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Friday, March 25, 2022

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Boss on the ref after the away draw



Gareth Ainsworth (PA)

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth has revealed his sympathy for referee Ben Speedie, following the Chairboys' 0-0 draw at Portsmouth.

Midway through the second period, Pompey's George Hirst and Wanderers' Ryan Tafazolli tussled when the former was running through on goal.

No foul was given much to the anger of the Portsmouth fans and bench, which resulted in the home side's manager, Danny Cowley, being booked for his protest.

He and Ainsworth also had several chats on the touchline during the stalemate.

The Wycombe boss explained: "It's a tough job for a referee and I think they [Tafazolli and Hirst] were grabbing each other."

"I also thought he was offside in the initial build up."

The match was Speedie's second in charge of Wycombe this season.

The first was the 5-0 home defeat against Burton Albion in the EFL Trophy back in November.

Positivity is the key for promotion

WYCOMBE boss Gareth Ainsworth praised his side's performance following Wanderers' 0-0 draw away at Portsmouth.

He said: "The boys are staying solid which is brilliant and in the first half, we had the wind and we know Pompey would have it in the second half, but the boys adapted well and we created the better chances."

"It was a real bloods, guts, and thunder match as predicted, it was just a shame that we didn't finish it off."

The top teams can go and have their private battle but there are three places to be fought and scrapped for and as long as we're in that, it's a brilliant place to be."

"You've got to earn the win and today, we didn't hit the target at the right times and when we did Bazunu was there to handle it."

The points are split away at Portsmouth

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers recorded their fourth clean sheet in five matches as they drew 0-0 away at Portsmouth.

The Chairboys were the better side throughout the contest but the draw means they are now winless in seven league visits to Fratton Park.

The first half lacked any real quality from both sides, but it was the away outfit that had the game's first chance.

Daryl Horgan and Joe Jacobson linked up well to find Garath McCleary.

However, the attacking midfielder blazed his shot from 25-yards well over the goal on what was his 50th league start for the club on six minutes.

Seven minutes later, Ryan Tafazolli saw his header caught by Gavin Bazunu in the Pompey goal, and this was the best it got until just after the half-hour mark, when the Chairboys had a glorious chance to take the lead.

Horgan, who has become a man reborn, brilliantly found Anis Mehmeti who was clean through on goal.

The Albanian raced through but with only Bazunu to beat, the Irish goalkeeper made himself big and produced a brilliant save to deny the 21-year-old.

It was the best chance of the contest by a county mile.

Wanderers continued to pile on the pressure as Horgan, Mehmeti and Anthony Stewart all tried their luck before the break, but both sides went in at half-time goalless.

The second period once again saw Wanderers dominate the ball and have the vast majority of the chances.

Seven minutes in, Tafazolli headed wide from a Jacobson corner, before McCleary's effort trickled inches past the post with Bazunu beaten on minute 55.

The Chairboys were not holding back as they continued to try and find that elusive strike on the south coast and on 61 minutes, they thought they had taken the lead.

Sam Vokes managed to brilliant go around the committed Bazunu and



Another clean sheet for the Wanderers as Wycombe draw 0-0 away at Portsmouth (PA)

fired his shot on goal.

However, the keeper managed to recover brilliantly to deny the Welshman what was another certain goal.

The introduction of Brandon Hanlan on the hour mark injected an increase of energy and urgency to the Wanderers forward lined, as they continued to push for that all and important winner, and they thought they got it with

13 minutes remaining.

Lewis Wing, who has scored twice since his move from Middlesbrough in January, saw his 25-yard free-kick fly towards the top corner, but, Bazunu again was on hand to deny the Chairboys.

There was a tense moment with six minutes left as Ronan Curtis smashed his effort into the side netting, but it

finished as a score draw at Fratton Park.

This means Wanderers are now unbeaten in five, whilst Portsmouth are also unbeaten at home in six matches.

Wycombe are now on 66 points for the season and are two places off the play-offs.

Attendance at Fratton Park: 15,092
Away support: 958



Stockdale pictured playing against Portsmouth in November 2021 (PA)

Stockdale happy at Aylesbury initiative

WYCOMBE goalkeeper David Stockdale has praised a Non League in Buckinghamshire for helping standard civilians in Ukraine.

Aylesbury Vale Dynamos, who play their matches at Haywood Way in the town, have confirmed that their Spartan South Midlands League Premier Division match against county rivals, Risborough Rangers, will be in aid of the war-torn country.

The fixture, which will take place on March 26, will see spectators bring unwanted clothes in lieu of payment,

with the items being split into two categories.

Sports related clothing will go to the Kit Aid foundation to help children in the poorest regions of Africa, whilst the rest will go to Eastern Europe.

Stockdale, who himself has donated necessities to Ukraine via a support hub in the town, said: "Any team or any person that's doing something to help, I admire."

"Whether you're donating or doing something, it's really important to help because imagine if that was you

or your family.

