

WYCOMBE Defender aims to crack the away day blues

Pierre delight at goal and solid defending

WYCOMBE 2 MORECAMBE 0

AARON Pierre says he loves scoring against Morecambe.

He did so last season in a niggly match, and the central defender did so again on Saturday in an impressive 2-0 win to give Wycombe their first win in five.

"Getting the clean sheet is the main thing, the fact I got a goal was a bonus," said Pierre afterwards.

He got on the scoresheet inside 90 seconds of the second half, latching on to a Joe Jacobson free-kick, with Luke O'Nien grabbing a second midway through the half.

"I talked to JJ (Jacobson) just before the free-kick and I asked where he was going to put the kick. He said just the same, in the middle of the box. He whipped it in, I headed it, it deflected off a guy but I am claiming it, no matter what."

The clean sheet was important as Pierre and Anthony Stewart have begun to form a strong fortress at the back, alongside Jacobson and Michael Harriman. It was that solidity at the back which impressed manager Gareth Ainsworth most in the post-match press conference. All good teams are built on a solid back four.

Pierre, 23, agrees. "We are working hard with our defending to make sure we keep as many clean sheets as possible. It's getting there."

As for the match, the first half produced few clear-cut chances



Aaron Pierre challenges for the ball in the Morecambe box.
Photo: Anita Ross Marshall

but Morecambe did go close when Paul Mullin was found by James Jennings, only to see his shot from eight yards well saved by Jamal Blackman in the Wycombe goal.

Morecambe were denied a penalty in response when Matt Bloomfield appeared to be handled in the box, but the referee gave a free kick which Michael Rose hit against the post.

And the Shrimps' hopes of a come-

back were dashed when O'Nien nipped in front of his marker to head home Paul Hayes' cross with nine minutes left.

Ainsworth described the three points as "very pleasing" pointing out how narrow the difference was between top and bottom in League 2 – six points between the relegation and play-off zones.

"At half-time we were in 22nd

place at 0-0 and now we are 16th," he pointed out. "You look at this league and it is hard to judge who are the best and who are the worst teams. But I believe we have a fantastic base here and we need to be looking up."

As for Pierre, he knows the next job is to get the away day monkey off their back – no league wins away this season, a run stretching back to last February. But with trips to Cambridge this weekend and Newport coming, he firmly believes that streak will soon be broken.

"We are defensively more secure and harder to break down," he added. "And I don't see why we can't achieve what we did when we went to Wembley."

"I think we have got the squad and the belief to compete with the higher teams. We have just had a bad start and are just a few points off the play-offs."

"I don't think other teams are better than us. On our day, when we are together, we can beat anyone."

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Blackman, Harriman, Jacobson, Stewart, Pierre, Gape (sub: Bean, 46), O'Nien, Bloomfield, Cowan-Hall, Akinfenwa, Hayes. Subs: Brown, Jombati, Thompson, Wood, De Havilland, Kashket.

MORECAMBE: Roche, McGowan, Edwards, Winnard, Mullin (sub: Dunn, 72), Murphy, Wildig (sub: Molyneux, 72), Whitmore, Jennings, Stockton, Rose. Subs: Nizic, Wakefield, Ellison, Conlan, Fleming.

REFEREE: Darren Handley (Bolton).

ATTENDANCE: 3,019 (70 visitors)

Holmer crash out of FA Vase



Holmer Green had their heads bowed at London Colney

HOLMER Green suffered a heavy 3-0 defeat at the hands of London Colney in the 2nd round of the FA Vase last Saturday.

Two goals before half time left the Spartan South Midland Premier League side with a mountain to climb before a goal with 15 minutes to go hammered a final nail into their coffin.

Both these sides played against each other in the league earlier this season when Colney ran out 2-0 winners and Holmer Green couldn't gain their revenge this time.

After 12 minutes, Ben Bradley was harshly adjudged to have handled in his own area. A penalty was awarded and Bradley was given his marching orders and the home side inevitably took the lead.

Holmer Green had a two shouts of their own for a penalty shortly after. The first was for another potential handball. However, this time the referee decided that the offence didn't warrant a spot kick for the away team.

