

WYCOMBE: Chairboys continue to climb League Two table

A magnificent seven for Ainsworth's men

by Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE WANDERERS' extraordinary winning run continued with an excellent 2-0 victory over Notts County in an incident-packed League Two encounter at Meadow Lane.

A 37th minute header from the irrepressible Adebayo Akinfenwa and a tap-in from in-form striker Scott Kashket on 55 minutes gave the Chairboys a seventh win in a row.

The inspired Akinfenwa scored the opener with a terrific header past Adam Collin after a sublime cross from Joe Jacobson.

Kashket doubled the advantage ten minutes into the second half when Akinfenwa expertly flicked a header onto Paris Cowan-Hall who raced past a static County defence to square for Kashket who tapped home, despite complaints that the striker was offside.

In between the goals, County captain Michael O'Connor was given a straight red by referee Eddie Ilderton for a lunge at Cowan-Hall with protests by his County team-mates falling on deaf ears.

On 77 minutes, Ilderton made it ten-a-side when he sent off Akinfenwa for his second booking of the match after an aerial challenge with Richard Duffy.

Reflecting on his side's win, Ainsworth said: "I am very, very happy with the way things are going.



Gareth Ainsworth was jubilant at his side's latest win, to make it seven wins in a row in all competitions. Photo: B&O Press Photo

"I told the lads that I watched John Sheridan's (Notts County manager) interview before the match and he said they would start the game very strongly.

"They had a go early on and had a few shots and Jon Stead was a real threat to us but Aaron Pierre really grew into the game against him and won that battle in the end.

"Bayo again was unplayable at

times. It is awesome to see. He is playing so well at the moment and the way the lads are playing in this formation is fantastic to see."

With regard to Akinfenwa's red, Ainsworth thought the second booking could be construed as harsh.

He added: "I want to look at it again on TV but it looked like a clash of heads which I think was an undeserved booking.

"I do understand the referee has a tough job but I now miss Bayo on Saturday which is a big thing for us."

After receiving the Sky Bet League Two Manager of the Month award on Friday, Ainsworth's start to December means he has hopefully avoided the dreaded curse but revealed the reason behind that.

"The amount of people who have said to me you have that curse now, well that was our third win in December so there is no curse for me," commented the Wycombe manager. "In all seriousness, it is everyone who wins the award, not just me. They have to curse all of us and that is a hard thing with the spirit we have got."

Chairboys left-back Jacobson, who was superb against The Magpies, was equally as pleased as his manager to keep the winning feeling going.

He commented: "It's fantastic to be on such a great run. The players are just looking forward to playing every game and it's a great feeling to have. The run we have been on has been incredible and we are just full of confidence at the moment and I think you can see that with how we are playing."

However, Jacobson warned that tomorrow's game against Leyton Orient will be tricky. He added: "They won their last game so come in with a bit of form so we have to be at our best."

SYCOB's Ramraid continues



Beaconsfield have won four in a row. Photo: Anita Ross Marshall

BEACONSFIELD SYCOB's fine run of form continued with a two brilliant league wins this over Aylesbury United and Arlesey Town.

A brace from Charlie Losasso and another from Aaron Berry gave the Rams a 3-0 victory and their fourth win on the bounce over Arlesey to banish the memories of their early season league form.

As early as the second minute, Losasso sent in a free kick that was met by Berry who saw his effort frantically hacked off the Arlesey goal-line. The visitors Rafe Goodman then saw his sixth minute backheel cleared off the SYCOB line by captain Aaron Minhas.

On nine minutes, however, Losasso broke the deadlock as he picked up an Ollie Jones pass to send in a looping shot that gave Arlesey keeper Bart Pedrycz no chance.

Rams' goalie Sam Bunting made a good save on 24 minutes from a rare Arlesey attack as SYCOB battled manfully to close down their opponents and regularly nicked the ball back from them.

