

Reaches 75% of adults in High Wycombe, Beaconsfield and Marlow each month

*E Telmer Oct 2021 (4 weeks in print & online)

Bucks Free Press

Friday, July 28, 2023

Covering Wycombe, South Bucks, Chilterns and Aylesbury since 1856

£1.50



POP STAR LEIGH-ANNE MIXES WITH FLASH MOB Pages 4 & 5



BACK TO SCHOOL FOR WEST WYCOMBE REUNION



Page 23

Friend guilty of Shah's shallow grave murder



Mourners gather

Victim Mohammed Shah Subhani, known as Shah



Accomplice who helped bury body gave police killer's name Page 2

LAW FIRM TO SHUT AFTER 250 YEARS



Page 10

Briants Fencing Supplies
LAP PANELS
 Autumn/Winter can be a great time to replace broken and damaged fence panels. Once the shrubs and borders have been cut back it's far easier to access those awkward areas.



Opening Hours - Weekdays 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM & 1:45 - 5:00 PM
 Collection OR Local Delivery (Within approx 20miles of HP27 9SG)
 Order Instore, online or call 01844 343863. www.briantsfencing.co.uk

Nursery Places Available
 Availability may be limited in certain age groups or booking patterns



Berryfields
 Day Nursery and Preschool
 HP18 1BB

Willows
 Day Nursery and Preschool
 HP21 8BP

Divorce, separation, finances & child arrangements.



Contact our family team today to arrange a free consultation.
 Call 01753 709262 or visit kiddrapinet.co.uk

Download our free **GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING DIVORCE**
kiddrapinet.co.uk/divorce/separation

kiddrapinet SOLICITORS

SPORT

Update on injury in win

A brief injury update has been provided on Wycombe utility player Jasper Pattenden.

The 21-year-old came off in and around the half-hour mark in the Chairboys' recent 1-0 away friendly win at Wealdstone on July 25.

He had featured in all of Wanderers' non-competitive matches this summer (excluding the 7-0 defeat versus Hanwell Town which saw the Wycombe team consist of trialists), and looked sharp during his appearance in Ruislip.

But after suffering a knock, he was replaced by Harry Boyes.

Assistant manager Richard Thomas said: "It was just a precaution to take him off as he felt his groin tighten up slightly so there was no need to push it."

"I'm sure he would've stayed on if needed too as that's in his nature, but it was a precaution that he came off as it was a little tweak, but, he said it settled down but we probably won't know until Thursday how serious it is."

Pattenden joined Wycombe from Worthing last summer and has played seven times for the Chairboys.

Number two is revealed

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the signing of Under 19 Kosovo goalkeeper, Laurie Shala.

The teenager joins the Chairboys after impressing Matt Bloomfield and Sam Grace on trial, after he was released by Crystal Palace in the summer.

He becomes the seventh new face to join the Adams Park club this transfer window, with the ex-West Ham United youth player being brought in as Max Stryjek's understudy for the season ahead.

Stryjek, who joined the club nearly 12 months ago, was the only shot-stopper at Adams Park prior to Shala's arrival, following the departures of Tyla Dickinson and Josh Blunkell respectively.

Shala will wear the number 13 shirt for Wanderers, which was last worn by Dickinson, and his move is subject to FA and EFL approval.

D'Mani is back and ready to go



D'Mani Mellor has scored two goals for Wycombe in pre-season. They have been against Arsenal U21s and Wealdstone (PA)



Lewis Wing spent 18 months with the Chairboys between January 2022 and June 2023 (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Matt Bloomfield has heaped praise onto striker D'Mani Mellor following his performance in the club's 2-1 friendly win over Aldershot Town.

The former Manchester United youth player scored a brilliant goal in the victory against the Shots on July 22, which was his second strike of the pre-season.

His first was in the 1-0 win versus the Arsenal U21s on July 14 at London Colney.

