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Ex-pupil 'regrets joining ISIS'

By Stephanie Wareham

A FORMER High Wycombe grammar school pupil who is believed to have joined ISIS has told how he spent most of his time in terrorist territory "playing PlayStation and riding his bike" – and says he made the "wrong choice" in joining the organisation.

Shabazz Suleman left the town's

prestigious Royal Grammar School (RGS) in May 2014 when he went on exam leave for his A-Levels, and is believed to have joined ISIS in the same year.

In his first face-to-face interview since being detained in Syria for allegedly trying to flee Islamic State, he told national media he had doubts about the Islamic extremists around five months after joining them.

The 22-year-old allegedly admitted he had been given weapons training and was sent to fight on the Iraqi border, but says he did not take part in battles or even fire a shot.

He told Sky News he tried to quit ISIS and was put in jail until he gave in and agreed to stay – and asked for a role that kept him away from fighting. Although he was transferred to the Military Police, he told Sky News he was "mostly

office-bound" playing games on his laptop. When asked by a reporter if he saw himself as a terrorist, he reportedly said: "No - it's very weird. You think of a terrorist as someone with a mask and sword cutting off people's heads. I was relaxing, hiding in Raqqa quietly, playing PlayStation or going around on bike rides - normal life in ISIS territory trying to evade ISIS checkpoints."

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GALLERY: Wycombe held to late draw with Robins



COMMENT

With
**NICHOLAS
TUNNEY**



IT all looked so good for Wycombe on Saturday. Their attacking play, led by Ebere Eze, was a joy to behold, especially after the break where the Blues scored three goals in 14 minutes. However, Cheltenham were always a threat but were no doubt aided by the officiating in the build-up to the equaliser two minutes from time. In the press box, even though the view was slightly obscured, you could see a clear four on Eze by Cheltenham forward Mohamed Eisa. Worse still, the linesman was two yards away from the incident! In the end, Eisa crossed for Brian Graham to head home, and the old cliché ‘two points dropped’ was very much the feeling after the game. Gareth was as usual very upbeat afterwards but called for referees to become professional

at this level. I have to agree with Gaz’s comments on this. Decisions like that could ultimately costs teams promotion, or a chance to stay up. At the end of the season, we will see how much that equaliser will have hurt Wycombe, or not, as the case may be. However, jobs and money hang on the line in football. I know referees have such a difficult job at any level of football but I have to be frank and say that it was an absolutely blatant foul on Eze, more so than some of the decisions that were given during the game itself. It is frustrating, but am sure Gareth is more concerned with the news that Adam El-Abd went of injured in Tuesday’s Checkatrade defeat to Swindon. He is hopeful that Dan Scarr and Anthony Stewart will be fit to face Solihull Moors on Sunday and that would certainly ease some of the pressure on the backline ahead of their first round FA Cup match. You think of the stability that Wanderers have on and off the pitch these days and that everyone

is pulling in the same direction. Unfortunately, there seems to be a bit of a crisis at Solihull at the moment. Richard Money resigned earlier this week as manager after just 26 days in charge and the club have announced that their assistant will be in charge against the Blues. Such upheaval can only hinder a club and Solihull are struggling at the bottom of the National League.

However, with a capacity crowd likely, a game like this could galvanise the squad and Gareth will, I am sure, have the team on red alert and mindful of avoiding an upset. We saw last season how a team like Stourbridge gave Wanderers a real fright before the Blues edged through their third round clash. I am predicting a 2-0 win for Wycombe but they will have to be 100 per cent on their game.



Adam El-Abd could miss Sunday’s game

Wycombe Wanderers

LAST FIVE LEAGUE GAMES: WDDLD

Solihull Moors

LAST FIVE LEAGUE GAMES: LLLWL

OPPOSITION VIEW



- 13. Nick Townsend
- 2. Kristian Green
- 22. Paul Green
- 26. Liam Daly
- 3. James Bowen
- 7. S Muxombedzi
- 8. Ashley Sammons
- 4. Darren Carter
- 34. Akwasi Asante
- 10. Jermaine Hylton
- 17. Oladapo Afolayan

