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SPORT: Wanderers plan life back in the third tier

Can Wycombe take League One by storm?



Wycombe were promoted to the Championship after they defeated Oxford United in the League One play off final last July. They were then relegated on the final day of the season against Middlesbrough on May 8 - finishing with 43 points (PA)

THE new season is only six weeks away and there's plenty of excitement among Wanderers fans around a potential promotion push.

With the impressive performances at the end of the Championship campaign combined with an excellent squad that will be added to in the coming weeks, Wycombe could be right in the mix in the third tier.

However, it's set to be a very strong league. Sunderland and Portsmouth will be desperate to finally return to the Championship, while Ipswich will be hoping they've found the right man in Paul Cook to make it click.

Oxford have to go again after double play-off disappointment, and former Premier League clubs Wigan and Bolton will be rejuvenated after surviving administration and entering a bright new era with success last season.

Charlton will also be one of the

By **Jamie Cameron**

favourites under Nigel Adkins, while MK Dons may be a dark horse with their possession-based style of play.

Of the Chairboys' fellow relegated clubs, Rotherham have shown on several occasions that they can bounce back after disappointment, while Sheffield Wednesday have some rebuilding to do and may not hit the ground running immediately.

Despite the multitude of contenders, Wycombe will still be confident of being right up there. The departure of Fred Onyedinma was a blow, but the squad is arguably better than it has ever been.

There's both experience and depth at the back in the likes of Joe Jacobson, Anthony Stewart, Jack Grimmer and Jordan Obita.

The midfield also looks stronger than it did in the last League One campaign, with Anis Mehmeti and Garath McCleary able to complement the hard-working duo Curtis Thompson and Dom Gape.

With a few additions, the squad could be one of the very best in the league.

The aforementioned Portsmouth and Sunderland are also yet to get underway in the transfer market, with the latter having let go first-team players like Jack Whatmough and Ben Close.

Two more Pompey men moved on to join potential promotion rivals, with Tom Naylor and Ryan Williams now at Wigan and Oxford respectively.

Charlton signed Jayden Stockley permanently this week, while Scott Twine's move to join MK Dons was an eye-catching one.

Wanderers are sure to make their own moves in the coming weeks as

they look to turn what looks like a play-off squad into a promotion-winning one.

One thing that has been floating around is that several Championship teams are interested in signing striker Uche Ikpeazu.

The 26-year-old, who signed for Wanderers last summer from Hearts, played 31 times for club and scored six goals in their inaugural Championship season.

His strong hold up play earned him many plaudits throughout the season, with Middlesbrough, Millwall, Derby County and Nottingham Forest all reportedly interested in signing the striker, according to Sky Sports.

If he were to leave the club, his departure will be a huge loss to Wanderers, who are hoping to bounce back to the second tier of English football at the first attempt.

Wycombe have yet to sign any players so far this transfer window.



Leicester won the FA Cup (PA)

PL side to play Wanderers

THE MIDLANDS SIDE WILL ARRIVE IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE IN JULY

WYCOMBE have confirmed that they will play Leicester City in a friendly match next month.

The Chairboys will host the 2021 FA Cup winners at Adams Park on Wednesday, July 28, with the pre-season match kicking off at 7.30pm.

This will be the only friendly match that Wanderers will play at Adams Park before their League One season kicks-off on Saturday, August 7.

The club said: "Ticket details for this fixture will follow in due course, pending further instruction from the government and local Safety Advisory Group on what level of attendance can be achieved.

"It is the club's intention to accommodate - as a minimum - all 2021/22 season ticket holders, with priority also given to those fans who waived their refund for the 2020/21 campaign."

The Leicester team that will be visiting Adams Park at the end of next month could include both Josh Knight and Admiral Muskwe.

The pair could return to Buckinghamshire following their successful loan spells at the Chairboys last season.

Knight, who joined in the autumn, played 39 times for the club and scored twice.

He also won both the club's Player Supporters' Player of the Year and Players' Player awards following his brilliant performances - despite Wycombe's relegation.

His teammate at both Wanderers and Leicester, Muskwe joined the Chairboys in January on a six-month loan deal and played 19 matches for Gareth Ainsworth's men, scoring three times.

For more information, visit the club's website wycombewanderers.co.uk.