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# Bucks Free Press

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# 'DEVASTATED'

Business owner 'shocked' after fire  
rips through factory

Story and photos: Page 3

### CRIME Bomb scare teenager in court



Page 15

### SPORT Wycombe hold onto



Back page

**INSIDE** • Property • Freetime • Letters • 7 pages of puzzles • 4 pages of sport

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## SPORT

## Gold medals for Jessica

AYLESBURY athlete Jessica Gadirova secured a hat-trick of golds at the European Gymnastics Championships after taking the top spot in the women's floor final on Sunday.

Gadirova, 18, saw off team-mate Alice Kinsella as Great Britain completed a superb one-two finish on the final day of the championships in Turkey.

Gadirova took her third straight European title on the floor with a total of 14,000 points, while Kinsella, 22, scored 13,666.

She said: "The experience has been amazing and I cannot believe what is happening.

"It has been such an amazing championships and I couldn't have asked for anything more.

"That is the reason I am a gymnast because I love to perform on the floor. I gave it everything today."

Kinsella said: "It feels amazing. I went into the final not expecting much but just to enjoy it.

In the men's vault, defending champion Jake Jarman settled for silver after he was narrowly beaten by Armenia's Artur Davtyan.

Davtyan's total of 15,033 points outscored Jarman's 15,016, with the former awarded a higher mark for his second vault.

## All for a good cause

A WYCOMBE Wanderers supporter will run this weekend's London Marathon to raise funds for a disability charity.

Sián Culley, who has been a Chairboys fan all her life, will take part in the event in aid of Level Playing Field – a charitable organisation which helps impaired sporting enthusiasts watch and attend events.

Sián said: "Both of my parents are disabled, and they love going along to support Wycombe.

"I didn't realise the impact good stewarding or facilities could have until I was trying to help manoeuvre them, and you see the range of accessibility at different grounds.

"This is a really important cause and my parents are very proud. They could not do this themselves, but I am able to run for a charity so close to them.

"It will be my 11th marathon and the atmosphere in London is really lovely. Being surrounded by other people raising money is so inspiring."

# Couple to take part in marathon



Jessica, 27 and Danny, 34, will run the London Marathon this weekend to raise funds for those fighting cancer

A FORMER Buckinghamshire local will run this weekend's London Marathon to raise funds for a world-leading cancer research institute.

Jess Calam, who grew up in Beaconsfield, will run the race with her partner, Danny Radis, to show support for two of their family members currently receiving treatment for cancer.

The duo now live in Balham in South East London, with the funds going to the Institute of Cancer Research which is based in the capital.

Jess, 27, said: "I'm close to my grandad and it's believed that he had exposure to asbestos when he was a young boy, which is thought to be linked to his mesothelioma.

"Danny's mum, who lives in Australia, has been battling with cancer for a few years now.

"Because it's an issue that's very personal to us both, we wanted to take part in a challenge that not only raised funds but also awareness of cancer.

"It's not uncommon to be told a family member or loved one has this unthinkable disease."

The couple has so far raised almost £2,000 for the ICR.

Jess said: "I took up running in lockdown and I've never run this far before.

"Danny is faster than me, so although we'll start together on London Marathon day, I think he'll finish before me.

"But Danny's taught me

By James Richings

about the importance of slowing down rather than stopping when I feel like I've reached my limit.

"So above all else, I just need to make sure I don't stop! I'm nervous that we're now in race week, I just want to get it done."

Lannah Carbonilla, Head of Supporter Engagement at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, said: "We're really grateful to have the support of Jess and Danny, and all of the #teamICR runners at this year's TCS London Marathon.

"Getting out there and training for a marathon, while also attempting to hit a fundraising target, is no easy feat, and we've been so impressed by the dedication and commitment of our supporters.

"We hope that Jess, Danny and all our runners will be spurred on by the knowledge that they're helping to make a difference for people affected by cancer up and down the country.

"Every pound raised means that our research can keep moving forward, and every step taken towards that finish line brings our researchers one step closer to finishing cancer."

To support Jess and Danny please donate on their fundraising page: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Jess-and-Danny](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Jess-and-Danny).



The cricket season has now resumed in Buckinghamshire

## Mixed start to the cricket season for Bucks

BUCKS made a mixed start when they shared the honours with Oxfordshire in their opening National Counties T20 double-header at Wormsley on Saturday.

In two closely-fought contests on a slow hybrid pitch, Bucks won the first contest by ten runs but lost the second by four wickets.

In the first game, Bucks, put in to bat, made 145-5 from their 20 overs, thanks largely to former Worcestershire player Alexei Kervezee, who made 63 from 53 balls with one six and eight fours.