SOLIHULL Moors have had a wretched start to their season in the National League, but that has been tempered by their progress to the FA Cup first round. It has been turbulent both on and off the pitch for the Midlanders, who are now on their third managerial appointment of the season with Gary Whild taking charge this weekend. This follows hot on the heels of Richard Money resigning earlier this week, after just 26 days in charge at Damson Park. The club began the season with Liam McDonald at the helm but a series of poor results in August has already left them with a mountain to climb to preserve their National League status. Their first win came away at Torquay after a dreadful first four games. The next

win came at home to Chester in early September, a 2-0 triumph. Young striker Oladapo Afolayan scored both goals as Moors eased to victory. The excellent win was expected to be a catalyst to kick-start their season but results went south again, apart from beating Ossett Town in the final qualifying round for the FA Cup. That match went to a replay after Ossett managed to get a draw at Damson Park. However, in the replay in Yorkshire, Joel Kettle and Darren Carter gave the National League side a 2-0 lead at the break before Ossett set up a nervy last 15 minutes thanks to a goal from Alex Peterson. The Moors managed to hold on to set up the Wycombe clash. Money then took charge and his side got a valuable 2-1 victory at Eastleigh,

before losing their last two games, including a 4-0 thumping at home to AFC Fylde, a result which set about Money’s resignation. With three managers since August and rooted bottom of the league, Moors now face a battle for survival but the FA Cup provides a distraction



Captain Liam Daly

In the CHAIR



KEITH HIGGINS



Keith Higgins

AT Wycombe Sound we celebrated our first birthday this week.

It was October 31 when we started broadcasting on 106.6 FM under our long term OFCOM licence. When I look back at what has happened in those last 12 months, I realise how lucky we have been.

Our first Sports Show under the licence was on Saturday November 6 when Wycombe had a very difficult cup tie away at high-flying Portsmouth.

We were in 21st place, things did not look good. However, Paris and Bayo scored in our 2-1 win victory and the tide turned. Little did we know what was to come. The 5-0 win at Chesterfield and Scott Kashket's hat-trick, that nerve jangling win over Stourbridge and that oh so epic day at Spurs.

If you listen to Wycombe Sound and our trailer for the Saturday Sports Show, it is made up of clips of us describing (aka shouting) some of Wycombe's goals against Spurs and Chesterfield.

We love a good FA Cup run at Wycombe Sound and we have had experience of them previously. We had some short term licences from Ofcom and in 2015/16 we covered Chesham's first round game at Bristol Rovers.

I wasn't on air when Ryan Blake scored which was probably a good thing as I shouted two words that are unrepeatable. I do remember interviewing Ryan afterwards and I swear he was floating off the ground as I spoke to him.

Later on, we sent one of our team to Millwall for Wycombe's second round tie. He dialled in at 4.50pm and I assumed it was going to be his full-time report on a 1-1 draw. The game hadn't finished and as he was just about to do his summary, there was this scream down the line as Aaron Pierre's cross was turned in by Michael Harriman for the winning goal deep in injury time. Moments like that are what make live radio so wonderful.

So we're off to Solihull Moors on Sunday. We are getting excited but like many football fans, a bit wary of the potential upset. Let's hope for a good game and some more exciting radio moments.

WANDERERS RECAP

Boss distraught after late push controversy

WYCOMBE 3-3 CHELTENHAM TOWN

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has called for referees at League Two level to become full-time professionals after a foul in the build-up to Cheltenham's late equaliser was not given by referee Lee Collins.

No foul was awarded after what Wanderers claim was a blatant push on Ebere Eze by Cheltenham forward Mohamed Eisa.

Eisa then crossed the ball in for Brian Graham, who headed into the Wycombe net despite vociferous protests by several Blues players.

That made it 3-3 and the match finished that way, with Wycombe coming back from one goal down to go 3-1 ahead thanks to goals from Eze and a brace from Adebayo Akinfenwa.

Ainsworth said after the game: "It is incredibly tough to take.

"I have seen the video and for me it is a blatant two-handed push on Ebs.

"Ebs was welling up after saying he couldn't stay on his feet and I was going to nail him if he could have cleared the ball but he was blatantly pushed.

"I can't believe it has been missed and refereeing is a tough job. However, it is League Two and we won't get scrutinised and people won't look at that.

"We will just go on now, having lost two points. If this was the Premier League it would have been on Sky Sports, being ripped to pieces and everyone would know about it.

"It is tough at this level sometimes. I have always asked for the referees to be professional at this level and I still want that.

"Lee Collins is a good referee but give him and these guys the extra help and make them professional at this level because we are professional players and this means a lot.

"I have spoken to the ref and he said he wants nothing more than to become professional and I feel for him.

"However, we did let Cheltenham into the game with two sloppy goals but I was delighted with our reaction second half."

After the visitors took the lead in the first half, Akinfenwa's double and a superb goal by the excellent Eze looked set to give the Blues victory.

The visitors took the lead on 22 minutes when Graham prodded home from close-range after Jamie Grimes pulled back Jordan Cranston's free kick.

After a frustrating first half from Ainsworth's men, they made the perfect start to the second period when Eze ran half the length of the pitch, pulled it back to Sam Saunders who played it into the path of the QPR loanee who then slammed home.

