

SPORT

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Tickets go on sale for Blues' big encounter

WANDERERS GIVEN ALLOCATION OF 500 SEATS FOR FRATTON PARK TRIP

TICKETS for Wycombe Wanderers' League Two clash with Portsmouth at Fratton Park are still available.

The Blues have been given an initial allocation of 500 seats in the Milton End, which is all seated and under cover, and more seats will be available on request.

Adult tickets cost £20, while both seniors (62+) and young adults (18 to 22) cost £15.

Unaccompanied under-18s can secure their seat for £10 and accompanied under-18s (with an adult or senior) tickets cost £5.

Tickets can be purchased directly from the club shop at Adams Park, by calling 01494 441118 or by visiting the Wycombe Wanderers website.

Wanderers will stop selling tickets at 1pm today, but they will be available for purchase from Portsmouth on the day of the match.

There is no cash turnstile at Fratton Park, so fans buying on the day should head to the ticket booth by the away turnstiles in the north east corner of Fratton Park.

Supporters are advised that tickets purchased on the day can only be paid for by cash.

Team just off target

TOO LITTLE TOO LATE FOR BUCKS AS MERSEYSIDE EASE TO DARTS WIN

A BATTLING display was not enough for the Bucks County Darts team as they went down to a 23-13 defeat to Merseyside over the weekend.

Bucks travelled north for the two-day event which saw their men's and women's A and B teams take to the oche.

Julie James was the standout performer in the opening tie of the match as she won her clash with Joanne Oliver 3-1 in her side's 4-2 defeat.

The men's B team were being led by new team manager Gary Patterson and matched their opponents for the first eight ties of their match.

Wins for Mark Boardman, Steve Sherrock, Clive Wilford and Gary Price had them level at 4-4 but Bucks lost the following four games to go down 8-4 overall.

Sunday saw Bucks' A teams get involved in the action, but they were powerless to change the momentum of the match, despite more competitive showings.

Firstly, their women's team drew 3-3 to make the overall score 15-9 going into the final match, but the men's first couldn't complete a comeback with a win.

Outsiders Wanderers live up to the title

RUTHLESS HATTERS PUT BLUES TO THE SWORD IN LEAGUE TWO CLASH

WYCOMBE Wanderers were billed as the outsiders ahead of their trip to Kenilworth Road and duly lived up to the title in Saturday's defeat against Luton Town.

Danny Hylton's hat-trick and a late Jordan Cook breakaway goal gave the Hatters a 4-1 victory on a day where Wycombe rarely looked like troubling their rivals.

Wanderers did briefly rally after Matt Bloomfield made it 2-1 with 27 minutes to play, but Nathan Jones' side controlled the match throughout.

They could, and probably should, have been out of sight by half-time and Wycombe were indebted to Jamal Blackman for keeping the score 1-0 at the interval.

The Chelsea loanee made some decent stops before Hylton headed home at the near post after Pelly Ruddock-Mpanzu had skipped past Bloomfield and crossed.

The 10th minute opener only increased the hosts control on proceedings and they should have made it two after Stephen McGinn fouled Cook on the edge of the box.

McGinn, who was lucky not to receive a second yellow card after an earlier foul on Mpanzu, looked to have made contact outside of the box.

The referee judged the foul to have been in the box though, and gave Cameron McGeehan a chance to from 12-yards.

His effort was poor and Blackman made a simple save low to his right.

It took Luton 11 minutes of the second period to ensure the penalty miss didn't come back to bite them after Hylton tapped in from six yards.

The Wanderers defence failed to react to Blackman's fine save from



Michael Harriman helplessly watches on as Danny Hylton doubles Luton Town's lead at Kenilworth Road on Saturday.
Picture: ACTION IMAGES

Cook's low effort and the forward was left with the simplest of finishes.

The goal looked to have killed Wycombe off, but Bloomfield drove into the box seven minutes later to slip an effort underneath Christian Walton.

Any hope of a late revival was ended with two minutes remaining after Hylton was fouled in the box by Will De Havilland.

The forward calmly sent Black-

man the wrong way to convert the resulting spot kick and complete his hat-trick.

There was still time for Town to add a fourth after Wanderers were caught on the counter as they searched for a route back into the game.

Again Hylton was involved as he slipped a simple pass into Cook and the midfielder compounded Wanderers' misery with a placed finish.

Luton Town: Walton, O'Donnell,

Mullins, Cuthbert (c), Potts, Lee, Cook, Mpanzu (Smith 68), McGeehan, Marriot (Vassell 83), Hylton (Famewo 90).

Subs not used: King, Gray, Gillied, Justin.