Mellor, who joined Wanderers 12 months ago, bagged one competitive goal in 12 games before moving on loan to Rochdale for the latter half of the season, where he failed to score in any of his 19 appearances.

On the 22-year-old, Bloomfield said: "D'Mani did really well and I love him as a lad."

"He works hard every single day and even though he was unfortunate to get relegated with Rochdale, he's taken a lot from that and his development has been good."

"As I said before, he's a lovely lad who always has a smile and wants to do well."

"I was really impressed with D'Mani who played really well."

"He linked up well with Garath [McCleary] who played in a slightly different role than what we've seen in the last couple of years, but we're trying to utilise him as much as we can in the attacking areas."

The manager was also impressed with the performance of Jack Young.

The 22-year-old only featured in

By James Richings

seven games during the course of the 2022/23 season, but looked assured when coming on as a second-half substitute against the National League club.

Bloomfield added: "We've got more minutes for Luke [Leahy] and Kian [Breckin] in the midfield and the back three played really well as Kane Vincent-Young played well too."

"I also think Jack has had a great pre-season and fair play to him."

"He's working really hard during the summer and he's come back in great shape."

"I'm pleased with how he's been."

Finally, on the performance itself, which saw Mellor and a trialist get on the scoresheet, the 39-year-old concluded: "It was a very good game in slightly testing circumstances due to the rain and the slippery surface, but this helped with the way we passed the ball, especially in the first-half."

"The game changed a bit in the second half when we made so many changes as we had several trialists, but there were plenty of positives to take."

"Usually in pre-season, you play games on nice pitches in nice, sunny weather so something like this was a good test for us to make sure we're ready."

"Aldershot were very good as they put in a good test and I'm glad with the amount of minutes we put into the lads."

Wing lands in Reading after Wanderers exit

FORMER Wycombe Wanderers midfielder Lewis Wing has signed for League One rivals, Reading.

The 28-year-old, who spent 18 months with the Chairboys between January 2022 and June 2023, was a free agent after he rejected a new-and-improved contract offer to stay at Adams Park.

After declining, he had been training alongside ex-Middlesbrough teammate Britt Assombalonga with performance specialist coach Luke Jones in order to build up fitness, and had been tipped to join Queens Park Rangers to reunite with Wanderers' old boss, Gareth Ainsworth.

However, it was later revealed that

Rangers 'were never in' for the ex-Sheffield Wednesday and Rotherham man.

Reading's head of football operations, Mark Bowen, said: "By securing Lewis' signature, we are bringing in a hard-working, dependable player who can provide moments of magic that can win football matches."

"He fits the mould of what we want at this club: someone who will give their all for the shirt, who will bring a positive influence to the dressing room, and who is desperate to win matches."

Wing played 63 times for Wycombe and scored 11 goals, which includes a



Joe Jacobson has played 377 games and has scored 44 goals for Wycombe since joining in the summer of 2014 (PA)

‘He just gets better’

WYCOMBE boss Matt Bloomfield believes skipper Joe Jacobson ‘gets better every year’ as the club prepares for his testimonial match this weekend.

The 36-year-old is celebrating his 10th year at Adams Park with a friendly against his boyhood team, Cardiff City.

This will be the last non-competitive match of the summer for the Chairboys before they take on Exeter City seven days later in the season opener.

Bloomfield said: “He’s a special guy and he’s one of the best guys you’ll ever meet, and I’m glad we’ll be able to celebrate him for what he has done for this club.

“Both as a player and as a person.

“There have been some special moments on the pitch, but off the pitch as well in terms of his leadership and how he conducts himself every day.

“This is to celebrate J on his day.

“It’s testament to his longevity that not many people join a club at 27 and then get a testimonial because most people think that when you’re above 30, you’re over the hill.

“He just gets better every year, and he does every minute of every session we put out, he’s looked after himself and he conducts himself in a great way.”

Very strong bonds are built at Wanderers



Joe Jacobson (left) (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Matt Bloomfield believes the ‘longevity’ at the club has helped created ‘strong bonds’ amongst players.