The irrepressible Eze then was heavily involved in the second goal on 50 minutes, playing a delightful ball through to Nick Freeman, who hit the post before the ball was forced home by Akinfenwa.

Akinfenwa then added a third on the hour, guiding the ball into the bottom corner from Craig Mackail-Smith's low cross.

However, Carl Winchester pulled a goal back with a rasping strike from 20 yards on 70 minutes before Graham's controversial equaliser.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Brown, Gape, El-Abd, De Havilland, Jacobson, Bean, Saunders, Eze, Freeman (sub: Bloomfield, 86), Akinfenwa, Mackail-Smith (sub: Cowan-Hall, 70). Subs: Makalambay, Southwell, O'Nien.

CHELTENHAM TOWN: Flinders, Grimes, Cranston, Dawson (sub: Pell, 68), Wright (sub: Sellars, 68), Winchester, Boyle, Eisa, Graham, Morrell (sub: Storer, 68), Moore. Subs: Flatt, O'Shaughnessy, Hinds, Davey.



Ainsworth was frustrated after controversy surrounded Cheltenham's late equaliser on Saturday

WANDERERS: Midfielder shows defensive class

Gape shows his case for the defence

CHAIRBOYS midfielder Dominic Gape is relishing his current role at right-back, filling in as injuries plague the Wycombe Wanderers defence.

With Michael Harriman out for a lengthy period and Sido Jombati currently sidelined, the Blues have no recognised right-back to call upon.

However, midfielder Gape has stepped into the role with assured performances against Swindon and on Saturday at home to Cheltenham and it is a role which the former Southampton midfielder is enjoying.

He said: "I have played at right-back before and I have played in similar circumstances in the under 23s at Southampton.

"I am enjoying it and enjoy playing anywhere on the pitch so if the gaffer asks me to play anywhere I will do so.

"When I was younger, when I first played at right-back, my youth team coach told me that it was a good string to add to my bow, to be able to play another position if something like an injury crisis happens.

"Playing at the under 23s is slightly different but I was playing against really high quality players who have gone on to do some great things and I have called on those experiences.

"It is a position where the game is in front of you and being a central midfielder I like to think my passing is my strength and at right-back I have the whole pitch in front



Gape has stepped in to the role at right-back seamlessly

of me so it is a case of picking the right ball and the right pass for my team-mates.

"When the ball is on my side, the

gaffer gives me the license to go forward and play and join the attack and I will try to do that as much as possible.

Defensive duo could return for Wanderers



Stewart could be back for Wycombe this weekend

WYCOMBE could welcome defenders Anthony Stewart and Dan Scarr into back into the squad for Sunday's game against Solihull Moors.

Stewart and Scarr have both been missing in recent weeks but look set to bolster the Blues defence this weekend.

However, skipper Adam El-Abd is being assessed ahead of the game after coming off against Swindon in midweek with a hamstring pull.

Manager Gareth Ainsworth said: "Adam felt his hamstring tightening in midweek, and with his experience,

did the right thing and came off.

"It hasn't gone completely, it is a pull but we will see what damage has been done.

"Hopefully it isn't too serious. It was disappointing to see Adam come off as he has been fantastic for us and we hope he can make it this weekend but we aren't sure yet."

Midfielder Luke O'Nien made his comeback from injury against Swindon and Jack Williams was on the bench as Wycombe's injury worries finally look like they may be easing slightly.

BLUES: Ainsworth looks ahead to another run Boss hails 'special' FA Cup

By Nicholas Tunney

THE FA Cup is finally upon us once again.

The oldest cup competition in the world begins another chapter of its unsurpassed history this weekend with teams from across the country hoping to etch their name in history.

First round weekend is always special, especially for non-league teams who fancy taking a league team as a truly historic scalp.

Wycombe Wanderers take on non-league side Solihull Moors away from home on Sunday, hoping to avoid a potential banana skin.

Wanderers, themselves, have plenty of pedigree in this competition, getting to the semi-finals in 2001 and running Spurs and Aston Villa very close in recent campaigns.

Now, the tables have turned, with Wycombe favourites to comfortably beat Solihull, who sit bottom of the National League.

However, manager Gareth Ainsworth has made his players well aware of the threat that Solihull could pose in a competition Ainsworth holds dearly to his heart.

He said: "The FA Cup is so special for me. Any manager who says otherwise is telling porkies.

"It is a competition where I have had plenty of ups and downs and we have to be wary of Solihull on Sunday. I want my players to be professional and go out there as if they are playing a League Two game or against Spurs or Villa.

"As a player, I was knocked out by Kidderminster playing for Preston in the fourth round and that defeat really hurt and those are the types of losses you remember.