On 40 minutes they went two up as Losasso fired home from a very tight angle and the points were virtually sealed on the stroke of half-time as Aaron Berry got the slightest of touches to deflect an incoming shot past Pedrycz.

The expected second half Arlesey fight back never really materialised as SYCOB continued to harass their visitors. Losasso nearly claimed a hat-trick on 64 minutes but his shot went wide whilst four minutes later Berry turned his marker but saw his shot go agonisingly over the bar.

On Wednesday evening, the Rams made the relatively short trip to Aylesbury and again ran out convincing winners with a 3-1 over their Buckinghamshire rivals.

That man Losasso was on fire again, scoring another brace which was sandwiched by a goal from Spencer Maw.

The triumph over the Ducks was the Rams' fifth win on the trot and in three of those they've kept a clean sheet.

Beaconsfield now travel to Petersfield Town tomorrow (kick off 3pm) before a home game against rivals Chalfont St Peter on Monday (kick off 7.45pm).

New off-field appointment a positive for Wycombe

WYCOMBE WANDERERS have announced the arrival of a new General Manager to begin working at the club, effective from Monday, January 9.

Michael Davies arrives at Adams Park from rugby union club London Welsh, where he has held the post of Operations Manager since September 2014, having previously worked with World Rugby and Irish Hockey in sports management positions following a decade in financial services.

He will take overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the football club, providing leadership and direction at the heart of the business.

Chairman Andrew Howard said: "We undertook a thorough search for the right person to build on the excellent progress that we have made over the past two-and-a-half years, and Michael stood out as somebody who can help us develop off the pitch in a number of key commercial areas.



Michael Davies has been appointed Wycombe Wanderers' new General Manager. Davies will begin work at the club on January 9

"His experience and expertise across marketing, sponsorship, retail, finance and general operations will stand him in good stead to implement the board's strategies and policies, and maximise the potential of the staff at Adams Park

to help improve the performance of each department at the club."

Davies said: "The challenge at Wycombe Wanderers is one that excites me and I look forward to beginning the process of reviewing each area of the business to devise and imple-

ment ways to drive the club forward off the pitch.

"I've been extremely impressed with everything about the club so far, from the way it has stabilised itself under supporter ownership to build strong foundations for future progress. There is great positivity around the place and I'm confident that we as a team of staff – supported by the vast pool of volunteers – can continue moving in the right direction in 2017 and beyond."

Davies will be a direct line manager of all heads of department at the club, reporting to Howard.

The appointment comes in the wake of the news that the Chairboys have cleared their debt to former chairman Steve Hayes.

The £1.5m payback to Hayes from the Jordan Ibe move to Bournemouth from Liverpool this summer has seen Howard take a fresh look at the club.

Howard has been interviewed by the Bucks Free Press and the feature will be out on December 30.

SPORT



BOXING: Young Wycombe fighter continues to scale heights Khan powers his way to brilliant fourth gold

A YOUNG BOXER from High Wycombe kept up his extraordinary run of success as he picked up a superlative fourth gold medal at the NABC Championships in Bristol last Sunday.

Jamal Khan, 16, won in the 56kg category with an impressive display of power, finesse and speed to climb the British boxing rankings.

After his brilliant victory five days ago, proud father Istar explained how Jamal will now have to make a further step up the ladder next year.

He said: "It was a brilliant win for

Jamal and we are all so pleased for him.

"He will now have a little rest until the end of January when he will enter the national youth tournament where he will box three three-minute rounds instead of three two-minute rounds like he has been doing.

"If he wins that, then we can set our sights even higher and he can go for the World Championships and the Europeans."

Jamal's roll-call of wins includes beating the Irish champion in Ire-



land for a terrific win as well as beating the Welsh champion in his own backyard so clearly being out of his comfort zone holds now fears

for Khan.

Istar also explained how hard Jamal has worked throughout his burgeoning career so far and his training regime is gruelling as he bids to become one of the country's brightest young talents in boxing.

"He trains six days a week, for a few hours a day, and his life is basically eat, sleep and box," added Istar.