The manager was speaking to the Free Press ahead of Joe Jacobson’s testimonial against Cardiff City on July 29, as the Welsh left-back is celebrating 10 years at Adams Park.

He said: “We’ve created a strong bond and in a way, the tough moments build those bonds rather than the good moments because you’ll find out more about people in the bad times than good, and he’s someone that I can rely on.

“I love him so much.

“Look at Bayo [Akinfenwa], he was at many clubs but spent six years at Wycombe, JJ at 27 came us and he’s been here for 10 years and I’ll keep saying it, this is a special club.

“The soul about this place and the new signings and staff members feel it too.

“This club is full of good people and in my life, I’ve learnt that you need to spend time with good people.”

Final prep for Cardiff ‘test’ at Adams Park

WANDERERS boss Matt Bloomfield believes facing Cardiff at home will be ‘stern test’ for his side ahead of the new season.

The Chairboys have won all their friendly matches bar one, and recently defeated National League Wealdstone 1-0 on Tuesday night.

He said: “It’ll be a stern test but we have had some really games against National League opposition, and we’ve been implementing a few new things over pre-season which we will start to come out.

“We’ve done some of it during the games that we have played but we would like to do more of it against higher opposition as well.

“Cardiff will be a tough test and it’ll be a proper game.”

Inspirational boss helps club captain



Joe Jacobson has credited Matt Bloomfield on his career at Wycombe (PA)

JOE Jacobson has admitted that he never expected a testimonial when he first arrived at Wycombe in 2014.

The then 27-year-old joined the club as a free agent following his exit at Shrewsbury Town and initially signed a two-year deal with the Chairboys.

Since then, he has gone on to feature in 377 competitive games for the club, scoring 44 goals and winning promotion on two occasions in 2018 and 2020.

He was also part of the 2015 and 2022 play-off campaigns which saw Wanderers lose both the League Two and League One finals against Southend United and Sunderland respectively.

He told the Free Press: “I never thought I’d sign for a club at 27 and have a testimonial, that’s for sure.

“But when you walk in here as a new signing, you immediately feel as if you’re part of something.

“Everyone made me welcome and I try and do that with the new players that come here too.

“I try and make them feel as homely as possible as we’re all here for one reason and that’s to help Wycombe Wanderers as a Football Club.

“As long as we’re all going in the right direction, we’ll be successful like we have done over the years.

“The proof is there so why change that?

“It’s hugely proud of me to be

By James Richings

here for 10 seasons and I want to thank the owners, the old gaffer, the new gaffer and all the contracts that have kept me here.

“I’ve loved my time here.”

During the last decade, he explained that he would look up to the 39-year-old in training and would ‘watch him’ due to how diligent he was.

Collectively, both Bloomfield and Jacobson have featured in nearly 1,000 competitive fixtures for Wanderers.

He continued: “I’ve changed the way I look at things both on and off the pitch, and that starts with Matt Bloomfield who I watched every day.

“I watched him at the training ground and he was so diligent in everything that he did, you can’t help but be attracted to what he is doing and follow that.

“That’s one of the reasons why I am still playing today as I saw how professional he was and how good he was.

“I wanted to be that person who could still compete and perform and I have probably got him to thank for that anyone else.

“If I hadn’t met the gaffer and seen what the culture was like, then maybe I still wouldn’t be playing.”

It will be the first meeting between Wycombe and Cardiff since April 2021.

SPORT



Dale Taylor (pictured for Nottingham Forest) (PA)

Wanderers' new striker on his goals for the season ahead

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Dale Taylor has revealed his aims for the season ahead.

The 20-year-old has joined the Chairboys on loan for the 2023/24 campaign from Nottingham Forest and told the Free Press what he aims to achieve at Adams Park by next April.

The Northern Irish international is so far one of eight new faces to arrive at the club

this summer, and is expected to partner Sam Vokes in attack when the latter is fit.

