

SPORT

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GRAHAM

Stewart must take his chance

FIGHT IS ON TO GET REGULAR START IN TEAM AFTER OTHERS IMPRESS

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Southampton had been set to expire today but he will now be at the club until Sunday, January 3.

Having turned 20 on Saturday, Ainsworth has been impressed by the maturity McCarthy has shown at the heart of the Wycombe defence.

He said: "He has improved with every game and it is just as you'd expect. You can't expect a 19-year-old who's never played before to come in and be superb in his first game. He has taken two or three games to get to know the boys and get up to speed but I think over the last three games Jason has performed very well, which has come as no surprise to me."

Stewart may get his first start since returning tonight when Wycombe host Leeds in a friendly.

The limited number of fit players available to Ainsworth means he will have to play a near full-strength squad and he expects Stewart to feature in proceedings.

"If all goes well Anthony will definitely play a big part on Friday and it is the perfect fixture for players like him who are coming back to fitness," Ainsworth said.

Saints pegged

CHALFONT HELD AFTER BEDFORD KEEPER ESCAPES RED CARD

A CONTROVERSIAL refereeing decision left Chalfont St Peter frustrated as they drew 1-1 with Bedford Town to leave them third in Southern League Division One Central on Saturday.

The incident occurred in the sixth minute as Tony Mendy went through on goal and was brought down by the Bedford keeper, who was also the last man.

With the offender already heading off the pitch in apparent acceptance of his punishment the referee called him back.

Mendy scored but Bedford levelled just 12 minutes later through Solomon Sambou.

The Saints' week got even worse on Tuesday night as they crashed out of the Red Insure Cup at the second round stage in a 5-1 loss at Northwood. Alex Paine scored Chalfont's goal in the 23rd minute.

WANDERERS: Jombati's sights set on round three Defender finally scores as Blues romp to cup victory

By Harry Gray

SIDO Jombati is pleased to have broken his goal scoring duck for the Chairboys after finding the net in spectacular fashion against Halifax Town in the FA Cup.

The right-back's outside-of-the-foot effort from all of 25 yards was the pick of the goals in the 4-0 win and a picture-book way to open his account at Adams Park.

The 28-year-old, who has been at the club since July 2014, is now hoping to build on his new found scoring touch.

"It was a good goal, and I am happy to score my first goal for Wycombe and it was a nice feeling to finally score," he said.

"I was lucky to play the ball forward and get a good one-two. The striker made a good run ahead of me and I just put my head down and hit it.

"It was a sweet hit and I am lucky it went into the net.

"I am happy to get my first goal after about a year-and-a-half here and I would like to maybe get one or two more but the team is the most important thing."

In truth Jombati is being modest in his appraisal of a superb goal that even the most prolific of strikers would have been proud of.

He had been a constant threat on the right-hand side all day and had got into similar positions to where he scored from on multiple occasions.

Jombati's strike also went a long way to clinching what proved to be an easy win against Halifax as the Blues, who had been contained in the first half, attacked at will after the break.



Off the mark in fine style: Sido Jombati scored the pick of the goals in Wanderers' FA Cup victory at Halifax on Sunday.
Picture: ANITA ROSS MARSHALL

The club, as a whole, is hoping for an improved cup run in a competition that has been cruel to Wycombe in recent years and the comprehensive win was the perfect way to open their campaign.

Jombati views the third round as the minimum target for Wanderers this season and would love to go far in the cup and secure a glamour tie against a top team.

With a match against Liverpool slipping through the Blues' grasp after

a defeat against AFC Wimbledon in round two last year, Jombati is determined to make amends for missing out on facing top level opposition in last season's competition.

"I only really have a preference for which team we play when we reach the third round. That's when you want a Premier League team for sure," he said.

"We missed out on Liverpool last year and we don't want something like that to happen again because

it was a big opportunity missed for us."

While reaching the third round and playing a Premier League team is an achievable goal, Jombati and his teammates will have to pass a difficult test against League One Millwall in the second round first.

The Lions are currently seventh in the league and will fancy their chances of ending the Chairboys' stay in the FA Cup in front of their own fans at the Den next month.



Focused on the job in hand: Gareth Ainsworth.

Ainsworth 'flattered' to be linked to QPR job

GARETH Ainsworth has failed to rule himself out of contention for the Queens Park Rangers job after his name was linked with the vacant post.