Good support came late on

from Ross Richardson with 27 not out. Oxon included former England and Notts all-rounder Samit Patel, who conceded 31 runs in his four overs.

In reply, Oxon skipper Johnny Cater, kept them in the hunt with 47 off 37 balls, but a good final over from Gerrards Cross seamer Jon Denning restricted them to 135-7.

This Sunday, Bucks continue their campaign with a double-header against Berkshire at High Wycombe. The first game starts at 11am.

Match scorecards can be found on Bucks playcricket website.

# Wycombe win away

WYCOMBE Wanderers' play-off push has lived to fight another day as they earned a hard-fought 2-1 victory away at Cambridge United.

In a first half that was full of chances for both teams, it was the hosts who had the inaugural attempts at goal.

However, on 34 minutes, Wycombe found their breakthrough through Ryan Tafazolli.

Lewis Wing's free-kick was brilliantly whipped into the box, and the centre back coolly slotted it past Mitov for his second of the campaign.

Moments later, Wycombe made it two through David Wheeler's seventh of the season with a

close-range header after Vokes' shot crash against the bar.

There were vocal appeals from both the players and fans that the attempt came from an offside position, but the replays showed that the ex-Exeter City man was clearly being played on.

In the second half, Sam Smith scored his fifth goal in as many games to give Cambridge hope on 61 minutes, as the Amber Army threw the kitchen sink at the Chairboys.

However, it was Wycombe that were victorious on a chilly night in Cambridgeshire.

Wanderers remain in eighth but are now only four points off the top six with three games left.

Attendance: 5,306 (261 away)



The win was only Wycombe's second in seven games, but it has moved them four points off the play-off places. Image: PA

## Alan Parry's Previews: The dream is still alive



There are two home games left

WYCOMBE'S fading hopes of grabbing a playoff place were kept alive by a gritty win at Cambridge United in midweek, the perfect response to last Saturday's demoralising defeat at Morecambe.

Next up is a must win game against Lincoln City at Adams Park on Saturday, April 22, but if Wanderers do miss out on a place in the top six, they are still on course for one of their highest ever finishes in the EFL.

Apparently, that is not good enough for some of their more critical fans on social media who forget that there are 16 clubs in League One and another 24 in League Two who would happily swap places with the Chairboys right now.

Three playoff finals in the last eight seasons is a remarkable achievement for a club of Wycombe's size, and it should not be forgotten that they have spent more time in League Two than in League One in the last decade.

Wycombe have had the better of previous encounters with Lincoln since the clubs first met over 30 years ago in the Chairboys' first season in the Football League.

They have won eleven games against the Imps, drawn five and lost just six.

Wanderers did the double over the Lincolnshire side last season winning both games 1-0.

Sam Vokes scored the only goal at Adams Park while Chris Forino grabbed the winner at Sincil Bank.

Earlier this season, Wanderers drew 0-0 at Lincoln where the home side have only lost one game in the entire campaign, and they have been in good form on-the-road in recent weeks drawing at Sheffield Wednesday and winning at Plymouth Argyle.

They have not tasted victory at Wycombe since 2006 with their last six visits to Adams Park ending in four defeats and two draws.

Another home win on Saturday would keep Matt Bloomfield's men in contention, then they need maximum points from their remaining games against Cheltenham Town and Portsmouth and must hope that their rivals for a playoff place slip up.

It is a lot to hope for, but not impossible.

# Explanation for Dom Gape's omission



Dominic Gape has only played 46 times for Wycombe since September 2020 due to injuries (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Matt Bloomfield has confirmed why Dominic Gape has been absent from the club's last two games.

The 28-year-old has only played 46 times for the Chairboys since September 2020 due to persistent injury issues.

This includes only making four appearances since October, totalling up to just half an hour of competitive football.

Bloomfield explained: "We've been carrying some injuries over the season and we're now in the fortunate position where we need to make decisions on the starting 11 and the squad.

"It's really competitive and it was a hard decision on who had to travel and who didn't.

"I love Dominic to bits as he was my teammate and a really good friend of mine over the years, but I'm in a position to make those calls.

"But Dominic is fit, he's training and I'm a big fan of his.

"He wasn't in the squad tonight [against Cambridge] but let's see moving forward."

Another player who has battled with serious injuries during their career is Jordan Willis, who played only his seventh game for Wycombe in the 2-1 victory against Cambridge United on April 18.

The centre back joined the Adams Park outfit in February but has only started twice since his move.

However, his second-half ap-

By James Richings

pearance in the win at the Abbey Stadium following a Chris Forino injury, saw the ex-Coventry City and Sunderland man put in an imperious display.