"Jamal is so dedicated to what he is doing. He has put his social life on hold so he can concentrate on becoming better and better as a

boxer and that is exactly what he is doing."

With a new focus for young Khan ahead in the New Year, he has an extremely impressive record to fall back on. In 40 fights, Khan junior has only lost twice and Khan senior wanted to thank Jamal's coaches for all the hard work they have put in with his son.

He commented: "The coaches at The Ring Boxing Club in Bracknell have been brilliant and I just want to thank them so much for helping Jamal."

WANDERERS: Striker's positive outlook on life Akinfenwa: I am in complete harmony

IT HAS BEEN a remarkable and extremely positive few weeks for Wycombe Wanderers on and off the pitch.

Seven wins on the spin in all competitions has seen the Chairboys propel themselves into the playoffs in the league, make progress into the third round of the FA Cup and set up a last-16 clash with Blackpool in the Checktrade Trophy.

Numerous players in Gareth Ainsworth's squad have been at the top of their game recently. However, one player in particular has made his mark on many defences since the beginning of November.

Adebayo Akinfenwa has been a pivotal player for Wycombe with in this amazing run of victories. Ainsworth has stated in recent weeks that Akinfenwa has been playing some of the best football in his career.

With typical modesty, "Bayo" puts it down to how he is feeling mentally and physically and lauded praise on his team-mates for their performances.

He said: "I am in a place where I am in complete harmony on and off the field. I am going into every game enjoying it.

"I am full of confidence and the gaffer breeds confidence. We have a formation which I believe gets the best out of me.

"The last seven or eight games has been playing to my strengths and as a team it has clicked at this

by Nicholas Tunney

moment in time and we are going to try and maintain this for as long as we can."

Whilst there is no doubt that Akinfenwa's contribution has been absolutely superb, he heaped the plaudits on the players around him for their brilliant play, especially Matt Bloomfield.

"The guys around me make it so much easier for me," commented the 34-year-old.

"I know they say I am an integral part but when you have runners like that it really helps. For me, Blooms is so key and his timing of the runs when I have got the ball allows me to do stuff one touch.

"This allows me to put it in areas where it doesn't have to be precise and they can make bad balls into good ones."

Tomorrow, Akinfenwa is suspended for the home game against Leyton Orient after being sent off for two bookable offences in the 2-0 win over Notts County at Meadow Lane.

Gutted to be missing the game, he explained: "Earlier part of the week I was down so as we get closer, it is getting harder to be missing out on this Orient game.

"However, at the same time I am looking at the positives. I am struggling with my back and this gives me time to get that sorted before the Plymouth game."



Akinfenwa has been mightily impressive in recent weeks for the Chairboys and put it down to the form of his team-mates as a whole

Wycombe skipper a doubt for Orient

GARETH AINSWORTH hopes to see Wycombe captain Paul Hayes back in action this weekend after missing last week's 2-0 win over Notts County with a knock.

With Adebayo Akinfenwa suspended, Ainsworth will be keeping his fingers firmly crossed that his skipper will be fit to play against Leyton Orient tomorrow.

The Wycombe manager said: "Paul will be close. He isn't far away so that would be big if he could be back as he is so experienced.

"You saw at Chesterfield how good he was but he picked up a knock against Millwall in the Checktrade Trophy.

"We managed to win without him last weekend but if both Paul and Bayo are out this weekend then we will miss two experienced strikers.

"If he does miss out, there are plenty ready to take their chance as well so we will adjust accordingly if we need to."

With his side on a seven-game winning streak, Ainsworth is trusting his methods so the players can try and keep up this incredible run of success.

"It is about keeping complacency away," added Ainsworth. "It's about keeping the boys fresh, keeping training fresh and keeping the same application.

"They are a great bunch of lads. Of course the defeat will be round the corner and how we react to that but I emphasise there is no pressure on the boys and I tell them to just go out there and play.

"One win doesn't make a season and one defeat doesn't make a season."