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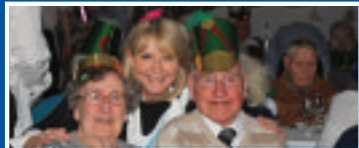
Bucks Free Press

Covering Wycombe, South Bucks & Chiltern Districts
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**Celeb joins OAPs
in town tradition**
Picture special Page 23

PARTY TIME



'Blues legend'

Ex-Wanderers star dies at 98, Obituary Page 41

SCHOOL KNIFE TERROR



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NEWS

Roadside tributes
to crash victim



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NEWS

New 100-home
plans revealed



Page 7

EDUCATION

Which school is
best in Bucks?



Page 24



Campaigners in High Wycombe

Protest 'ignored' as centres axed

By Shruti Sheth Trivedi

CAMPAIGNERS battling to save 35 "vital" children's centres from closure have accused the council of ignoring their protests - days after it declared plans to replace some of the centres around Bucks with community hubs.

The new early help service will see nine teams working in community settings across the county, including people's homes, which bosses say will save Bucks County Council more than £3 million.

Under the new plans, the team bases will replace seven of the existing children's centres along

with the remaining two areas - Quarrendon and Buckingham - currently being assessed for "appropriate locations".

Council bosses said the future of the remaining 28 buildings will be decided with local communities, schools and early years providers.

See page 9

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WANDERERS - IN PICTURES

Bucks Free Press Sport is sponsored by **MICHAEL GRAHAM**

All the action from Wycombe's FA Cup defeat to Championship side Preston



Preston North End keeper Declan Rudd punches away the danger



A big crowd attended the game



Despair for O'Nien



O'Nien grabbed Wycombe's goal



Nick Freeman calls for the ball



COMMENT

With
**NICHOLAS
TUNNEY**



ANOTHER superb FA Cup campaign has come to an end. I thought Preston were absolutely fantastic last weekend at Adams Park. The last thing Wanderers will want to have seen was an early goal and Harrop's wonderful free kick was the ideal start for the visitors.

Although the lads worked their socks off, Preston were always in control and looked like a team who will certainly challenge for promotion in the Championship this season.

They were fast, slick and although they have no starts, they play as a well-oiled team.

There was one really big plus to come out of the defeat, though. The return of Scott Kashket is a real boost for the side at this stage of the season and I thought he looked very sharp when he came on and almost scored at the end with a

trademark deft finish.

To have someone of Scott's calibre back is brilliant for Gareth and the squad as a whole. He proved last season what a threat he is at League Two level and defenders will now be even more wary with the fact that Kashket is back and in contention.

With so many excellent forwards at his disposal, Gareth has a nice problem for the rest of the season and even has the luxury of rotating if the guys up top remain fit and healthy.

One player who did leave this week was Dayle Southwell, who has departed for National League side Guiseley.

Dayle came with a huge reputation but an injury sustained last campaign blighted his career at Adams Park. However, when called upon he always gave 110 per cent and produced some excellent displays, most notably in the win at Hartlepool last season.

I am sure he will go on to have a successful career and I wish him all the best.

Attention now turns to the league. 20 games left and it is bound to be an exciting race to the finish line.

Colchester are the next opponents to visit Adams Park and they have been in good form lately, although lost last week to Cheltenham.

Like Wanderers, they harbour play-off ambitions and are bang in contention to challenge. John

McGreal's side are always a threat at this level and Gareth will be hoping the boys can bounce back from their FA Cup exit.

It was an excellent win for the Blues at Colchester earlier in the season which got them off to a good run. Am sure Gareth will be hoping for the same heading into a tough set of fixtures for the rest of the month.

COYB!



Kashket is back for Wanderers

Wycombe Wanderers

LAST FIVE LEAGUE GAMES: WLWLW

WYCOMBE WANDERERS

VS

COLCHESTER UNITED FC

Colchester United

LAST FIVE LEAGUE GAMES: DWDDL

OPPOSITION VIEW



- 1. Sam Walker
- 2. Ryan Jackson
- 18. Tom Eastman
- 6. Frankie Kent
- 22. Kane Vincent-Young
- 7. Drey Wright
- 4. Tom Lapslie
- 14. Brandon Comley
- 16. Sean Murray
- 28. Kurtis Guthrie
- 19. Mikael Mandron

THIS week's Opposition View comes from Jon Waldron of the Colchester Gazette.

How have Colchester fared since the last meeting between the sides?

Really well. The Wycombe defeat back in September signalled the end of Colchester's slow start to the season and from that point on, their results have picked up and they have risen up the League Two table.

