran Sadlier] took a quick throwing [which led to Wycombe's first goal], and that improved our intensity.

"We've got to thank the ballboy because his quick thinking helped us score.

"We all sang him a song in the changing room after the game to make him feel part of it, and I had a lot to thank him for.

On the two week break, he added: Butcher continued: "It was massive to the three points because if it didn't have a good performance or get the result, it lingers over you, so to have that momentum is good.

"The break will put some freshness in the leagues for what will be a busy end to the season.

"Hopefully we can carry that on after the break."

Up next for Wycombe is Portsmouth at home on Good Friday.

FOOTBALL

Reaction to third win in a row

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has reflected on his side's 2-0 home victory against Northampton Town.

A second-half brace from Matt Butcher secured the Chairboys' third straight league win for only the second time this season.

The result has lifted Wanderers to 12th, making it the first time they have entered the top half of the League One table in four months.

Here's what he had to say on the win.

On the result

"I'm chuffed as the players are getting their awards for all the hard work they've put in this season.

"We've had a lot of changes but we've looked at the stats, the data, the back four, and we knew we weren't far away from where we want to be.

"So to have the week we've had, we're delighted."

On the 13 day break, he added: "The boys are jaded.

"The energy levels show that we've had midweek games for pretty much the whole year so far and we're now in mid-March.

"If it was my choice, I would have wanted the Cambridge game to have been played, but we'll be getting some good work in during that time."

WANDERERS

Stepping in to clear up the banners and stickers

THE Wycombe Wanderers hierarchy have praised a fan after he voluntarily cleared up banners, signs and stickers left outside Adams Park by several disgruntled Reading supporters.

Fans of the Royals descended to the venue on March 15 after it was revealed that the Chairboys had agreed to purchase the club's state-of-the-art Bearwood Park training ground earlier this week.

Reading are in financial ruin, with fans accusing the club's Chinese billionaire, Dai Yongge, of asset stripping.

Following the revelation, hundreds of Reading fans with a handful of Wanderers supporters stood outside Adams Park to protest against Yongge.

As everyone departed, banners, signs and stickers were left behind.

Thankfully, Wanderers supporter and peaceful protester, Arran White, along with three others, stepped in and removed all the items.

They were given a free beer ahead of the club's home fixture against Northampton Town on March 16.

SPORT

0963-2336



Another big win for Chesham promotion beckons



Jordan Edwards Totton. Pic

AFTER last week's defeat, Chesham United FC got back to winning ways with a fine performance against AFC Totton, writes Andrew Westlake.

It looked as if the visitors would present a stiff challenge as they were unbeaten in eleven, but Chesham took control after scoring early and never let the visitors back into the game.

Chesham made four changes to the starting eleven, including new signing James Harding who made his debut after joining the club from Salisbury FC. Ryan Upward, Jack Connors and Jordan Edwards were recalled, and

Roddy Collins dropped back into defence. Eoin Casey, T'Shane Gallimore, Zak Joseph and Ricardo German were all on the bench.

Chesham made a dream start with a goal in the third minute. Bradley Clayton (pictured) found Alex Lafleur on the left, ran on to the return ball and set up Jordan Edwards who finished coolly after working a shooting chance. Chesham continued to press in the first half while the visitors also had plenty of the ball but failed to muster a serious effort on goal. In stoppage time there was one of a long

list of cynical fouls when Jordan Edwards looked to break clear from his own half but was pulled back by Charlie Kennedy who earned Totton a yellow card. Half-time and it was 1-0 to Chesham.

The second half started in much the same way as the first – Totton were caught cold as Chesham added a second goal on 49 minutes. Following a throw-in on the right Bradley Clayton crossed from the by-line, and Lewis Rolfe forced the ball home after an earlier effort was blocked.

The game ebbed and flowed from

there and late in the game Ethan Taylor was shown the visitors' seventh yellow card of the afternoon, including two for manager Jimmy Ball and his assistant.

Full-time came and it was a solid 2-0 win against a very good Totton side.

With Salisbury, second in the table, only managing a point in a tight 0-0 tie again 10-man Merthyr, Chesham now extend their lead to 14 points at the top of the Southern League Premier South table with 7 games to play.

