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YEAR IN REVIEW

Look back at the big stories from 2018
Special report: Pages 6-9



INSIDE • 2 pages of Property • 4 pages of Freetime • 2 pages of Nostalgia • 5 pages of Sport

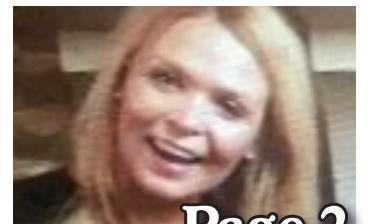
HORROR AS TEEN STABBED

Manhunt
underway after
teen suffers
'stab wounds in
10-man street
brawl' during
Christmas break
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CRIME

19-year jail term
for killer banker



Page 2

FEATURE

Favourite 2018
reader pictures



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Major roadworks planned

By Stephanie Wareham

WORK to improve a busy High Wycombe crossroads costing £750,000 is set to get underway next month - in a bid to cut congestion for drivers.

New pedestrian crossings, improvements to traffic lights and a

ban on heavy vehicles are part of the planned works at Cressex Link, which will start on January 21.

Two new left-hand turns from Cressex Road will be introduced, which Bucks County Council says will make it easier for drivers to get to Cressex business park and the link road towards John Hall Way.

Traffic light improvements will give north-south priority to traffic from the business park in a bid to cut queues at evening peak times.

A 7.5-tonne weight limit will also be introduced, meaning heavy lorries will not be able to use Cressex Road.

Traffic islands will also be re-

moved and four new puffin pedestrian crossings will be installed.

The county council says it will be working with the nearby Chepping View Academy in a bid to reduce congestion at the school entrance while the work is ongoing.

Continued on page 3



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GALLERY: Wycombe 1-2 Wombles



Scott Kashket put in a lively cameo



Jason McCarthy



Dominic Gape tussles for the ball



Tyson



Adam El-Abd and Fred Onyedinda try and stop the Dons



Joe Jacobson in action



Craig Mackail-Smith



Nathan Tyson wins a header



Alex Samuel crowded out



Onyedinda scored late on



Team talk from Richard Dobson

In the CHAIR

BFP sports reporter Nick Tunney



Nick Tunney

THIS is the last edition of the Bucks Free Press for this year and what a year it has been for Wycombe Wanderers.

It has been a truly whirlwind 12 months for the Chairboys and without a doubt, the highlight for me was that Chesterfield game where they sealed promotion back to League One after a six-year absence.

It was great for me to get onto the pitch at the end of the game and absorb the celebrations for such a deserved promotion and a lot of hard work.

Gareth was understandably elated at the final whistle but I was still extremely touched that he thanked me for my coverage. Certainly shows the mark of the man that he can still do that even when he is in the midst of arguably his best day in football.

I am in an extremely privileged position to be able to travel the length and breadth of the country to watch Wanderers in action.

With the way the team play and are set-up, games are very rarely dull and you know Gareth has just told the team to enjoy it and get the three points. A refreshing way to play when you consider the park the bus tactics that bigger clubs than Wycombe have employed over the past few years.

The drawback, or what makes my job harder (!) is the fact that the Blues exhibit that never say die spirit which sees them score so many late goals.

I literally have to rewrite my opening paragraph and change the structure of my report but it is a very small sacrifice to make when you consider the entertainment value on offer.

The Carlisle comeback, the Scunthorpe comeback, the Luton away match last season. These three games were end-to-end and the Blues showed heart quality to win these games.

Even the 0-0 games, like the Notts County match on Good Friday and the opening day Blackpool game were riveting and had you glued to the action.

I just hope that 2019 can be just as exciting as 2018 for me in the press box and although survival is clearly the main aim, this squad has the quality to definitely go further.

COYB!

WANDERERS

Ainsworth rues the absence of Akinfenwa

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth admitted his side missed the presence of talisman Adebayo Akinfenwa as they lost for the first time in seven league games at home to AFC Wimbledon.

Goals from Kwesi Appiah and Jake Jervis put the visitors 2-0 ahead before Fred Onyedinma pulled a consolation back for the visitors late on.

Ainsworth refused to be too despondent at the loss as his side have been mightily impressive in the past few weeks but explained they could have done with the services of Akinfenwa against an unpromising and organised team.

He said: "He was definitely a miss. Bayo would have made a big difference and it would have been fire with fire as they were quite direct."