The Greens then felt they were denied another stonewall penalty by the officials moments later when Eliot Derby was shoved to the ground in the Colney area but the referee again waved away their protests.

London Colney then rather fortunately doubled their advantage just after the half hour mark when a cross-cum-shot looped over goalkeeper Sam Butcher and into the net, summing up their luck during the first half.

The ten men of Holmer had a chance to score before the interval but Ben Hodges' volley was straight at the keeper after excellent build up play. A goal there would have caused jitters amongst Colney.

After the break, the visitors did their best to reduce the arrears again but were missing Dean Allen's cutting edge and guile as they tried to force their way back into the contest.

With a quarter of an hour still to play, London Colney scored their third after the home player cut inside and beat Butcher with a fine strike to send hapless Holmer home with nothing to show for their efforts.

Tomorrow, Holmer Green return to league action when they entertain Oxhey Jets at home as they bid to get back to winning ways (3pm kick off).

League games wiped out but Saints earn draw in cup

BOTH Chalfont St Peter and Flackwell Heath's fixtures last weekend succumbed to the weather but the Saints were in action on Tuesday where they picked up a very creditable 2-2 draw away at Burgess Hill Town in the 2nd Qualifying Round of the Buildbase FA Trophy.

Travelling down to Sussex held no fears for the Evo Stik League Southern Division One Central side and they went in front when Craig Tomkins scored a penalty after Rud-dock Vala had been fouled.

It remained that way until the 53rd minute when the home team equalised through Okwute after he touched in an inviting cross.

However, with 25 minutes remaining the Saints regained the lead when Adam Kirby headed home Tomkins' superb free kick.

Unfortunately some hesitancy in the away defence led to the home team equalising through Richardson-Brown as he took advantage of some dithering in the backline.

The result ensures that there will



Lamar Mason-Williams scored a hat-trick for Risborough Rangers in a 5-0 win over Iwer Heath Rovers in the Berks & Bucks Cup

be a replay at Mill Meadow in due course and Chalfont St Peter will be hoping that they can squeeze through to face either Hitchin Town or Biggleswade Town at home in the next round.

The Saints' next game is a league

fixture tomorrow at Mill Meadow against Ashford Town (kick off 3pm).

Unfortunately due to the weather this week, Flackwell Heath have seen both their fixtures in the league called off this week.

The Heath were due to play away to Tuffley Rovers last Saturday and Oxford City Nomads on Tuesday evening but were prevented from doing so.

With a more favourable forecast for the weekend, Flackwell Heath entertain Brimscombe & Thrupp at home tomorrow (3pm kick off).

● Risborough Rangers thumped Iwer Heath Rovers 5-0 last Saturday in the Berks and Bucks Intermediate Cup Third Round.

All five goals were scored by Lamar Mason-Williams, including a first half hat-trick, as Rangers marched into the fourth round of the competition they won last season.

This was an excellent display by the entire Rangers team who dominated throughout.

Risborough Rangers return to league action tomorrow when they make the trip to Bedfordshire to play Amptill Town in the South Midlands League Division One (kick off 3pm).

SPORT

Rugby

Wycombe take top honours in hockey derby: [Page 61](#)



Jones' big break sees him become champion

A YOUNG man from High Wycombe has become a world champion at bar billiards, just two and a half years after his very first game.

Matthew Jones, 33, won the world title in Jersey last weekend and beat off the 140-strong competition to reach the final, where he triumphed against Mark Brewster with an exceptional score of 18,780.

Jones, who plays at the Totteridge Community Centre, had a whole host of local fans support him at the event and he was shocked that he managed to be crowned champ.

He said: "I am absolutely delighted. I never expected to win the event so I am really surprised to have won and become champion."

Jones only took up the game in 2014 when a friend of his offered to have a game with him. The newly crowned world champion explained that he never had thoughts about playing before.

"It was only when I played against my friend for the first time that I thought I could be quite good at this," added Jones.

"My dad played when I was a lot



younger but I thought I would give it a go once I played for the first time and I am glad I did."

Jones also took part in the pairs

where he reached the semi-finals alongside his partner, Cliff Slade, to round off a fantastic weekend.