His last start for Wanderers was in Bloomfield's opening game against Shrewsbury back in February.

The manager said: "Jordan has been unlucky not to have played more.

"He is a diamond of a guy and I hate leaving him out because he's a brilliant trainer and man.

"His communication skills are just fantastic and it hurts to leave him out, but there have been times he has been crucial for us.

"That includes tonight and at Bristol Rovers away, as he has shown us his qualities."

Finally, on the injury Forino picked up in the win, Bloomfield concluded: "We've had a few little knocks tonight as it's that time of year where the bodies are getting tired due to the quick turnout of games.

"We had two trips away which included one up north, and we really felt that.

"And even though he came off, hopefully, Chris will be OK."

To read more about the latest news on Wycombe Wanderers, go to [www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport](http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport), or, you can follow James Richings on Twitter by going to @James\_BFP).

# SPORT



## Vokes commmits his future to Wycombe



Sam Vokes (centre being congratulated) has signed a new deal to stay at Wycombe until the end of the 2023/24 season (PA)

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers forward has revealed his intention was to 'always stay' at the club following his latest contract extension.

The 33-year-old would have been a free agent this summer after signing a two-year deal at the start of the 2021/22 campaign from Stoke City.

His commitment to the Chairboys was confirmed a day after their recent 2-1 away victory at Cambridge United on April 18, with the Welshman being one of six players to pen a new deal with the club.

The other names to have pledged their future to the Adams Park side for next season are Jason

McCarthy, Jack Grimmer, Josh Scowen, Joe Jacobson and David Wheeler.

Speaking to the Free Press on April 20, Vokes said: "It feels great and I'm delighted to be staying."

"I was obviously coming to the end of my contract this season, so it was nice to get in and speak to the club about everything."

"We've finalised it now and I'm excited for the future."

"I've enjoyed being here ever since I joined and it was always my intention to stay."

"I've loved my time here so far, I really have."

"And the future looks great and it's something I want to be a part of, as this club has captured me enjoying playing football again."

The new deal comes in what has been a very injury hit term for the former Burnley, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Stoke City man.

He has only scored six times this campaign in 34 games, compared to the 17 in 50 he got in his inaugural season.

And speaking to the Free Press, he openly spoke about how 'frustrating' the year has been due to his injury issues, lack of form the side's inconsistency in recent weeks.

But he remains positive that a place in the top six is not out of reach going into the final three matches.

The club's remaining matches of the season (as it stands) are against Lincoln City, Cheltenham Town and Portsmouth respectively.

He continued: "It's been a really frustrating season for me personally."

"I got a really good pre-season under my belt but I got injured in the last game and it carried on for a few weeks."

"That led me to miss essentially the first two months and it took me a while to get back into things."

"And to be honest, I thought I was playing some of my best football before getting injured again a few weeks ago."

"That too was frustrating as it has come at a critical time as we were on a good run."

"But that's football and I felt really good getting my first start at Cambridge since returning, and hopefully we will have a good run in for the last three games."



Wycombe sit in 8th (PA)

## Changes explained after win

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has revealed why he opted to make four changes to his starting line-up in their 2-1 away victory over Cambridge United.

Jason McCarthy, Chem Campbell, Tjay De Barr and Brandon Hanlan were all dropped to the substitutes bench, whilst Ryan Tafazolli, Garath McCleary, Nick Freeman, and Sam Vokes came in.

The alterations were made following Saturday's shock 1-0 away defeat against Morecambe, who earned their first victory in 10 games.

Bloomfield told the press: "It was necessary to make the [four] changes after a disappointing trip north to Morecambe."

"I was happy with the performance, but not the result on Saturday, so I thought it was important to freshen it up."

"Having Garath and Sam back in the starting 11 are big, and I felt it was the right thing to do, and I was really pleased with the way Nick played too."

## How many points are needed?

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield has admitted that he doesn't know how many points the Chairboys will need to secure a play-off place.

The Adams Park side sit in eighth place and four points off the top six with three games left.

Even if Wanderers win all their remaining fixtures, it still may not be enough, but Bloomfield is staying confident that a third play-off campaign in four years could yet happen.

He told the Free Press: "Who knows how many points we need. "It's hard to predict as we don't know what could happen there are always a couple of results that nobody would have expected. "All I know is that we need to take each game at a time and get in the play-offs."

The victory over Cambridge was his fourth in 12 games since taking over from Gareth Ainsworth two months ago, however, he is yet to taste a win on a Saturday afternoon following his appointment from Colchester United.

Up next for Wycombe is Lincoln City at home this Saturday [April 22].