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Friday, December 8, 2017

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INSIDE

Tribute to air crash victim

Funeral for man killed in helicopter tragedy

Teenager in ISIS text probe

By Stephanie Wareham

A RADICALISED young supermarket worker from High Wycombe shared Islamic State propaganda on WhatsApp, a court has heard.

Ifthikhar Ali (pictured, right) was aged 18, living at home with his

parents in Totteridge Drive, and had a job at Sainsbury's at the time he allegedly sent extremist material on his mobile phone.

He is currently on trial at the Old Bailey charged with 12 counts of dissemination of a terrorist document and one of possessing a document likely to be useful to a person

committing an act of terrorism.

He allegedly had a guide giving advice on how to get through airport security, prepare for Jihad and travel to join ISIS.

Opening the case, prosecutor Mark Paltenghi warned jurors that some of the evidence was "graphic" and "upsetting" and showed

men about to be killed, although it was edited out of respect for their families.

He said: "The allegations span a period of six months between September 8, 2015 and the defendant's arrest on March 10, 2016.

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NEWS

Roadworks cause traffic chaos



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SPORT

Wycombe's cup run continues



Page 58

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COMMENT

With
**NICHOLAS
TUNNEY**



A LONG-STANDING record has been broken thanks to Wycombe's latest FA Cup exploits. The battling victory over Leatherhead meant that the Chairboys have reached the third round for the third year in succession for the first time in their history. It was an enthralling match at Adams Park on Sunday, a proper FA Cup tie with the whiff of a shock in the air. Of course, Leatherhead took the lead. I still cannot believe the penalty was given. If that happens, then there should be a penalty given every single match, or nearly every single time a set-piece is defended. It looked like it rattled the Blues for a few minutes as the visitors threatened again but fortunately an incredible free kick from Sam Saunders relaxed Wanderers. After the break there

was only one team in it as Wycombe piled the pressure with Tanners keeper Zaki Oualah performing heroics to keep the home side out. It took a great bit of skill and shot by Akinfenwa to unlock the door and allow Craig to snaffle the rebound before Bayo settled matters with a bullet header. The sportsmanship shown at the end by Gaz, clapping the Leatherhead fans, is what the FA Cup is all about and it was great to witness such a cracking game between two sides who went for it. Preston North End are now the next opponents for Wycombe in the third round and it has all the makings of a great cup tie. A League Two side playing well at home against a middling Championship team. There could certainly be a chance for Wanderers to get through although it will be very tough. It also brings a sentimental feel as Gaz played for Preston very early in his career and is from that area so it promises to be an in-

triguing contest in early January. Now, though, it is back to the league and a very tricky trip to Stevenage this weekend. Last season, the Blues came unstuck in north Herts with a 3-0 defeat and they have some very dangerous players with the likes of Matt Godden and Tom Pett in their ranks. They have had a slightly iffy run of late but possess some real quality. Hopefully, the lads can get back

on track on the road by at least picking up a point. The away form lately hasn't been to the usual standard, with three losses in a row. However, Wycombe could easily have got something from those games with a bit more luck and starting a bit quicker. I am going for a tight 1-1 draw which I think would be a creditable result. COYB!



Mackail-Smith against Leatherhead

Wycombe Wanderers

LAST FIVE LEAGUE GAMES: DLWLW



VS



Stevenage

LAST FIVE LEAGUE GAMES: LDLDL

OPPOSITION VIEW



- 1. Joe Fryer
- 25. Ronnie Henry
- 4. Jack King
- 6. Luke Wilkinson
- 3. Joe Martin
- 7. Chris Whelpdale
- 2. Jonathan Smith
- 30. Mark McKee
- 11. Tom Pett
- 15. Alex Samuel
- 24. Matt Godden

THIS week's Opposition View is from Stevenage FC programme editor, Mark Venables. How have Stevenage started the season? I suppose patchy would be the best description. There have been glimpses of the sort of football that the manager wants to play, where the ball has been passed at pace and we have dominated some teams. At the end of September, we were well in the play-off places and looked set to have a successful season, but we have only one sole league victory from our nine league matches in October and November that has seen us gradually slip down the table. Who are your key players? Football is won and lost in

both boxes and in Matt Godden and Danny Newton we have two of the best goal scorers in the league and both are playing well. What are the hopes for Stevenage this season? I think most fans are realistic that when you have one of the smallest budgets in the division everything must come together for a successful season. That said I think that the club's ambitions are always to be around the playoff places, so the current league position would be slightly disappointing. What are your thoughts on Wycombe? Wycombe under Gareth Ainsworth have always had a nice blend of flair, energy

and aggression that make them difficult opponents to play against. Prediction? Even given Wycombe's fine league form I must predict a home victory for Stevenage.