"So for a Non League club to be doing something like that shows humanity is still there, and I'm sure when the world goes back to normal, it'll be great to visit Ukraine and hopefully the world can help in rebuilding a great nation."

The match between will kick-off at 3pm, and spectators are being encouraged to wear old football shirts, or yellow and blue clothing, which matches their kit and the Ukrainian flag.

Team goals over records

WYCOMBE goalkeeper David Stockdale has revealed that he'd rather concede a goal in every game if it meant Wanderers were promoted back to the Championship.

The former Premier League keeper kept his 15th clean sheet of the season in the recent 0-0 draw away at Portsmouth, which was the Chairboys' fourth in five matches.

This comes after the Adams Park outfit kept just one in the previous seven.

Speaking after the draw at Fratton Park, he said: "I'd take a goal in every game if it meant we were promoted.

"At the end of the day, [keeping clean sheets] is just a stat that no-one reads as people are

interested in the goal scorers, but for us, it is important as it keeps things going, it gives us a platform for promotion."

The ex-Fulham, Leicester City, and Brighton & Hove Albion keeper also praised the centre back partnership of Anthony Stewart and Ryan Tafazolli who also played a blinder in the draw on the south coast.

He added: "The guys in front of me have been brilliant all season.

"We went through a bit of a bumpy stage but that could happen.

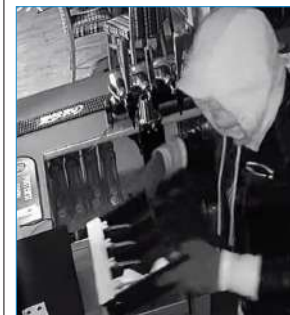
"It's a 46 game season and these leagues are tough.

"We're still putting bodies in the way and for them not to have a shot on target at Fratton Park is massive.



Stockdale won promotion with Wycombe back in 2020 and has so far played every minute of the Chairboys' league season, keeping 15 clean sheets (PA)

Video of break in is released at Dynamos



The CCTV footage from AVD FC

VIDEO footage of Aylesbury Vale Dynamos' break in has been released on social media.

In the early hours of Wednesday, March 16, two people reportedly entered the club's Haywood Way stadium with one person going into the bar's till.

The news came just one day after the Non League side had confirmed that their league match on March 26 against Risborough Rangers will be free of charge to help children in Africa and those in Ukraine.

Spectators are being asked to donate clothing in lieu of payment, with unwanted sports clothing going to the Kit Aid Foundation, whilst winter clothing such will go to civilians in the stricken Eastern European country.

Following the reported burglary, the club released a statement that called for help to contact the people pictured as they may have information to help with investigations.

The statement was released on social media and shared more than 300 times alongside the CCTV footage.

Plaudits as Bazunu is the man of the match

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth has praised the performance of Portsmouth keeper Gavin Bazunu following the side's 0-0 draw at Fratton Park.

The Irish international, who is on loan from Manchester City, made several important stops to deny the dominant Chairboys the lead, with his best saves seeing him deny Anis Mehmeti in the first-half and Lewis Wing in the second.

Speaking after the stalemate on the south coast, Ainsworth said: "How it finished 0-0 I'll never know.

"Their keeper was man of the match and rightly so, as he has made some fantastic saves."

On Wycombe, he said: "I don't think Portsmouth had a shot on target which is a great testament to the way we are playing at the moment."

Ainsworth's analysis after Pompey point



Wycombe Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth believes the point could go a long way to help Wanderers' promotion push (PA)

GARETH Ainsworth believes if Wycombe were to get promoted back to the Championship at the first attempt, the achievement could eclipse the club's successes from two years ago.

At the time of writing, the Chairboys are eighth on 66 points, and are just two places and one point off the play-offs.

Their 0-0 draw at Portsmouth also saw them record their fourth clean sheet in five games.

During that time, they have not lost a league match and due to the international break next week, the draw versus Pompey means Wanderers will end the month unbeaten.

This is off the back of seven-game winless run which saw the Chairboys drop from top to seventh.

Speaking after the draw, he said: "The lads will have a few days to recover as they need to, both mentally and physically.

"When we get back, it'll be a clean slate, so we just need to get down and go because everyone at this club wants us to get promoted.

"It will be a fantastic achievement and I know we were there last year but probably, if we did get promoted, it could eclipse what we did [back in 2020].

"This is a huge league this season with the teams in this league and if you look at it, the league has been split into two - bottom and top.

"There is no middle ground in this league, and I think it'll be the highest ever for a play-off and the lowest going down.

"It's really split, but, with the calibre of teams in it make it that way."

The run of clean sheets is the product of the boss knowing that changes needed to be made, following their

By James Richings

winless streak of seven matches.

During that time, Wycombe conceded 16 goals keeping just one shut out.

But since moving to having four at the back, rather than the three which has been used throughout the campaign, Ainsworth believes they can end the season strong.

On the recent defensive changes, he said: "I'm really happy as we worked really hard on it as I pride myself on defensive shape and we work hard in training on that.