Loftus Road has a special place in Ainsworth's heart after he spent seven years with the London club from 2003 to 2010 and he is among those being flattered as a long-term replacement for Chris Ramsey.

While the 42-year-old stressed that he remains fully committed to the cause at Adams Park, he did consent that he was flattered by the speculation surrounding him.

He said: "It is brilliant to be linked and very flattering to be linked with big clubs, but I work closely with

(chairman) Andrew Howard and I have a job to do at Wycombe Wanderers and I am very happy here.

"If things take their natural course we will deal with it as it comes but I have got a job to do with Wycombe and that is what I am focusing on at the moment."

Neil Warnock is currently in charge of QPR in an interim capacity and may still be given the job on a permanent basis if he can turn around the Championship club's ailing fortunes.

They currently sit 13th in the table and have not won a game since they beat Bolton Wanderers 4-3 at home at the start of October.

Ainsworth is popular at QPR having

played 152 times for the Loftus Road outfit – his longest spell at any of his 12 clubs – and his impressive start to managerial life at Wycombe has seen his stock rise.

He is however an outsider to be offered the job with former Leicester City manager Nigel Pearson, who is also reported to be wanted by Fulham, among the favourites to become the club's third manager since February.

His stance though, is a departure from earlier this year when he categorically ruled himself out of the running for the job after Harry Redknapp departed the then Premier League side.

BLUES: Boss pleased not to make the headlines Ainsworth hails mature Blues after FA Cup first round victory

By Harry Gray

GARETH Ainsworth was pleased with the professional manner in which his Wanderers team beat Halifax Town in the FA Cup first round on Sunday.

Garry Thompson, Sido Jombati, Max Kretschmar and Aaron Amadi-Holloway scored the goals at The Shay as the Blues made light work of a potentially tricky tie.

Ainsworth was pleased by the manner in which his players approached the game and with the win that meant they remained firmly out of the media spotlight after the full-time whistle.

"I'm so glad people have seen how professional we were because that was the aim today. We knew the headlines could be written about us and we'll probably get a couple of lines now," he said.

In a first half in which Wanderers were rarely troubled, but also had to battle for their chances, Thompson was the outstanding player.

He took his goal with a first-time finish after Luke O'Nien had flicked on a cross and could have had more in the second half but hit the post and had a good chance well saved.

Ainsworth praised the 34-year-old for his work rate that allowed Wycombe to finish off a fatigued Halifax later in the game.

"He ran the line really well today and I thought when the subs came on the defenders for Halifax were tired, and fair play to Garry he has run them ragged," explained Ainsworth.

"He could have had a hat-trick today but it was fantastic to see Garry



'Back to his best': Gareth Ainsworth praised Garry Thompson for his performance

back on the scoresheet and he was back to his best today."

The Chairboys attacked at will in the second half and scored three well-taken goals with Jombati's effort with the outside of his foot being the pick of the bunch.

Kretschmar finished calmly when put through on goal in the final five minutes before fellow substitute Amadi-Holloway scored the final

goal in injury time.

Although his side were cutting through the Halifax defence almost at will, Matt Ingram proved his worth with a fine save from close range to secure the clean-sheet in an altogether seamless display.

While Wycombe's win was obviously top of his agenda, Ainsworth also spared time to congratulate Chesham United after their victory

at Bristol Rovers, which was taking place at the same time.

He said: "It is fabulous for Chesham, for Andy Leese and for the FA Cup as a competition. It shows that the magic of the FA Cup is still alive.

"For a team like Chesham to turn over Bristol Rovers is a real special moment and Buckinghamshire probably belongs to Chesham tonight and not Wycombe."

FOOTBALL: Chesham through after beating Rovers Triumph in cup 'doesn't feel real yet'

CHESHAM United forward Brad Wadkins says it is a surreal feeling to be in the second round of the FA Cup after Sunday's 1-0 win against Bristol Rovers.

Wadkins is now looking forward to being a member of only the second Chesham team to ever reach the second round where they will play Aldershot Town or Bradford City away.

He says he is struggling to get his head around the fact the club is still fighting in the world's oldest club knockout competition.

Wadkins said: "It was mad to be in the first round anyway let alone the second. It is not something I'd ever expected to happen and doesn't feel real yet.