Since that game, they have suffered just three league defeats in 18 matches and their away form in particular has been excellent.

Are the play-offs a realistic target for Colchester?

Definitely. They head into the Wycombe game on Saturday sitting just two points off

the play-off places in League Two and three off the automatic promotion positions, so with 19 games to go this season they have as good a chance as anyone else.

Will there be any incomings/outgoings in January?

There are rumours that leading scorer Sammie Szmodics could leave for a big fee this month and it goes without saying that Colchester will be keen to keep hold of him, in the second half of the season.

Colchester head coach John McGreal is looking to bring new players in this month and could retain the services of current loanees Brandon Comley and Kyel Reid but at the time of writing, they are yet to add to their squad aside from bringing in unproven

duo Junior Ogedi-Uzokwe and Ryan Gondoh from Bostik League outfit Maldon and Tiptree.

Prediction?

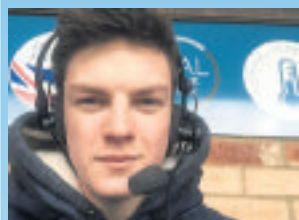
I'm going to sit on the fence and go for a 1-1 draw with both teams in strong form.



Jon Waldron

In the CHAIR

SAM AVERY FROM WYCOMBE SOUND



Sam Avery

OVER the past couple of years Wycombe Sound has become an immense part of my life. Wycombe Sound is a community radio station and I am a member of the sports team.

We have a Tuesday sport show from 7-8pm where we reflect on the weekend results and often have sporting guests with local links. We also have a Saturday sports show from 2:30-6pm where we keep listeners up-to-date with the scores up and down the country but have a strong emphasis on how our local sporting teams are doing. Every week we have at least one local game where a member of our team will be located; giving live updates and sometimes commentary.

Over two years ago, while shadowing the media team at Adams Park on a matchday, the Wycombe Wanderers head of media and marketing, Matt Cecil introduced to one of the radio station directors and head of the sports team, Keith Higgins who invited me to be a part of the sports show. This was a huge step in the right direction for me personally as football reporting is a particular interest of mine and has been from a very young age.

Wycombe Wanderers have supported the station massively which is much appreciated and we cover all Wycombe Wanderers home matches, and away games in the FA Cup. Unfortunately, due to Football League restrictions we are unable to give live updates for Wycombe league games like we can for our other local teams, but we do have a reporter there giving pre-match thoughts and post-match analysis and reaction, including an interview with Wycombe manager Gareth Ainsworth, who also supports Wycombe Sound wholly and always gives up his time to speak to us.

Us sports team members have already reported on incredible local sporting moments; most notably Wycombe's FA Cup run last season, including the Chairboys emphatic win at Chesterfield and the cup upset that just wasn't to be at White Hart Lane. We have a fantastic team of really dedicated volunteers at Wycombe Sound, and I thoroughly enjoy working at the station.

WANDERERS RECAP

Blues dumped out of FA Cup by Preston

WYCOMBE 1-5 PRESTON

WYCOMBE Wanderers' FA Cup run came to a grinding halt as they were dispatched 5-1 by Championship side Preston North End at Adams Park.

A brace from Josh Harrop, two goals from Alan Browne and a deflected Daryl Horgan effort gave Alex Neil's side a very impressive victory in south Bucks.

Luke O'Nien gave Wycombe hope just before half-time to make it 2-1 but Preston were too strong for their League Two counterparts.

Harrop gave the visitors the perfect start when he scored a delightful free kick from 25 yards which gave Scott Brown no chance.

Browne then scored a wonderful half-volley on 38 minutes from 20 yards which he belted into the top corner after Joe Jacobson heroically cleared Horgan's cross.

O'Nien gave Wanderers belief on 43 minutes when he smashed home with the aid of a deflection after good work from Nick Freeman.

However, Preston stepped up a gear with Wanderers chasing the game and the superb Horgan saw his effort deflected in off Will De Havilland on 50 minutes to make it 3-1.

Browne then scored from the penalty spot on 76 minutes after Dan Scarr was harshly adjudged to have pulled Paul Huntington's shirt from a corner.

Harrop then finished the scoring on 86 minutes when he thumped home a header from Greg Cunningham's pinpoint cross.

The early goal knocked Wycombe out of their stride with the home side unable to exert any real pressure in the opening few minutes.

The visitors almost made it two on 13 minutes when they broke away

down the left and Harrop got in behind but was denied by a superb stop from Brown.

Brown came to the rescue again on 22 minutes when Robinson lashed a firm shot at goal from 12 yards but Brown kept it out brilliantly with his legs.