Ainsworth hopes to emulate recent FA Cup campaigns

"In the FA Cup, any team can beat any team if you don't turn up and that is what we have to guard against."

Solihull have endured a torrid time of things this season, sitting bottom of the league, and now they are on their third manager of the season with Richard Money resigning this week and being replaced in the hotseat by Gary Whild.

Ainsworth added: "They have got a good history, having merged with Moor Green and now they want to make their mark in football.

"With everything that has been

going on there this season, I do sympathise with their supporters.

"They are currently in a period where they are finding out how tough the National League is but this is a different game for them and they have nothing to lose so we have to be as professional as we can.

"There will be a full house and I am hoping we can get a positive result. This for them is a like a third round tie for us when the big boys come in so if we want to get there again, we have to be ready."

This week saw Ainsworth appear

on the bench against Swindon in their Checkatrade Trophy loss.

Although naturally disappointed with losing, Ainsworth commented: "I hate losing at any level but if there is a small silver lining it is the fact we can concentrate on the league and FA Cup.

"The Checkatrade Trophy can drain your resources playing wise and losing on Tuesday will ease that pressure.

"I was tempted to come on against Swindon, but only if we were ahead and assessing how they boys were."

Blues bow out of Checkatrade Trophy

WANDERERS exited the Checkatrade Trophy at the group stage after a 1-0 loss to Swindon Town at the County Ground.

Matt Preston headed home the only goal of the game with three minutes remaining, while the visitors suffered another defensive setback with Adam El-Abd being forced off through injury.

Manager Gareth Ainsworth named himself on the bench while Yves Ma-Kalambay was handed a debut in goal and Luke O'Nien, Matt Bloomfield, Paris Cowan-Hall and Dayle Southwell were given the opportunity to get vital minutes under their belts.

Early on, Ma-Kalambay routinely held a free-kick from Paul Mullin while Cowan-Hall flashed a shot wide under pressure from just inside the area, before Ebere Eze drilled over the top after juggling the ball neatly 15 yards out.

At the other end, Kaiyne Woolery was caught in two minds as he raced onto a through-ball and opted to place it beyond Ma-Kalambay with the outside of his right boot rather than strike it with power, and saw the ball go wide.

The visitors stormed back and Cowan-Hall had a shot saved and Eze curled one wide, both from distance.

Robins substitute Harry Smith, the hero of the league game for Swindon 10 days previously, fizzed a shot just wide of the far stick as chances began to present themselves for both sides.

More woe came for Wycombe just after when El-Abd hurt himself whilst challenging Smith and Marcus Bean was required to come on in his place in the centre of defence.

Swindon's second substitute John Goddard let fly from 20 yards but was denied by Ma-Kalambay, and the keeper tipped the same player's shot behind for a corner, from which Keshi Anderson hooked a loose ball over the top from close range.

But there were only three minutes left on the clock when Preston broke the deadlock, losing his marker to send a bullet header past Ma-Kalambay from an inswinging free-kick.

The defeat sees Wycombe out of the competition at the group stage, with still one game to play.

SPORT

Rugby

Neale's Amersham lose
to Chingford
- Page 66



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ANOTHER FA CUP ADVENTURE BEGINS

- Ainsworth has eyes on FA Cup run
- Boss wary of Solihull threat
- Wants new-look side to emulate White Hart Lane heroes

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Page looks to start new chapter

HE MAY not have won the coveted track board trophy at Six Day London but Amersham cycling star Charles Page is determined to experience more of the same after racing in front of the biggest crowd of their career at the Lee Valley VeloPark.

Page finished seventh in the U21 Talent Cup at Six Day London last week, as he rode with Louis Rose-Davies in 40-minute Madison races on each of the

first three days of the event.

And after rubbing shoulders with the likes of former road world champion Mark Cavendish and Olympic gold medallist Peter Kennaugh, Page was motivated to come back to Six Day London as part of the pro ranks, one day.

"It's been very interesting, I've been getting back used to track riding and the intensity of competing in a Madison," he said.

"Six Day is always a fun event, the crowd and the enormity of the whole competition really makes it, but it's been interesting to get back into the groove on the track.

"It's a 40km Madison which is longer than what I'm used to. It's been tough but also a good laugh.

"I rode Six Day London last year, that didn't go as well after a tough season with injury, but it's all good experience.

"I want to keep competing in Six Days wherever I can, to come back as an elite rider is always something I've wanted to do."

"They make it look like good fun and I can imagine it being even better doing the whole six days."

The competition was won overall by Belgium's Bryan Boussaer and Jules Hesters as they came back from a second-place finish last year to dominate in 2017.



Amersham rider Page in action