"It is totally surreal when you look at the reaction it's had, and players are doing Match of the Day interviews and

Chesham United being on TV is amazing."

Aldershot and Bradford played out a 0-0 draw on Sunday but the League One side will be favourites to progress past their National League opponents in Wednesday's replay.

While United manager Andy Leese maintains his opinion that Chesham are just pleased to be in the cup going into December he accepts the draw of a trip to Bradford is big for the players.

"The players are delighted with the draw and obviously for them the tie at Bradford is maybe more appealing."

"They realise that they have the opportunity to play two great clubs and show what they can do on a big stage", he said.

His biggest challenge may be to keep his squad focused on their league games and other cup

competitions between now and Sunday, December 6.

The extended cup run has seen Chesham's schedule become congested. They have games to make up in the league as well as continuing to fight in the FA Trophy and the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup.

Leese said: "It is a challenge to keep the players focused and fresh and that will be my job over the next few weeks and I will have to juggle my resources a bit."

Wadkins won a penalty in the first half after being brought down by Tom Lockyer but Dave Pearce's attempt was ultimately saved.

It could have been a big blow for the non-league club but they remained resolute and Wadkins claims they never panicked despite the setback.

"We stuck to the game plan and created chances while keeping it tight

at the back. Credit has to go to the defence because they were solid but we were always dangerous on the attack," he said.

"I knew if I got a touch on the ball it would be a penalty. Unfortunately we missed it but we never panicked and played well."

The Liverpool fan is now dreaming of a trip to Anfield and in a year where he has already achieved so much he sees no reason why the team cannot reach the third round and meet a Premier League side.

Just last month he returned from representing England at the EuroMINI six-a-side tournament in Croatia where they made the last 16.

He said: "It just seems like everything is currently going so well. I never thought I would be playing in the second round of the cup or that I would represent my country."

Hayles treble in cup victory

VETERAN HITS THREE AS GENERALS
FIGHT ON SEVERAL TROPHY FRONTS

BARRY Hayles scored a hat-trick as Chesham United beat FC Burnham 3-1 in the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup on Tuesday.

Hayles' goals added to a memorable week for the 43-year-old in which he also returned to former club Bristol Rovers to play in Chesham's FA Cup giant killing.

Chesham are now in the semi-final of the Senior Cup and are battling on three different cup fronts having enjoyed extended runs in the FA Cup and FA Trophy.

They will have to wait to discover their last four opponents after Maidenhead United versus Milton Keynes Dons was postponed.

United enjoy a strong recent history in the competition and have won it on four occasions in the last 15 years, with the latest success in 2014 when they beat Beaconsfield SYCOB 1-0 at Stag Meadow.

The club's attention will switch to the FA Trophy as they take on Swindon Supermarine in the second qualifying round tomorrow.

Their opponents are in good form and sit fifth in the Southern League Division One South & West and head into the match on the back of a 2-0 win over AFC Totton.

Giant kill joy

CONSIDERABLE CASH BENEFITS
FOLLOWING SHOCK FA CUP WIN

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money for a club of Chesham's size to receive.

It is a reality that Leese is all too aware of and with a potential tie against League One Bradford – should they beat Aldershot in a replay on Wednesday – there was a chance the game would be televised, although those hopes have now been dashed after the three games selected for live broadcast were announced on Wednesday.

However as the Bucks Free Press went to press, it was confirmed the tie will be played on Sunday, December 6 (kick-off 2pm), having been selected to be included in BBC's Final Score single camera coverage.

This means Chesham and their opponents will both receive £12,500.

SPORT

Duck broken

Sido Jombati gets off the mark in style for Blues with fine FA Cup strike in victory



WANDERERS: Evans treating friendly as 'competitive game' Leeds United 'to play strongest side possible'



Gareth Ainsworth.

LEEDS United manager Steve Evans has confirmed that he will bring his strongest available squad to Adams Park for tonight's friendly with Wanderers.

The game is being held as neither side has a league fixture this weekend due to the international break and will be the first meeting between the two at the Blues' home since 2009 when Leeds were 1-0 winners.

While some may see the game as a chance to bed in some youngsters, Evans is eager to field a competitive

line-up and come away with a win.

"Our strongest possible squad will be travelling to Wycombe Wanderers. We're treating this as a normal competitive game," Evans told the club's website.