Wycombe Wanderers: Blackman, Harriman, De Havilland, Jombati, Bloomfield, Rowe, McGinn (Gape 54), Freeman (Thompson 72), Hayes (c), Southwell (Akinfenwa 72).

Subs not used: Richardson, Pierre, Wood, Kashket.

'We do not want a relegation battle'

GARETH Ainsworth says his Wycombe Wanderers side must arrest their current form as quickly as possible to ensure a high League Two finish this season.

A 4-1 trouncing at the hands of Luton Town saw them slump to 22nd in the table, just a point above the relegation zone.

While he acknowledges the season is still in its infancy, Ainsworth believes his side must prioritise avoiding getting involved in a relegation dogfight.

"I have told the lads now, forget going anywhere up the league we have to sort ourselves out down the wrong end of the table," he said.

"We don't want a relegation battle again and we need to start get-

ting points on the board and get ourselves up the league so when the big players do come back we have a strong squad.

"There is 40 games to go, so it is not like there is two games to go where have been before, but we need to make sure we get things right, starting at Portsmouth."

The match itself saw the Hatters dominate at Kenilworth Road as Danny Hylton bagged a hat-trick and Jordan Cook added a fourth late on.

It was, perhaps, no surprise that a depleted Wanderers side went down to Town.

But the defensive frailty they showed against the new league leaders was highly out of character.

The scoreline by no means flattened Town, despite Matt Bloomfield giving Wanderers brief hope as he made it 2-1 in the 64th minute.

The hosts could have been out of sight by half-time but for the intervention of goalkeeper Jamal Blackman and some wasteful finishing.

Ainsworth was full of praise for Nathan Jones' side, but also felt Wycombe made it too easy for Luton in front of goal.

He also questioned the award of a penalty, which gave Hylton the opportunity to complete his hat-trick with the score at 2-1.

"It is one of the biggest gulfs [in class] I have seen in League Two, they are an awesome side.

"They have backed Nathan [Jones,

Luton manager] with their finances and have some great players," he said.

"The third goal was an absolute sucker punch for me. Whether it is or isn't [a penalty], Danny Hylton has turned us too easily.

"You can't allow that and a couple of goals today were too easy for people to turn when they have been stood up.

"We need to keep doing the right things and doing the things that have got us success for the last two seasons.

"We have just gone away from that today at the end [of the game]. 4-1, they deserve that and you are probably looking at the league champions today."

Club masterclass given by three-time world champion

By Harry Gray

HOLMER Green Squash and Racketball Club (HGSRC) members were treated to a masterclass by three-time world champion Nick Matthew on Friday.

The former world number one coached and played against some of Holmer's junior players before taking on fellow pro Alex Noakes.

Matthew also played a number of the club's senior players and says he is always eager to give back to local clubs.

"It is rewarding, not just with the kids but with people of all ages. Inspiring people who have maybe not seen squash for years to take up the sport is nice," Matthew explained.

"You have the biggest influence with the kids but it is always surprising how people connect with the sport when it is being played in front of them."

The exhibition formed a central column of the club's 40th anniversary year in which they will look to build on winning the Bucks Junior League title last season.

Chairman, David Albin, believes Matthew's attendance at the club can only have a positive impact on their junior members.

"I think it is a massive inspiration because they don't see much squash on TV and to get the chance to see Nick in person, play with him and get some tips from him is something you can't buy," Albin said.

"It would be fantastic if Nick could inspire them to replicate him. We have a few nationally ranked players and if they get a few tips and hopefully follow in his footsteps it would



Former world number one, Nick Matthew, was the star attraction as he coached junior players at Holmer Green Squash and Racketball Club.

be great."

Albin's affiliation with HGSRC spans half of the club's 40-year existence and he is eager to expand their membership at both junior and senior level.

He has seen the appetite for the sport grow in that time and says attracting young players has been key to the club's growth.

"I think the big thing over the past

six to eight years is a real investment in juniors at the club. We had around 10 juniors six years ago and now we have 60 odd," he said.

"That has been really important because it gets parents who maybe haven't touched a racket in years back on court to play with their sons and daughters."

Matthew is also keen to encourage participation at grassroots level and

views his involvement with local clubs as an essential part of his role within the sport.

He said: "I enjoy coming to these sort of sessions because you are touching base with the grassroots level of the sport really."

HGSRC are on the lookout for new players. To register interest in joining, e-mail membership@hgsrc.co.uk or visit www.hgsrc.co.uk.

Shae on form at games

JOHN HAMPDEN SCHOOL STUDENT ENJOYS DOUBLE MEDAL SUCCESS

JOHN Hampden Grammar School student Shae Thakker was on excellent form at the School Games as he won a gold and silver medal.