He said: "I'm here for the experience but promotion is the main goal.

"For myself, I have got a target in mind personally, but promotion is the main aim.

Prior to his move to Bucks, Taylor had joined Forest's first team on their pre-season

tour of Spain after impressing whilst on loan at Burton Albion at the back end of the previous campaign.

He scored five goals in 20 matches for the Brewers to help them secure a midtable finish after what was a terrible start to the season.

Speaking on his time at Wanderer so far, he added: "I felt really good as I only came into

the squad a few days ago and trained so that was always going to be difficult.

"Meeting all the lads and the gaffer was brilliant and I thought the boys did really well today against Wealdstone and everyone looked sharp.

"All the lads have made me feel welcome in the few days I've been here and they're a really good group which was great."

Jacobson looks ahead to Cardiff

WYCOMBE Wanderers captain Joe Jacobson believes his testimonial against Cardiff City this weekend will be 'a good benchmark' to test themselves against higher league opposition.

The fixture at Adams Park will celebrate the 36-year-old's 10th season with the Chairboys, but he wants the game to be treated as if this was a competitive match.

The Bluebirds finished in a disappointing 21st in the Championship last season and only avoided relegation to League One after Wanderers' Thames Valley rivals, Reading, suffered a six-point deduction for breaching an EFL business plan.

But with a new man in charge and with some impressive signings, Cardiff have been tipped for a promotion push for the season ahead.

Jacobson told the Free Press: "It'll be a competitive game and for us, it'll be a good benchmark as they're a good team.

"They were in the Premier League a few years back and have signed some good players, most notably Aaron Ramsey who has got all the experience at the highest level.

"I have had the pleasure to play with him when I was younger along with Sam Vokes who is a lot younger than me, and if they can attract players like that, then they are a club on the up.

"I want to see them compete

By James Richings

at the top end of the Championship as I think that's where they deserve to be."

Jacobson, who is from the Welsh capital, started his career with the Bluebirds and played two first team games for his boyhood team before departing in 2007.

This was in a Championship fixture which saw the Chairboys lose 2-1 at the Cardiff City Stadium.

He continued: "One thing I wanted was to have a proper game because of the timing.

"I didn't want to have a young Premier League team which we had the option of doing, and I didn't want to go against what the gaffer wanted to do for his pre-season plans.

"So I thought a game against a Championship team would be competitive as it'll give us a good reading of where we are now, and Cardiff is where I grew up and they're my hometown club.

"It's where I started my career and thankfully, they agreed to do it.

"I've got great memories as a kid going to watch Cardiff both home and away, and thinking about it, when we were going through the teams, Cardiff was one that I was thinking about.

"They've been great in terms of organising things."

The match will kick-off at 3pm and tickets are still available.



Joe Jacobson has played nearly 400 times for the Chairboys (PA)



Luke Leahy (PA)

Leahy on his move to Bucks

WYCOMBE Wanderers utility player Luke Leahy has revealed why he opted to join the club from Shrewsbury Town this summer.

The 30-year-old, who has also played for Bristol Rovers, Walsall, Falkirk and Rugby Town, signed for the Chairboys at the start of the month for a fee believed to be around £100,000 after two successful years in Shropshire.

During his time with the Salops, where he was captain, he scored 20 goals in 91 appearances and won the club's Player of the Season award on two occasions.

He said: "When I've played against Wycombe, I've always seen the camaraderie between the players and they've been up there for the past few seasons.

"That played a big part and after speaking to the gaffer and Scott Mitchell, I felt like this was the right fit for me at this stage of my career.

"It was a decision that I thought about thoroughly and had to go over all the pros and cons with my wife but I'm here now and I'm loving it.

"I sort of pushed for it, but it was always hard to leave Shrewsbury as I was captain and have two brilliant years there, but going forward, I thought this was the right move for me.

"The lads have been great as they've been really welcoming and it's been an easy group to get involved in.

"I've been here for about two weeks now and have really settled in."