"The hard work has continued since Saturday's win at Huddersfield and we have no intention of letting that slip and it is a game that I know both sides will want to win."

Evans' sentiments will be music to the ears of Gareth Ainsworth who wants to ensure his Wanderers players can build momentum over the

enforced break from league action.

The club's long injury list means he has little choice but to play a strong squad for the game and he has been frustrated by having to endure a second enforced break because of international call-ups.

He said: "We seem to be playing everyone who has internationals and these games that keep getting called off are not good for us."

"If we hadn't won against Mansfield we could have ended up in 16th or 17th place without even playing for three weeks."

Off the pitch the game will also have a positive impact in helping to satisfy the financial demands of running a football club.

Wanderers have not played a home game since the 1-1 draw with Carlisle last month, and had they not arranged the friendly they would not have received a home gate until the visit of Portsmouth on November 28.

He explained: "We have had to arrange the game with Leeds to help with the finances as well as having a great game for the fans."

CHESHAM: Cash boost due after historic win Joy for giant-killing Generals in FA Cup

CHESHAM United manager Andy Leese struggled to believe his side are in the FA Cup second round after beating Bristol Rovers 1-0 on Sunday.

Ryan Blake scored the only goal of the game with 13 minutes remaining at the Memorial Ground with a long-range effort to complete the giant killing.

With Chesham sitting 75 places below Rovers in the Football League pyramid Leese admitted he was still struggling to come to terms with what his team has achieved.

Following the victory, he said: "We are elated but we are also tired and I can't quite get over the fact that it has happened but it will start to sink in over the next few days I am sure."

"The players couldn't quite believe what they had achieved and we watched the DVD the whole way back on the coach."

"I'm sure they will start to realise how well they did when they see the media attention and have a while to look back on the way they played in the game."

The result saw United reach the second round proper of the cup for the first time since 1980 and for only the second time in their history, where they will play either Aldershot Town or Bradford City.

Chesham missed a golden chance to take the lead when Dave Pearce's first-half penalty was saved by Lee

By Harry Gray

Nicholls after Tom Lockyer had fouled Brad Wadkins.

It was the sort of chance that lower league sides are desperate for against bigger teams and Leese admitted that having seen it spurned he worried it may not have been the Generals' day.

However, spirited defending and Blake's speculative strike that seemed to catch Bristol's Nicholls off guard meant he could enjoy a famous day as manager.

"I am proud to be manager of this club and to go this far in the cup is fantastic for everyone involved in Chesham United," a delighted Leese said.

"When you miss a penalty you do start to think it might not be your day but we showed great character to keep going and come away with the win."

"We had to defend well and it was backs to the wall at times but we also showed quality going forward and deserved this great achievement."

While increased media attention comes with the territory of becoming the latest in a long list of FA Cup giant killers the financial rewards are also well documented.

The prize pot for the second round sits at £27,000 and would be a very significant amount of



Jubilation: Andy Leese celebrates following Chesham United's shock FA Cup success. Picture: TREVOR HYDE

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Stewart 'not sure of place'

BOSS PLEASED BY CENTRAL DEFENSIVE PERFORMANCE IN HALIFAX VICTORY

GARETH Ainsworth has warned Anthony Stewart he may face a fight to get back in the Wanderers starting line-up after returning from injury.

Stewart has played just twice this season and has not featured for the Chairboys since injuring his knee in the 1-0 defeat at Craven Cottage in the Capital One Cup in August.

He made his return on the bench in Sunday's 4-0 FA Cup win over Halifax Town but did not feature and Ainsworth made it clear he would need to impress to dislodge his current centre-back pairing.

"Anthony knows he is going to have to fight his way back into the first team because I felt Jason McCarthy and Aaron Pierre were outstanding today," explained Ainsworth after the Halifax match.

"It was not an easy job today against non-league players who are really fighting for it. One slip can cause a big cup upset but they performed really well."

After starting the campaign with a goal in the 3-0 victory over York City, the injury suffered by Stewart just three days later was supposed to keep him out until Christmas.

His early return is timely as Ainsworth continues to balance a finite squad that has been stretched to its limits by injuries this season.

McCarthy, who has formed an increasingly composed part of the defence that Stewart is looking to return to, has also strengthened the Wycombe cause by signing a new loan deal at the club.

His original one-month loan from

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