The Chairboys, to their credit, were hanging on in there and Akinfenwa was giving the Preston backline plenty to think about from set-pieces.

The Blues were beginning to find their feet and the dangerous Freeman crossed for Akinfenwa on 32 minutes but the big man's header was off target.

Unfortunately, a hammer blow happened for Wanderers with Browne's magnificent strike before O'Nien gave the Blues a lifeline.

Wanderers came out with real purpose in the second half, playing at a higher tempo attempting to pin Preston back.

However, they were dealt a hammer blow with Horgan's goal before Robinson almost extended the Lilywhites' advantage on 59 minutes but he stroked his shot just wide of the far post.

Preston were then awarded a debatable penalty which Browne slammed home before Harrop made it five with an expert header from Cunningham's cross.

Scott Kashket almost grabbed a dream goal on his comeback at the death but was denied by a smart save from Rudd from 12 yards.

Now, Wycombe have the league to focus on after yet another excellent FA Cup campaign for the Chairboys.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Brown, Bean, El-Abd, Scarr, Jacobson (sub: Cowan-Hall, 77), O'Nien, Saunders (sub: De Havilland, 46), Bloomfield (sub: Kashket, 70), Freeman, Akinfenwa, Tyson. Subs: Ma-Kalambay, Gape, Southwell, Mackail-Smith.

REFEREE: Peter Bankes



Kashket made his eagerly awaited return at Adams Park against Preston

WANDERERS: Gaffer disappointed with cup exit Ainsworth: Too much respect shown

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth said his side showed Preston 'too much respect' in their 5-1 drubbing against the Championship team at Adams Park.

Ainsworth heaped praise on the performance of Alex Neil's men. He said: "The chance of an upset went out of the window in the first minute (with Harrop's first goal).

"We were outdone by a much better team. Fair play to Alex, he has his team working really well. They were fluid and they are a really good team.

"They are the best Preston side I have seen for a long, long time and I think they have a real chance of the play-offs this year.

"There is a gulf in class in the leagues. We are playing one of the

form teams of the Championship and they were excellent and we were definitely beaten by the better team.

"We had one or two moments but nothing like we have against teams in League Two.

"I thought at times we showed them a lot of respect and that was disappointing.

"We dropped off a lot and their front three caused us all sorts of problems."

However, there were a few positives to come out of the game, with Scott Kashket making his long-awaited return off the bench after a serious injury which has kept him out for the whole of 2017/18 campaign so far.

Ainsworth added: "It was great to



Ainsworth said his side showed Preston too much respect

see him get some minutes. He nearly scored at the end which would have been fantastic for him.

"To have him back in the squad

and on the pitch is phenomenal for us and it is a real indication of where we want to go and we have good options up top now."

Dayle Southwell leaves Wycombe for Guiseley

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Dayle Southwell has left the club to join National League side Guiseley for an undisclosed fee.

Southwell, 24, arrived at Adams Park in July 2017 following a prolific spell at National League North side Boston United, but an injury sustained two months later hampered his progress in his maiden year with the Chairboys.

The forward has made just three league starts this season, and boss Gareth Ainsworth feels the time has come for Southwell to explore a new

opportunity with Guiseley.

He said: "I had high hopes for Dayle when he came here and unfortunately it just hasn't worked out how we would have wanted.

"Nobody could ever fault Dayle's effort and dedication because he worked his socks off in every training session and every game he played, but he hasn't been able to force his way into the starting line-up regularly enough.

"He's a great lad and I'm sure he'll benefit from regular football at Guiseley. We wish him all the best."



Southwell scored twice in 32 appearances for the Blues

WYCOMBE: Ainsworth looks to bolster defence Manager eyes busy month

By Nicholas Tunney

JANUARY is always an interesting month for a football fan.

The league starts to take some sort of shape and the transfer window opens for the whole month which means teams get their squad finalised for the final push.

Wycombe Wanderers have already been active so far with Max Muller remaining at Morecambe for the rest of the campaign and Dayle Southwell moving to Guiseley this week.

With injuries mounting, boss Gareth Ainsworth is looking to make a couple of signings as well as potentially adding to his backroom staff in the wake of Barry Richardson's departure over the festive period to spend more time with his family back home in Lincoln.

Ainsworth said: "Baz has left a big hole. Defensively he was a major part of what we do and goal-keeper wise. We are still in contact on the phone but he has left for family reasons and we have got to respect that.

"There are plans to replace him but the transfer window is upon us too which is very important. Myself, Richard Dobson and the staff are working hard now and making sure we have enough to make a challenge in the final three or four months.

