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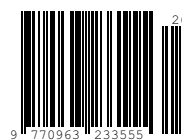
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SPORT



FOOTBALL: It has been a busy week at Adams Park Derby situation and new signing revealed



Wycombe boss Gareth Ainsworth has confirmed that regardless of what league Wanderers are in next season, they are currently 'preparing as a Championship club'. The players returned for pre-season training on July 1 and have friendly matches during the next four weeks (PA)

By James Richings

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth has revealed that the Chairboys are 'preparing as a Championship club' following the EFL's decision to punish Derby County.

The Rams, who avoided relegation on the final day of the season [May 8] at the expense of Sheffield Wednesday, Rotherham United and Wanderers, could be expelled from the Championship for breaching the EFL's financial rules between 2016 and 2018.

The footballing body has since revealed in a lengthy statement that was released on June 23 that the club, who are managed by Manchester United and England legend Wayne Rooney, will be fined £100,000 - but the future of what leagues both clubs will play in next season is yet to be confirmed.

If Derby are demoted to League One, Wycombe will replace them as they finished one point and one place behind the Midlands side.

The EFL also revealed that despite fining Derby, a disciplinary

process' is still being 'finalised'.

Speaking on the topic, manager Gareth Ainsworth has said: "We are preparing as a Championship club which is important as we want to be a Championship club, with Championship standard.

"We learnt plenty of lessons last year as we didn't start well at all and that was probably a combination of having a little bit of faith into the League One team that came up, an ageing League One team, and we spoke to players and discussed it, and we thought we needed some new blood in.

"And once that new blood came into the team, we saw in the second half of the season we were fantastic.

"There's still room for the old guard without a doubt, but I think with some of the exciting signings we have made, they have really effected the squad and it rose their

levels.

"And once you feel that you can compete with people, the confidence levels rise and the shackles come off.

"We believe we can compete with anyone, and if that is League One again, we believe we can get promoted as we have done it once, and if it is the Championship, then we will carry on where we left off."

Regardless of which league the Chairboys will be in next season, one person who will be donning the famous blue kit will be midfielder Josh Scowen, who has returned to Adams Park.

The 28-year-old, who left Wycombe in January 2015 for Barnsley, resigned for Wanderers on Tuesday, June 29, after spending the last 18 months at League One rivals Sunderland.

He is the first player to sign for the club this summer.

Following his arrival, the boss said: "Josh is a player with real Championship pedigree and that's exactly what we're looking for here,

so I'm delighted to bring him back.

"I was a big admirer of his when I saw him playing in our youth team all those years ago, and it's been no surprise that he's made his way up the ladder and spent much of his career in the Championship.

"Wycombe fans will remember Josh as being a real battler in midfield, someone who can win the ball and make things happen for us going forward, and he will play a big part in our efforts to have another successful season.

"There are more signings in the pipeline but it's great to get this one over the line in time for the start of pre-season training on Thursday, and I'm excited to see him back in the light and dark blue quarters."

During his first spell with the club, Scowen played 100 times for the Chairboys, scoring three times.

After his move to Barnsley, he moved to QPR and then Sunderland.

Wycombe will start their season against Accrington Stanley on August 7 at Adams Park.



Wycombe will play MK Dons

Who was drawn in the cup?

OPPOSITES FOR THE LEAGUE CUP AND FOOTBALL LEAGUE TROPHY

WYCOMBE Wanderers will play Exeter City in the first round of the League Cup this season.

In the draw that was concluded on Sky Sports News on June 24, the Chairboys were the fourth team to be pulled out of the hat for the Southern section - where it was confirmed that they will travel to St James Park week commencing August 9.

The draw was made on the same day that Wanderers were given their League One fixtures for the up-and-coming season.

The Grecians, who play in League Two, last played Wanderers in the 2017/18 season when they drew 1-1 in Devon in February 2018.

Overall, the two clubs have played each other 20 times since their first battle in 2000, with the Chairboys winning nine of those matches.

There have also been six draws and five wins for the South West side.

On the same day, it was also revealed who Gareth Ainsworth's men would play in this season's Football League Trophy.

The Chairboys did not partake in the competition last season due to being a Championship club, but this campaign, they will play Burton Albion, Milton Keynes Dons and the Aston Villa Under 21 side in the Papa John's Trophy.

Wanderers played MK Dons in the competition in the 2019/20 season, which saw the Chairboys win 2-1 at Stadium: MK.

Dons had taken the lead through a Brennan Dickenson free-kick before a Nnamdi Oforih screamer and an injury-time strike from Josh Parker sealed the win.

The match also saw Dons' Kieran Agard and Giles Phillips both sent off for violent conduct against each other.