Dawn Jordan, a friend of Jones', heaped praise on his achievement. She commented: "I have been playing for 30 years and my husband 55, so for Matthew to be as good as he is after just two and a half years is unbelievable."

"The format he played in Jersey is tougher as he could only play it off the spot, which means there aren't many easy shots."

"The game is dying but young

players like Matthew can keep it going. He has already had a brilliant career, representing England already, and now he can call himself world champion. I don't suppose High Wycombe has too many world champions."

Having already reached the pinnacle after just over two years experience of playing bar billiards, Matthew added there is only one more thing left to do.

He said: "The plan now is to retain my title next year in Jersey so let's see how I can get on."

BLUES midfielder has become YouTube favourite

Keeping up the high standard of his game

LUKE O'NIEN has become something of an internet sensation to rival Adebayo Akinfenwa's goals-cracking Dab Dance.

The midfielder's 1,000 keep-me-ups with a tennis ball while coming back from injury has been attracting quite a few YouTube hits.

"One of my mates said I couldn't do 1,000 keep-me-ups using left foot, right foot, so when someone says something like that, that's all the incentive I need," said O'Nien, who turns 22 on Monday.

The Wycombe player was into his third month of rehabilitation from a leg break when he took on the challenge, and managed to complete the skill in just under 12 minutes.

"There is method behind the madness," he said. "It helps me to improve my touch by controlling a tennis ball. It makes a football much easier."

"When I was out injured I would do it as often as I could so when I came back I knew my touch would still be there."

It was no surprise to manager Gareth Ainsworth, who described O'Nien as one of the most competitive players he had ever met, and was delighted by the goal he scored in the 2-0 win against Morecambe on Saturday in his third comeback match. Last April, he signed a new contract which will keep him at Adams Park until 2019.

"I certainly believe with Luke

By Dave King

that there's more to come," said Ainsworth. "He's been out for a long time with a broken leg, but he is a great player. He had a fantastic first season with us. I have no doubt he will go on to bigger and better things. He wants to win at everything."

O'Nien puts that winning mentality down to his fiercely competitive older brother and sister who would always want to put one over their younger sibling at home in Hertfordshire.

"I do love the competitive side, but we have a whole squad like that so it brings out the best in everyone," added O'Nien.

As for the injury, picked up on the opening day of the season at Crawley which he tried to play through, it has been a long and hard road back. That's meant plenty of physio, time in the swimming pool, and also sitting in a pressurised oxygen chamber for 90 minutes to speed up the recovery.

"It's been a tough few months but it has been good to get back. I was never fearful about what might happen with the broken leg. I could only control what I could work on, and that was my focus."

As for challenges, O'Nien admitted that if anyone reckoned they could beat his 1,000 keep-me-ups, he would be game to top their target.



Luke O'Nien scores Wycombe's second goal in the 2-0 win over Morecambe at the weekend. Picture: Anita Ross Marshall

Ainsworth is full of praise for his players

GARETH AINSWORTH was effusive in his praise of his current crop of young stars, believing that they can make the step up and follow Alfie Mawson and Kortney Hause in gaining international recognition.

Both Mawson, now playing at Swansea, and Hause, now at Wolves, made their debuts in the week for the England U21s and Ainsworth feels that a lot of his squad can follow in their footsteps.

He said: "I think there are a lot of players in the current squad who can make that step up."

"Aaron Pierre has attracted a lot of interest, I think Anthony Stewart is a great prospect and I am really excited about Max Muller but he is obviously a work in progress."

"We really do have a great crop of young players again and I firmly believe that a lot of them can go on and have top careers."

Looking ahead to tomorrow's game, Ainsworth is a very confident that his team can go to Cambridge and get a positive result, even though they haven't won away since February.

"The consistency in our play has been apparent for the last three weeks now and, since Doncaster, we have found a shape to our team that suits us well, helped by having Bayo (Akinfenwa) in the team," explained Ainsworth.

"Cambridge are a strong side but I am hoping we can keep consistent and the boys are feeling good and I believe we can start climbing."

"Away wins are something I want to start getting and there would be no better time than this weekend."