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history of Sands
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GALLERY: Blues 3-2 Doncaster



Gape and El-Abd challenge John Marquis



Sido Jombati kicks a ball away in delight



Scott Kashket hurdles a challenge



Matt Bloomfield



Wycombe celebrate Cowan Hall's winner



Adebayo Akinfenwa celebrates



Dominic Gape



Nathan Tyson



In the CHAIR



BFP sports reporter Nick Tunney



Nick Tunney

IT was absolutely fantastic to see the Blues bounce back against Doncaster Rovers after their losing run of four games.

It was my 100th game watching the Chairboys reporting for the Bucks Free Press and it was the 49th time I had seen them win from the press box.

That game summed up watching Wanderers perfectly. Sometimes they don't make life easy for themselves but very rarely are you entertained watching the Blues and the amount of times I have had to rewrite my match report because of an incredible comeback is unbelievable. They don't make my job easy!

Two superb goals from Paris Cowan-Hall and Curtis Thompson levelled matters and the scenes that greeted Cowan Hall's winner will live long in the memory.

With the way Wanderers came back, you wouldn't think they had lost four in a row but it shows how much they care about playing for the club and when you have a manager like Gareth backing you, you can't fail to be caught up in his infectious enthusiasm.

I remember my first game which was a 2-1 win away to Cambridge in November 2016. In that game it took a 96th minute winner from Aaron Pierre to get the points. My following game was at Newport a few days later and, lo and behold, there was another last minute winner, this time from Sido Jombati.

These late goals can't be a fluke. It is testament to the mentality and fitness of the players that they keep going until the bitter end.

Those three strikes last weekend made it 15 goals in the last 15 minutes of games this season. In the case of the Chairboys, it is never over until it is over.

This weekend, it promises to be a tasty game against Bristol Rovers with a rivalry that goes back a few years.

I am sure that victory over Doncaster will have done the team the power of good and the Chairboys will be looking to kickstart their away form in positive manner.

WANDERERS

Ainsworth hails his side's superb belief

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth hailed his side's character as the Blues turned their match around against Doncaster Rovers, coming from two goals behind to win 3-2.

After a very even first hour, the game burst into life when John Marquis and Tommy Rowe put the visitors ahead.

However, with 15 minutes to go, Wycombe turned on the afterburners as Paris Cowan-Hall and Curtis Thompson levelled matters before Cowan-Hall's injury time winner sparked amazing scenes around Adams Park.

Ainsworth said: "I hoped the belief was still there with me and the way I am as well as the boys.

"There were fundamental mistakes, especially in the second half, but for long periods I thought we were the better side. We frustrated Doncaster and our plans worked a treat."

At 2-0 down, Ainsworth turned to his star pairing Adebayo Akinfenwa and Scott Kashket to come on and breathe life into a potential comeback.

Akinfenwa, especially, had a huge impact on the game, giving their centre backs a very uncomfortable last 25 minutes and the Chairboys boss admitted the substitutions made a difference.

He added: "We have two different ways of playing. Once we have the pace in the team, people are worried about the space in behind but when the big man comes on, it is a totally different story.



Ainsworth was delighted to see his side halt their losing run

"They have to get round him and compete with his physicality and he played a huge part here. He is a special guy and our relationship goes so much deeper than football and he is there for everyone and he was outstanding when he came on."

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: Allsop, McCarthy, Jombati, El-Abd, Jacobson, Thompson, Gape, Bloomfield (sub: Kashket, 71), Freeman, Tyson (sub: Akinfenwa, 71), Cowan-Hall. Subs: Yates, Stewart, Mackail-Smith, Harriman, Samuel.

DONCASTER ROVERS: Lawlor, Blair (sub: Mason, 64), Anderson, Butler, Andrew, Kane, Coppinger (sub: May, 84), Whiteman, Crawford (sub: Rowe, 67), Marquis, Wilks. Subs: Marosi, Smith, Greaves, Lewis.

WANDERERS: Winger pleased to make his mark Cowan-Hall: I have had to be patient

WYCOMBE matchwinner Paris Cowan-Hall explained he hoped he had taken his chance with both hands as his brace gave Wanderers a dramatic 3-2 win against Doncaster Rovers.

Cowan-Hall started the comeback on 76 minutes with a blistering finish and completed the turnaround in injury time when his very well executed header found the top corner to send the Blues fans delirious.

He said: "I have had to be very patient with the loanees we have had in and the team went on a bit of a run and were doing very well so I can't expect to come straight back in.

"I have been given a chance and I would like to think I have taken it," Cowan-Hall scored two differing

goals in the match and explained he was delighted with both finishes.

He added: "The first one was a bit of a peach and it was very nice. The second goal I just followed the ball in and Ads [Adam El-Abd] has blocked it and I have seen a little window of opportunity in the top left hand corner and guided a header and it worked so I was buzzing.

"More importantly though I am happy with the three points in the end so I am very pleased."

Cowan-Hall also hailed the impact of Curtis Thompson, who scored with a rocket to make it 2-2 in the 89th minute.

He commented: "What a strike and what a time to score your first goal for us.

"Since he has been here, Curtis



Paris Cowan-Hall (left) grabbed a superb brace against Doncaster

has been superb. He has been given a chance and he has really taken it.