"They were a good outlet for that and they scored with a set play and they showed two sides of the way they can play and we have been playing some good stuff but we never got it going here."

Wanderers went behind to Appiah's close range strike and Jervis added a second in the 90th minute. Onyedinma got one back straight away but the Dons held on for a crucial victory in their attempt to escape the drop.

The first real chance of the game came on 20 minutes when good work down the wing from Jason McCarthy whipped in a ball that Randell Williams nodded back across goal but striker Nathan Tyson could only put his header over the bar from six yards out.



Ainsworth refused to be despondent

Wimbledon opened the scoring in the 30th minute through Appiah, slotting home after latching onto James Hanson's header.

Wycombe came out the traps slightly better for the second half with Onyedinma looking the most likely to cause problems and when Alex Samuel was saw his shot superbly saved by Tom King in the Wimbledon goal.

Wycombe huffed and puffed but

to no avail and right on 90 minutes Jervis doubled the lead.

Onyedinma pulled one back with seconds to go after a superb low cross from Tyson but Wanderers will be left rueing the chance to make it seven wins on the bounce at home.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Henderson, McCarthy, Jombati, El-Abd, Jacobson, Onyedinma, Gape (sub: Mackail-Smith 79), Thompson, Wil-



Onyedinma scored late on

liams (sub: Kashket 64), Samuel (sub: Morris 64), Tyson. Subs: Yates, Stewart, Mackail-Smith, Kashket, Cowan-Hall, Morris, Freeman.

AFC WIMBLEDON: King, Watson, Nightingale, Thomas, Purrington, Wagstaff (sub: Jervis, 10), Hartigan, Appiah, Wordsworth, Barcham, Hanson (sub: Soares 81). Subs: McDonnell, Garrett, Trotter, Soares, Kalambayi, Burey.

REFEREE: John Busby

WYCOMBE: Midfielder keeping extremely focused Thompson: We can bounce back

WYCOMBE Wanderers midfielder Curtis Thompson says despite the Chairboys shock 2-1 home defeat to League One's bottom club AFC Wimbledon on Saturday there is still plenty of time left in the season for the club to achieve their targets.

Gareth Ainsworth's men were looking for their seventh straight home win but goals in each half for the visitors ensured the Dons left Adams Park with all three points despite Fred Onyedinma's late consolation.

Thompson said: "There are games coming thick and fast, we know what we've got to do, we know we've got to get points out of these next few games to put us where we want to be in the second half of the season, and I think we'll be looking to do that."

The former Notts County man has been in good form this season, being voted man of the match against

Wimbledon and has become a regular in his managers starting XI as well as being a fans favourite.

Thompson's contract is set to expire at the end of January but insists his concentration is to carry on improving, playing as well as possible and keeping his place in the team.

He said: "I'm just focused on performing at the moment, contract wise there's talks going on, but nothing is certain until its in black and white, but I'm just focused mainly on performing and staying in the team."

He added: "I've got to stay alert. Performances and wins they come and go, I think the main thing is to stay focused, keep trying to rack points up, stay in the team and see where we go from there."

Wycombe travel to Burton on Boxing Day (kick off 3pm) hoping to do the double over the Brewers.



Curtis Thompson has been of Wycombe's star players

Allsop's mixed feelings after Albion defeat

WYCOMBE Wanderers keeper Ryan Allsop admitted it was a bitter-sweet day for him as he returned from a lengthy injury-off in the Blues' 3-1 loss to Burton.

Allsop was in supreme form before his injury which has forced him to miss six games as Wycombe tried to cement their place in the top half.

The former Bournemouth stopper made an assured comeback at the Pirelli Stadium but was disappointed it ended in a loss.

He said: "It was bitter-sweet. We were poor and it was very disappointing."

"However, it was great to be back in

the side and back fit but it wasn't the result we hoped for.

"We scored against the run of play and it was very disappointing to go behind in the manner we did and they were poor goals from our point of view.

"We were better in the second half but it didn't quite fall for us and we didn't have that cutting edge. There is plenty to work on.

"I am delighted to be back at there with the boys and the games come thick and fast over the next few days now.

"Hopefully we can kick on and get the win on Saturday."



Allsop made his return from injury against the Brewers

WYCOMBE: Second loss in four days for Ainsworth's Chairboys Wanderers crash to Burton defeat

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE Wanderers crashed to their second League One defeat in four days as they suffered a disappointing 3-1 defeat to Burton Albion at the Pirelli Stadium.