Chesham United's next home game is against Hayes & Yeading United on the March 29.

Training ground move to Reading 'on hold'

WYCOMBE Wanderers have put the talks to buy Reading's Bearwood training facility 'on hold' due to 'seeming planning limitations allowing only Reading FC to use the training grounds.'

The Chairboys had signed an exclusivity agreement with the club to purchase the state-of-the-art facility, but supporters were left up in arms and protested outside Adam's Park.

A delve into Wokingham Borough Planning showed that permission was only granted to use for Reading Football Club, something which was sent to Wycombe last week.

In a latest twist, talks are now on hold with the club while interested parties are in talks with Dai Yongge and his people over purchasing the club.

"Wycombe Wanderers Football Club are putting on hold provision for funding to Reading Football Club and the acquisition of the Bearwood Park training facility from its owners," a club statement read.

"A little over a week ago, Reading Football Club announced that it was selling its training ground.

Wycombe's majority investor, Felician EFL Ltd, made a proposal to purchase the grounds. Many of the details were still to be worked out, including potential sharing with Reading and how to ensure a smooth transition.

"Importantly, it was agreed that while the details were being finalised and due diligence carried out, Felician would provide sufficient financing to Reading to allow it to pay its tax obligations and operating expenses, including payroll for the staff and players.

"It was Wycombe and Felicia-

By James Earnshaw

na's belief that they were helping Reading and professional football with the offer to assist its neighbour in a manner that had historically been used in the past by many football clubs.

Indeed, Wycombe's own training ground had been sold over a decade ago to reduce operating expenses and fund the club when the club had its own financial issues.

"Wycombe Wanderers Football Club and Felician have to put on hold the discussions and ongoing due diligence due to seeming planning limitations allowing only Reading FC to use the training grounds.

"Wycombe continues to wish its neighbours good luck in solving its issues.

"For its part, Wycombe will continue its search for a training ground that meets its ambitions for the club."

Following the news that Wanderers were pursuing to secure the acquisition, several Reading supporters held a peaceful protest outside at Adams Park in the evening of March 15 to showcase their dismay.

Around 200 people attended the Hillbottom Road venue and sang chants about the club's inept owner, Dai Yongge.

Several Chairboys fans also joined in on the demonstration next to the stadium.

Wycombe supporter, George Gutteridge, said: "Whilst we can sit here and say it's great news for Wycombe if it goes through, there's a fanbase and club on the other side that can't comprehend it."



Wycombe Wanderers put Bearwood sale 'on hold' due to 'planning limitations' (Image: Reading FC)

'What is their plan?' Wycombe Wanderers

WYCOMBE Wanderers chairman Rob Couhig has questioned the 'plan' of Reading fan group Sell Before We Dai following their decision to protest against the attempt to buy Bearwood Park.

The Chairboys had entered a period of exclusivity to purchase the state-of-the-art facility, but within days had decided to pull out.

Hundreds of Reading fans descended on Adams Park on Friday to make their feelings heard, something which has been attributed to the decision not to progress talks.

American Couhig confirms that the Buckinghamshire-based club were set to lend the Royals money to pay their outgoings for March while a period of due diligence went on.

NEW EPISODE

Morning! Not much to talk about this week really

- we speak to @RCouhig about the events of the last week
- thoughts on Bearwood
- Cobblers review
- Non League Day

Give it a listen! <https://t.co/Co2EgDG-Uh> pic.twitter.com/d4MnhFwflv

The Heroes of HP12 Podcast (@HeroesOfHP12) March 21, 2024

"They've already cost their club three points, haven't they? I like the fans and I understand their anxiety but wait until you see how things work out," he told Heroes of HP12 podcast. "What is their plan? The plan is we're going to force these people out, but who are you going to force to buy it? What's the economics of buying a club that has all of those assets? The training ground doesn't produce any revenue, it's a huge revenue drain. I don't understand what their plan was.

"Nobody asked the leaders of these anti-groups for their plan. What is your plan? What is the alternative? What are you going to do about the wages this week? Make the owner pay it? If the owner doesn't pay it, what's the plan? What are we going to do with staff- how are they going to eat?"