"In terms of a replacement for Baz, competence and trust are two big words for me when I am recruiting. Whoever comes in I will have to be able to trust.

"I will have their back and they will have mine and competency do that job and once that person arrives I am sure we will be fine."

Injuries, especially in defence, are depleting the squad currently



Ainsworth looks to strengthen his squad this month

with the likes of Michael Harriman, Anthony Stewart and Sido Jombati all missing for Saturday's crunch game with Colchester.

Ainsworth added: "With Sido, Anthony and Michael out we are certainly looking to bolster the defence at the moment.

"We have been working really hard. We have had a couple of doors shut in our face which will happen because we are League Two and sometimes you have to wait a little bit longer at this level, especially when you haven't got the other finances that other clubs

can tempt you with. It is a waiting game. We will see how we are on Saturday.

"Numbers may be slim but I have always said whatever squad we put out we will try and win the game but watch this space as we are trying to bring players in with two or maybe more this window."

Next up at Adams Park is a clash with Colchester tomorrow and Ainsworth is under no illusion as to how tough the game will be.

He commented: "John McGreal has done an excellent job there. There are question marks

around Sammie Szmodics who is rumoured to be going to Bournemouth.

"They have some good players and they have played a couple of different systems this season.

"It will always be a lively one against Colchester with the rivalry going back years to non-league days and I am sure the Wycombe faithful will be behind us to turn around what was a nasty week last week but looking at the league form we have been very good lately and looking forward to continuing that at home."

Saunders: Focus on our main job

WANDERERS playmaker Sam Saunders said there is no time to dwell on the Preston defeat last week as the team prepare to face fellow promotion contenders Colchester at Adams Park this weekend.

Saunders was part of the side who lost 5-1 last week to the Championship side in the FA Cup third round but is convinced that the defeat could turn out to a blessing in disguise with challenging for promotion the sole focus for the Chairboys now.

Saunders commented: "It is one of those defeats that we brush under the carpet and move on. No-one likes to lose never mind by the amount of goals that we did.

"I don't think it is something that we need to dwell on and our league form has been very good. We had some good cup runs last year but I thought that was a detriment to the league to be honest so hopefully we can use the fact that we are out of the cup to solely focus on our main objective which is to get into the play-offs and try and get promoted.

"When I first signed here we had a run of seven weeks with Saturday-Tuesday-Saturday-Tuesday and we lost points that way.

"We finished the season strongly last term when the games slowed down a bit and now we have a bit more breathing space between games.

"The gaffer can train us right and we will recover and hopefully that proves to the benefit of the club and the squad for the rest of the season."

Saunders started last week's FA Cup match but had to make way at half-time due to illness. However, the midfield maestro has had an excellent run in the team and is absolutely delighted with how his form and fitness has stacked up in recent weeks.

He added: "Last few weeks I have felt really good and I played three games in six days.

"Especially with the two games back-to-back over New Year [Mansfield on December 30 and Forest Green on January 1], I haven't done that for seven or eight years.

"I was really pleased and felt good and after those matches I felt strong and still had minutes in my legs so it was disappointing to come off against Preston with illness but hope to be ok for Saturday."

SPORT

Motorsport

Goff signs new contract
with Eurotech Racing
- Page 59



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WANDERERS RESHUFFLE

- Two leave with boss tight-lipped on arrivals
- First-team coach replacement on cards?
- Could Richardson departure halt promotion push?

See page 63

Bell pursues his golfing dream

AN amateur golfer from Chalfont St Peter is following his dream of turning professional as he bids to enter qualifying for the Europro Tour in March.

George Bell, 23, is a member of Harewood Downs Golf Club and holds the course record at the picturesque venue situated between Amersham and Chalfont St Giles.

Bell is bidding to qualify after his grandparents, who sadly

passed away recently, wanted him to pursue his dream.

Bell said: "I left school and went to Australia. I played there but when I came back to the UK, I lost the buzz for golf.

"At the beginning of the year, I lost both my grandparents, who were always there for me, and they encouraged me to pursue my dream as I now want to turn professional so here I am and I am going to give it my best shot."

George, who took up golf when he was eight and now plays off plus one, is attempting to raise £50,000 to enter the qualifying process.

He added: "I have been selected for the England U18 regional squad before and have been county champion across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire in the past.

"Golf was my first love and I really have that buzz back for it

again. I am turning professional this year and to enter the Europro Tour would be an incredible thing for me.

"The aim then is to keep going through the ranks and to become a full European Tour member."

The Europro Tour is two steps down from the European Tour and Bell could follow in the footsteps of Marlow's Tyrrell Hatton should he make it to the top echelons of the golfing world.



George Bell