It looked good for the Chairboys when they took the lead midway through the first half but the Brewers fought back to score three goals before the break that knocked the stuffing out of Gareth Ainsworth's side.

The Blues took the lead on 27 minutes when Joe Jacobson's cross was turned into his own net by defender Jake Buxton.

However, having been on top before that goal, Burton deservedly levelled when Lucas Akins rifled in from close range.

Just a minute later, Albion took the lead when David Templeton fired home after good work from Akins.

Wanderers, rattled by the two-goal burst, conceded a third on the stroke of half-time when the dangerous Akins slotted past Ryan Allsop.

Wycombe manfully tried to mount a comeback and Ainsworth turned to the returning Adebayo Akinfenwa to try and grab a point for his side.

Alex Samuel, Nathan Tyson and Craig Mackail-Smith all had decent opportunities to reduce the arrears but Burton held firm for victory.

Wanderers now face another long trip on Saturday afternoon when they face Scunthorpe at Glanford Park (3pm).

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Allsop, McCarthy, El-Abd, Jombati, Jacobson (sub: Samuel, 77), Gape, Thompson, Morris (sub: Kashket, 61), Tyson, Onyedima, Mackail-Smith (sub: Akinfenwa, 74). Subs: Yates, Stewart, Cowan-Hall, Williams.



Akinfenwa made his return from injury

SPORT

Football
Rams fight
back for win
- Page 36



Wanderers
Allsop returns
for the Blues
- Page 39



Ainsworth: We really need to dig very deep

Blues boss urges his side to bounce back



Ainsworth felt his side weren't at the races on Boxing Day

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth bemoaned his side's below par display at Burton on Boxing Day and urged his team to bounce back against struggling Scunthorpe on Saturday.

The Blues slumped to their second defeat on the spin despite taking the lead at the Pirelli Stadium on Wednesday but shipped three goals in 11 minutes before half-time.

Ainsworth said: "Burton de-

served it and we were poor. There are very few positives to take. Curtis Thompson was excellent again and it was good to see [Adebayo] Akinfenwa back.

"The double whammy just before the break has cost us. Ironically, we had a couple of really good chances to score before that but we weren't great here.

"The expectations are great but this is going to be a tough season and we have to dig deep and I need to get the boys right and firing for Saturday because we can't defend

like we did here. It wasn't us at all and it happens now and again.

"I need to get the attitude right for Saturday and will look to rotate."

Ainsworth brought on Akinfenwa for his first appearance in two months and was pleased to see his talisman back in the fold.

He added: "The best time we had was the last 20 minutes when Bayo was on the pitch.

"We went a bit route one but at times we have to do that and we have been playing a different style which has been refreshing."

Another player back was first-choice goalkeeper Ryan Allsop and Ainsworth was pleased to have his number one back for selection having used five keepers already this season.

He said: "His match fitness will be getting better with each game and he is our number one.

"Ryan is a good keeper, stops shots really well and comes for crosses and his kicking is good and he wasn't at fault for any of the goals here.

"The aim now is to bounce right back."

Chiltern win cup classic

Rugby

CHILTERN beat Beaconsfield 35-28 on Saturday to retain the Bucks Cup in incredible fashion.

It wasn't all plain sailing for Chiltern as they were hit by illness to the always influential Jordan Scott who was suffering from a really nasty stomach bug and lasted only 10 minutes.

Beaconsfield were 6-3 to the good with just minutes to go to the break but Jack Kenyon gave Chiltern a priceless 8-6 lead at the interval with a brilliant try.

Chiltern now had the wind at their backs and the outstanding Teddy Reus at scrum half regularly pegged Beaconsfield back with accurate box kicks.

In a see-sawing second half, Chiltern got to 18-16 ahead thanks to Monty Weatherall's magic boot.

However, Beaconsfield rallied and looked to have one hand on the trophy when they took what looked like a match-winning 28-18 lead.

Back came a highly aggrieved Chiltern who were ferocious in attack. Flanker Joe Batt gave chase and outsprinted the Beaconsfield centre to score a splendid try in the corner. This was unconverted but brought the score to 23-28.

Two minutes later another turnover ball had Chris Naisby seize on the loose ball, he cleverly chipped it forward, caught the ball on the bounce and ran in from 40m to put Chiltern back in front. The try was converted by Weatherall so 30-28 ahead.

The extraordinary comeback was complete when Giles Westgarth went over for a try late on to seal the deal.

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