Mark Venables

In the CHAIR



RORY STRINGER, WYCOMBE WANDERERS SUPPORTER



Rory Stringer

MANY wonder why Wycombe Wanderers' Adebayo Akinfenwa is so popular and famous despite spending most of his career in the lower leagues of English football.

I have also thought this way for a while and his success has become clear to me ever since he signed for my local team Wycombe.

Firstly the size of the man, weighing in at 16 stone, he is an imposing unit and his size intimidates defenders week in, week out.

Football fans enjoy seeing different ways of playing and with Akinfenwa in your side he provides a very unique way of attacking.

His sheer strength helps him hold onto the ball and win headers and tackles off opposing players. This may be seen by some as a less attractive brand of football however few could argue his technique hasn't been effective over the years.

Akinfenwa's fame has also come about as a result of his FIFA statistics, he is rated as the strongest player on the game.

This makes him a useful player to have on FIFA Ultimate Team, so many know of him solely because of the video game. His prominence on FIFA is complemented by his friendly, comical persona, which often comes across positively in interviews.

His most iconic interview appearance came back in May 2016 post-playoff final at Wembley Stadium. His team at the time (AFC Wimbledon) had just clinched promotion against Plymouth Argyle. "The Beast" light heartedly mentioned the fact he was "technically unemployed" and appealed to managers to "hit him up on the Whatsapp". Wycombe manager Gareth Ainsworth did just that weeks later.

Akinfenwa doesn't take for granted his popularity and rewards his fans with frequent updates on all his social media platforms. Akinfenwa associates himself with the nickname "The Beast" referring to his size and dedication to daily gym sessions. He frequently inspires youngsters to "#Defylimination" with reference to his past when he was often told he was "Too big to play football". I think it's safe to say he's proved otherwise.

WANDERERS RECAP

Ainsworth praises second half display

WYCOMBE 3-1 LEATHERHEAD

WANDERERS boss Gareth Ainsworth hailed his players for their second half display as his Wycombe side came from behind to beat Leatherhead 3-1 in the FA Cup second round at Adams Park.

Jack Midson had given Leatherhead the lead after eight minutes with a contentious penalty but Sam Saunders levelled with a wonderful free kick before late goals from Craig Mackail-Smith and Adebayo Akinfenwa sealed victory.

In between the second and third goals, Sammy Moore was sent off for the visitors and Ainsworth concurred that it was a very tough game for his side.

He said: "Second half there was only one team in it and that was us.

"It took me to get to half-time level, which believe me was tough, because at the start that was a real cup tie.

"The fans that Leatherhead bought, the off the ball stuff, the penalty, it became an emotional, highly-charged atmosphere in the first half and it was difficult to get to grips with some of their midfield play which is huge credit to them.

"At half-time we got some messages on and got the mental stuff and second half there was only one side in it.

"The sending off obviously helped but at the end of the day we felt pretty comfy second half.

"Massive credit to Leatherhead. You can see why they have got here with that first half performance and they could have had a couple more.

"I have some friends in the Leatherhead side and I wish them all the best in the league but I am glad we are in the hat for the third round."

Leatherhead's penalty was a hugely controversial moment early on. Referee Tim Robinson pointed to the spot, despite no protests from the Leather-

head players and Ainsworth was baffled as to why it was awarded.

He added: "I have no opinion on it because I can't understand why it has been given.

"It gave them a real leg-up and gave them confidence but fortunately Sam Saunders' goal was vitally important and it allowed us to dictate the game in the second half."

After that early scare, the experienced players came to the fore and Ainsworth explained that the balance in the team is crucial with that mixture of youth and the older heads.

"I keep saying there are goals in this team and we balance it out with the older players, who have a few more days off and carry more knocks now and again," added the Wycombe boss.

"The likes of Saunders, Mackail-Smith and Akinfenwa have all played at a higher level and you can see why.

"The energy in all the boys was fantastic and I am really pleased with the result."