The 13-year-old table tennis star took part in the round-robin disability team competition as part of the South East team with Nicko Anderson and Hamish Friell.

The event saw standing athletes compete alongside team mates in wheelchairs and with learning disabilities.

Thakker's team dropped just one point on their way to taking the gold before the teenager claimed silver in the individual standing class.

He narrowly missed out on taking gold in the singles final after battling back from 2-0 down, but was delighted with his performance.

He said: "When I started the match I was hoping for a good game and to play my best but I got into it and took it to 2-2 and thought 'I could win this'."

The final against Billy Shilton, who only just missed out on qualifying for the Paralympics, proved to be an entertaining affair.

Shilton showed his class though and won the match 3-2.

Club in players pursuit

VOLLEYBALL SIGN-UPS WANTED AS NEW TEAM ENTERED INTO LEAGUE

SOUTH Bucks Volleyball are inviting new players to take part in both adult and youth training sessions.

Adult sessions commence on Thursday, September 15 and will take place from 5.30pm to 7.30pm every week.

The club is entering a team in the Berkshire Volleyball League this season, with matches starting in October.

Anybody who is interested in joining the team or taking part in training should email southbucksvolleyball@gmail.com.

A Buckinghamshire LEAP sponsored Sportivate event for girls aimed at youth players also starts on September 15.

More information on that can be found by emailing jessturner@pfplesure.org or by calling 01494 688100.

WYCOMBE: No concerns over centre-back's focus Pierre fully committed to Blues

AARON Pierre will have no problem focussing on Wycombe Wanderers after narrowly missing out on leaving the club on transfer deadline day, says Matt Bloomfield.

Wycombe turned down a bid for the 23-year-old last Wednesday as they moved to ensure they had adequate options in central defence.

He was subsequently left out of the starting XI against Luton Town, but Bloomfield insists Pierre will be able to maintain the high standards he has set in recent seasons.

"He is absolutely fine. I get on really well with Aaron and I have spent time talking to him over the last couple of weeks and obviously things happened on Wednesday," said Bloomfield.

"His head is here and he is fine. He will come in to training and get on with it. He will be trying to train hard this week to get back in the team."

"Aaron is really enjoying his time at

Wycombe Wanderers. They have given him the opportunity to play league football and he fully appreciates that."

The decision to leave Pierre out was the main talking point ahead of kick-off at Kenilworth Road as Gareth Ainsworth persevered with Anthony Stewart and Will De Havilland.

The Blues boss was eager to stress Pierre's position on the bench came as a consequence of De Havilland and Stewart's displays against Northampton Town last Tuesday.

Wanderers kept a clean sheet in the 3-0 Checkatrade Trophy win and Ainsworth opted to reward their defensive solidity.

"No, not at all," Ainsworth said when quizzed on whether Pierre's state of mind had forced his decision to leave him out.

"He had a difficult Wednesday, but he is a professional footballer and is

fine with that. My decision was to keep the same back four which shut Northampton out on Tuesday.

"I think anyone who was at that game would have said fair play that was a decent display against a decent outfit."

Ainsworth also refuted claims Pierre's focus may be broken by the speculation surrounding his future and is confident he will return with a positive mind-set.

He did, however, accept Pierre, who is in the last year of his contract, may not remain a Wycombe player for too much longer and does want to advance his career.

"Aaron Pierre is absolutely in the right frame to be a Wycombe Wanderers player, even more so perhaps because he wants the right club if he moves on," he explained.

"He will want to improve his career, of course he will, but Aaron is a

Wycombe Wanderers player and will do his best for Wycombe Wanderers.

"He knows he is in the last year of his contract and it is not like he is on a five-year contract and trapped at Wycombe Wanderers."

"If he does move on he is going to want the best possible shop window to attract the best clubs so it is a win-win for Aaron and for me."

Ainsworth also stressed that he is pleased with his defensive options, despite his side shipping six goals in their last two league matches.

As well as Pierre, De Havilland and Stewart, he has Danny Rowe who can play at centre-back and is still waiting for summer signing Max Muller to recover his fitness.

Regardless of current form, Ainsworth remained coy on whether Pierre would return for tomorrow's match against Portsmouth when quizzed on Thursday.

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Exhibition visit

World champion drops in at
Holmer Green Squash Club
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FOOTBALL: Loanee Blackman happy to extend Wycombe stay 'I'll do as much as I can to stay number one'



Jamal Blackman.

HE MAY have only played five games for the club, but Jamal Blackman says he is willing to extend his stay with Wycombe Wanderers.

The Chelsea loanee's current deal expires on Tuesday, January 3 after he was signed to cover for the injured Scott Brown.

After impressing in the early days of his Wanderers career, Blackman says staying beyond his initial loan and potentially battling Brown for the number one spot appeals to him.