"If you ask the boys, they'll tell you that I put on these phases and little functions which will precede in the 11 vs 11 and they've really got to grips with it, as they are all really great players.

"They work out things during the game because as the wind was in our face during the second half, they knew how to deal with that. Ryan Tafazolli and Anthony Stewart have claimed that but, I'll have to credit Chris Forino, Jack Wakely, Jack Grimmer, Jordan Obita who didn't feature today.

"We have got these defenders competing and they know they have got to be on their A game because if they are not, I've got people saying, 'gaffer, I'm ready', which is something that you want as a manager.

"I'm very proud of them."

And on the performances of his attackers, the boss concluded: "Garath McCleary and Jason McCarthy did brilliantly when they linked up and Daryl Horgan was fantastic, but we were missing that killer's touch.

"That happens sometimes and we'll group."

SPORT

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Wycombe knocked out by Ascot United



Gareth Ainsworth (PA)

No concerns for the boss, Ainsworth

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth has no worries that the break for the Chairboys next week could impact their recent good run.

When asked if he was worried regarding the break, he said: "Not at all.

"We will work this in the right way. "I have got sport scientists and medical staff that will make sure that this break is done the right way.

"We've got a history of finishing strong so when we do come back, we try and get into the top six.

"I've got every faith in the boys." "I'm looking forward to a couple of days off as it has been really intense and thank you to the fans that travelled today, as you were absolutely fantastic.

"You out sang Portsmouth at times which rarely happens but that tells you how this Wycombe side are turning heads."

Linton shines as De Barr returns

TJAY De Barr has returned to Wycombe Wanderers following his short-term loan deal at Non League, Eastleigh.

The Gilbertian played four times and failed to score for the Spitfires, but he hadn't played since their 1-1 home draw against Southend United at the end of February.

In that fixture, De Barr picked up a 'serious injury' and will rehabilitate with the Chairboys.

The Non League outfit said: "Tjay De Barr has returned to Wycombe Wanderers following the conclusion of his short-term loan.

"Despite making an instant impression in his four appearances with the Spitfires, he, unfortunately, picked up a serious injury in his final appearance for the club against Southend United."

In other loan news, Malachi Linton scored twice in King's Lynn's 3-0 away win at Aldershot, Ali Al-Hamadi and Connor Parsons both featured in Bromley's 0-0 draw against Yeovil, and Max Ram and Andre Burley both played in Hungerford's defeat at home to Eastbourne Borough.



Fans ran onto the pitch after Ascot defeated Wycombe on penalties to reach the Berks & Bucks Cup final (@Thowland81/Twitter)

By James Richings

A RECORD attendance, free programmes, a pitch invasion, and a semi-final victory.

Tuesday, March 22, 2022, will forever be a day to remember for Non League Ascot United, as they defeated Wycombe Wanderers of League One in the Berks and Bucks FA Cup semi-final 3-1 on penalties, following a 0-0 draw at the Racecourse.

Before the match even kicked off, there was a party atmosphere in the Royal Borough of Berkshire as 1,267 people descended on the stadium which boasts a 4G pitch, recording the Yellamen's highest-ever record home attendance.

This smashed their previous record of 1,149 spectators which was

against Wembley, in a FA Cup extra-preliminary round, in August 2011.

Going into the match, several Wanderers first team players made an appearance against the Combined Counties League Premier Division North outfit with the likes of Jack Grimmer, Sullay Kaikai, Adam Przybek, and Chris Forino all starting against Ascot.

Other notable names included the likes of Jack Young, Jack Wakely, and Andre Burley, whilst four trialists began the defeat against the Yellows.

Despite Wanderers' strong squad, Ascot were the better side throughout the contest as Przybek was kept busy saving a flurry of United attempts throughout the first-half.

Goalmouth scrambles, dangerous set-pieces and great defensive work

saw Wanderers keep themselves in the game as the home side were dominant during the opening stages.

The first period petered out with Wycombe resulting in long-range efforts, but you have to give credit to Ascot, as they defended in numbers and sniffed out any danger, as both sides went into the break goalless.

The second half was similar to the first with Ascot dictating the play as Przybek again needed to be on guard to keep the flurry of attempts out, whilst Wanderers tried to break down the Non Leaguers with counter-attacks.

Attack was the best form of defence for both teams during the second period, as it finished goalless.

No extra time was played so it went straight to a penalty shootout, and after the coin toss saw Wanderers face the Ascot fans behind the home goal,

there was a sense of predictability that a cup upset was on the cards.

The United fans were loud in voice and made their presence known which ultimately helped the home side progress into the final.

After both Wycombe and Ascot missed their inaugural spot-kicks, the Yellaman recovered and scored three of their five penalties, whilst Grimmer and Burley failed to convert theirs.

The stage was set for Louis Bouwers to seal a famous win for Ascot.

He duly converted which led to scenes that the Berkshire outfit had not seen for several years.

They'll either play Reading or Milton Keynes in the final, whilst Wycombe will turn their focus onto pushing for that play-off place in League One.

Well done to Ascot, and good luck in the final.