"I am buzzing for him. He has been everywhere. He is disciplined

defensively, he has a good range of passing and he is aggressive. He is quick and strong and I can't really find a fault in the guy's game."

THE BIG MATCH: No new concerns for Ainsworth

WANDERERS manager Gareth Ainsworth revealed once again he has a near fully-fit squad to choose from ahead of this weekend's match with Bristol Rovers.

No fresh injuries were picked up against Doncaster last Saturday, meaning Ainsworth has an array of options at his disposal ahead of the trip to the Memorial Stadium.

He said: "We picked up nothing new, which is great.

"Once again we are going into the game with a good squad and a fully-fit squad which is great apart from Darius Charles and Yves Ma-Kalambay.

"Both of those guys are still out and

they are long-termers and that leaves us with 19 players which is great.

"It means no-one misses out and some players can smell the first team and they are very close to playing and that is how I have always liked it.

"I know that I can put any one of those 19 players in a position for me and they will perform and I know what I will get from them and that is important as a manager."

After the trip to Bristol, Wycombe are set to face Plymouth Argyle at home on January 26 before a long trip to Blackpool on January 29 and then Bradford City at Adams Park on February 2.



Darius Charles is still out of action

BLUES: Gaffer still hopeful of boosting squad before deadline Ainsworth keen to make signings

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth revealed he is still hopeful of getting in a couple of players to bolster his squad ahead of the transfer deadline at the end of this month.

With just 19 fit players at his disposal, Ainsworth is looking for a couple of "quality" signings to boost Wycombe's hope for survival and hit that 55-point target.

He said: "There will be some movement with the squad.

"We are going to have to work hard and creatively with the budget to make things happen but it is something we have done before.

"We are still quite far back in the pickings and it is going to be a tough couple of weeks. We have targets and a list as long as your arm.

"Whether we can get them in or not is a different story. We need the best players in at the right time and the right price and strengthen the squad for the run-in which could be very important."

Wycombe's never-say-die spirit was evident again last weekend with three more goals in between the 76th minute and the final whistle to take their tally to 15 goals in that time period in League One this season.

That is four goals ahead of their nearest rivals and Ainsworth took pride in that statistic, hailing his squad for their character.

He added: "We never give up and they haven't for all the years I have been in charge.

"We have had some great moments games in those last 15 minutes and I am hoping people don't leave too early and they know that Wycombe don't ever give up."



Ainsworth is still scouring the transfer market

SPORT

Golf
Hatton kicks
off in 2019
- Page 65



Rugby
Chiltern beat
old foes
- Page 66



Blooms: Clashes with Rovers have that spice

Club captain prepares for Bristol fixture



Bloomfield made his first appearance for three months against Doncaster

By Nicholas Tunney

WYCOMBE Wanderers club captain Matt Bloomfield admitted that clashes with Bristol Rovers have added spice as they prepare to face Graham Coughlan's side at the Memorial Stadium on Saturday.

Wanderers have had many important clashes with Rovers down the years, including when managing to defy the odds and stay in the Football League at Rovers' expense in the 2013/14 season with a win at Torquay.

Due to that, games since that memorable day have always been keenly contested encounters and Bloomfield, who has represented the Blues in many of those games, believes Saturday will be no different.

He said: "I think games against Rovers do have that added spice."

"There have been a few things over the years where the game was called when they were 2-0 up [in 2012] and other bits and pieces that have added spice to it."

"I always remember going there.

It is a tough place to go and play and it is always a good atmosphere."

"We are looking forward to going down there after a morale-boosting win against Doncaster Rovers and we will be fully fired up trying to bring those points home."

Bloomfield had been out injured for three months with a knee issue and he started the game against Doncaster before being substituted after an hour.

He explained that he has had no ill effects from that appearance and is looking forward to kicking on for

the rest of the campaign.

He added: "It was some game to come back to after three months on the sidelines."

"It was great to be back out there with the boys and in front of the home fans and I had been training for a couple of weeks and I felt good and it was just great to be back out there."

"My fitness and sharpness will only improve and whilst I have been out I have been trying to keep my fitness as high as I can and it was great to get that win again."

Penn FC appeal ongoing

Football

PENN and Tylers Green FC's appeal against the decision to refuse them floodlights at their French School Meadow ground has been designated a case officer, with a decision due mid-March.

The Hellenic League Division One East side initially submitted the appeal in May following the refusal to install floodlights at their ground in February.

This season, Penn have had to play matches at Spratleys Meadow, the home of Amersham Town, due to the situation and the club are not allowed to be promoted to the higher leagues, despite winning the title in two of the past three seasons, because of no floodlights.

Chairman Tony Hurst said: "The subsequent process will take approximately eight weeks to complete so we will not know the decision until approximately mid-March."

"This will mean we will miss the FA deadline of March 31, 2019 for the completion of the installation of the floodlights, if we are successful in our appeal."

"The Hellenic League have been informed of this development and they will ask the FA to extend the deadline as the delay is through no fault of Penn and Tylers Green FC as we have adhered to all the appeal processes and deadlines and the delay of the decision is totally due to the government planning appeal department's backlog of cases."

"If our appeal is unsuccessful then the FC committee will decide how we proceed into season 2019/20."

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