After Midson's early shock, Leatherhead had a couple of opportunities to extend their lead but Wycombe just about weathered the storm before Saunders' equaliser becalmed them.

Second half, the Blues were dominant and Akinfenwa's presence became key in keeping the visitors at bay.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Brown, Jombati, Stewart, El-Abd, Jacobson, O'Nien, Bloomfield, Saunders (sub: Scarr, 84), Southwell (sub: Freeman 62), Akinfenwa, Mackail-Smith. Subs: Ma-Kalambay, Bean, De Havilland, Williams.

LEATHERHEAD: Oualah, Clohessy, Nnamani, Ambroisine, Richards, Minshull, Moore, Theobald (sub: Gallagher, 70). Midson, McManus (sub: Omofe, 85). Subs: Blonski, Wood, Sager, Cash.

REFEREE: Tim Robinson



Ainsworth heaped praise on Leatherhead for their gutsy display at Adams Park

WYCOMBE: Saunders happy to get through test Midfield maestro pleased with goal

WANDERERS midfielder Sam Saunders was pleased to see another awesome free kick hit the back of the net as his crucial equaliser against Leatherhead paved the way for a second half comeback.

Saunders levelled the scores from fully 30 yards as his powerfully hit free kick curled right into the corner to give Leatherhead keeper Zaki Oualah no chance.

The former Brentford playmaker said: "It was nice to see it go in.

"Dobbo [Richard Dobson] joked at the end of the game and said I don't score any tap-ins a which is probably correct since I have been at Wycombe.

"I don't think I have scored any inside the box but I wish I did because I would score a few more goals.

"It was nice to get us back in the tie. To be honest, the referee gave them a bit of a leg-up and gave them something to hold onto.

"It was a good FA Cup tie.

"Their fans were good and we probably didn't start as well as we could have done.

"In the second half we got stronger and stronger and I felt we were going to be the only team that were going to win the game.

"In the end, a bit of skill from Bayo and Macca popped up and it was good to see him score again."

Saunders also added that a few choice words were said at half-time to galvanise a second half comeback.

He commented: "There were a few words said from players and man-



Saunders scored a sublime free kick to equalise

agement staff so we know we can do better.

"It was good to get in at half time 1-1 and we got stronger.

"We just wanted to copy what we have done previously in the competition and in the end it was professional job."

Stevenage goal threat makes Ainsworth wary

STEVENAGE are Wycombe's opponents this weekend and Gareth Ainsworth is certainly wary of the threat they pose to his Wycombe side.

Last season, Wanderers lost 3-0 at the Lamex Stadium and despite winning only one league game in nine, Stevenage smashed Swindon 5-2 last weekend in the FA Cup.

Ainsworth said: "They are a real threat.

"They really did a job on us last year and they have changed their squad round a little bit.

"Darren Sarll has had a little blip

but he has proved he is more than capable of managing at this level.

"They have some good individuals in their team and they are really dangerous.

"Godden and Newton up front have been banging in the goals for them and Darren has done well getting them both from non-league and both have carried on their form from their non-league days.

"They break well and tactically they did a good job on us last year and we want to get them back this time around."



Godden has been in fine form since signing for Stevenage

WANDERERS: Ainsworth's delight at full squad Key duo knocking on door

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE Wanderers' latest injury problems could be at an end with key players back in contention this weekend.

Nathan Tyson and Scott Kashket could be added to Gareth Ainsworth's squad for the tricky trip to Stevenage on Saturday, which is a real boost ahead of a tough run over the festive period, with four games in 10 days.

Tyson has been out for a couple of months with a knee ligament injury and Kashket has played no part this season as he battles back from a long standing problem.

However, both players have been seen by fans training with the squad on matchdays in recent weeks and Ainsworth commented that he is delighted he now has a few selection headaches to deal with.

He said: "We came through unscathed against Leatherhead and we have players coming back now.

"Tyson and Kashket are going to be in contention, hopefully for this weekend which is fantastic news.

"Nathan is probably a little bit ahead of Scott but with them both in full training it is not going to be long before we see them back out on the pitch.

"With Scott, especially, we have to be careful and make small steps and fitness will be an issue but I am looking forward to him coming back.

"Nathan as well, when fit, is above this level and a real weapon for us to have so I am really pleased with both of those and Dominic Gape is looking good as well so it could be a full quota barring Michael Harriman and it is a great time to have all those players



Kashket is back in full training and could be back this weekend

back ahead of this run of games."