"I would like to stay longer and it is obviously up to the gaffer and my

performances to decide if I can," Blackman said.

"That [being first-choice keeper] is up to the manager, but I will do as much as I can to stay number one."

He will fill that role while Scott Brown, who signed a two-year deal in July, recovers from a thigh injury sustained on the opening-day defeat against Crawley Town.

The 22-year-old has made an assured start to life at Adams Park and has impressed with his handling, shot-stopping ability, and command of his area.

He was arguably Wycombe's best player against Luton Town on Saturday, in spite of the 4-1 scoreline as he made some decent saves.

His display included denying former Chelsea youth team player Cameron McGeehan from 12 yards.

He also played a pivotal part in the 0-0 draw at Blackpool last month with some fine late stops and has coped well during Wanderers' testing start to League Two.

Blackman believes his 6ft 6in stature and experience around the Chelsea first team has allowed him

to acclimatise to life in League Two quickly.

"My physical attributes are one of my biggest strengths. I am good in the air which helps when you come to a league where a lot of balls come in your box," he explained.

"The manager told me to bring my experience from being in the first team at Chelsea to the team.

"Coming to League Two is different to the Premier League, but football is football so you just have to go out there and show what you can do."

BLUES: Ainsworth expects testing atmosphere Blues must deal with Pompey's 12th man

GARETH Ainsworth believes dealing with the pressure cooker environment of Fratton Park will be one of Wycombe Wanderers' biggest challenges against Portsmouth.

Tomorrow's crowd is likely to be the largest Wycombe will play in front of in League Two this season as they take on one of the favourites for the title.

With a number of Blues players having only made their Football League debuts this season, Ainsworth says his side will have to counter a fierce atmosphere to prosper.

"We have a goalkeeper from Chelsea who everyone thinks will make it to the top, including me, but it is probably the first time he has played in front of this atmosphere," Ainsworth said.

"It is almost a hostility from the fans and they have so much support. You feel the extra man for them sometimes.

"I am hoping that every lad wearing a Wycombe shirt will embrace it and give it their all because it is a fantastic game."

Wanderers head into the match after damaging back-to-back losses against Colchester United and Luton Town.

The Blues were sluggish in the opening 20 minutes at Kenilworth Road and Ainsworth is expecting a reaction from his side.

"I am demanding a good start

By Harry Gray

from my team and a good finish, so we want the whole performance and want a hard-working Wycombe display," he said.

"I want a better start and don't want to be 1-0 down and need a bit of a rollicking to find our feet.

"We know what we can do when we are on it. Once we are, there are not too many teams that can stay with us in League Two."

Wanderers have just one win in their first six games and could do with taking all three points from tomorrow's game.

Ainsworth, however, feels it would be foolhardy to suggest Wycombe need to win at a ground where Pompey comfortable beat Crawley Town 3-0 last time out.

He explained: "We do not need a win, we need some points on the board. Anyone who goes to Fratton Park saying we need a win is approaching it the wrong way.

"I think you do anything you can to play well and bringing anything back from Fratton Park this season is a great result.

"They are a team that looks out of place in League Two and need to be higher up the leagues because of what they are."

Ainsworth is still without a host of first team players, and seven regulars are set to miss the trip to the south coast as they continue their recovery from injury.



Gareth Ainsworth says his players must cope with a hostile Fratton Park atmosphere during tomorrow's League Two clash.

Swimmers chosen for training

STRONG SUMMER GAMES DISPLAYS
EARN WDSC DUO BRITISH CALL UPS

TWO Wycombe District Swimming Club (WDSC) members have been selected to take part in the British Swimming national junior training camp.

James McFadzen (17) and James Eddy (16) were chosen for the 80 strong squad after impressing at the British Summer Championships.

The duo, who both live in Wycombe District, were in sparkling form as Eddy set a British record to win gold in the 50m backstroke and McFadzen took home a silver and bronze medal from the games.

WDSC head coach, Kevin Brooks, said: "I'm thrilled for both of the boys to be recognised in this way.

"This will only serve as a fantastic experience in their development as elite swimmers, and both of them have the potential to represent England and Great Britain over the up and coming four years."

The training camp aims to expose talented young swimmers to a national squad environment and has been developed alongside ASA, Scottish Swimming and Swim Wales.

With Olympic athletes now turning their attention to Tokyo 2020, it is hoped the camp will ready Britain's next generation of world class swimmers.

McFadzen and Eddy will have a familiar face to turn to for guidance during the camp as Brooks has been chosen to coach the male sprint group.

The training camp takes place at Aberdeen's Sport Village and runs between Thursday, September 15 and Sunday, September 18.