With these two explosive players so close to playing, the form of the other forward this season has been very impressive too.

Ainsworth added: "I have got in a lot of strikers over the past two seasons and in pre-season I got in Tyson and Mackail-Smith to add to the ranks and we have been free-scoring.

"Nick Freeman has come into form and Ebere Eze too, it has been fantastic. There is not one person set in stone for one position apart from Bayo who as we know is very

tough to replicate.

"Because of this it has allowed me to not rush these guys back and we a fully-fit squad, we have something special here because I believe we can match anyone in this league."

Another player due to return is Eze, who missed last week's FA Cup due to not being allowed permission to play by parent club, QPR.

The 19-year-old has been a shining light since joining on loan with five goals in just 13 appearances, including scoring in his last three

games at Adams Park, but the excellent form of Matt Bloomfield, Sam Saunders and Luke O'Nien means the manager has another poser to look at.

He said: "There is great competition for places and we all know that Ebs is a talent.

"The guys [Saunders, Bloomfield and O'Nien] were great without him at the weekend but we will assess ahead of the Stevenage match and pick the best team that we think can win this game and whoever will be out there will do a good job for us."

Captain relishing 'tough' away test

WANDERERS skipper Adam El-Abd said he is relishing coming up against one of the best strikers at League Two level this weekend.

El-Abd is set to face Matt Godden for the first time in his career this weekend and is aware of the threat the former Ebbsfleet striker brings.

Godden was linked with a move away from north Herts in the summer but no deal could be agreed and that is certainly Stevenage's gain.

The skipper has already faced the likes of Danny Hylton, Tom Pope and Christian Doidge so far this season and commented that they all have their own standout attributes.

He said: "It is difficult to put your finger on one striker and with most teams all their strikers pose different threats.

"I have not come up against Matt Godden before and have heard a lot about him but obviously he has scored a few goals at this level so it will be tough and we have to be on our guard."

In the last three away games, Wycombe have lost all of them by the odd goal against Swindon, Morecambe and Accrington and El-Abd said that although the team have been a bit unlucky in those fixtures, the level they have performed at hasn't been at the standard they set themselves.

He added: "In the Swindon and Accrington games there were nothing in them. Against Swindon it blew a gale and it was a 50/50 game as was the Accrington game.

"Their was a bit of fortune on their part. For the goal but we had our chances. Against Morecambe we had it out in the dressing room that we didn't play at our best and we under-performed.

"You could say that in those three games we haven't been up to the level required so you could say that luck plays a bit of a part but we have to address our performance ourselves to give ourselves a better chance to the win game.

"Our home form on the other hand has been very good and we are working on things to add to our performances that we can implement for the rest of the season.

"If we can take that on and perform as we can, that will hold us in good stead for this weekend's game and beyond."



SPORT

Wanderers

Wycombe strikers back
in full training
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WYCOMBE NETBALL COACH SCOOPS AWARD



- Ratnapala named Performance Coach of the Year
- Huge success at Bucks Sport Awards
- Legend named in Hall of Fame

See page 54 & 55

Preston await for Wanderers

Wycombe Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth said the draw against Preston is a nice one for him as he prepares to welcome one of his former clubs to Adams Park in the FA Cup third round.

The Chairboys were drawn to face the Championship club on Monday night and the tie will be played on the weekend of January 6.

Speaking exclusively to the Bucks Free Press, Ainsworth

said: "Personally, it is a great draw as it means a lot to me.

"Preston are the team who gave me a chance in league football and that is never to be forgotten.

"However, I feel it is a winnable draw for us. I think there are a couple of over-confident fans at Preston already thinking of the fourth round so my team talk will be quiet an easy one.

"We are the underdogs and nobody will expect us to go through

so let's try and upset all the form books and a home tie is fantastic for us.

"I am looking forward to pitting my wits against one of the top managers in the Championship [Alex Neil] and I am very much looking forward to facing one of my old clubs."

Last time the Blues faced Preston was in 2013 in this competition when a solitary wonder strike from former England

striker Kevin Davies settled matters between the two sides.

In the process of beating Leatherhead, Wanderers made history by making the third round for the third successive season and setting a new club record.

Wanderers are certainly making their presence felt in this competition in recent seasons and hopes will be high that the Blues can beat their Championship opponents next month.



Ainsworth welcomes his old club