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WANDERERS: Defender revels in hat-trick heroics

Jacobson: We were awesome

WYCOMBE Wanderers defender Joe Jacobson explained scoring a hat-trick was "pretty awesome" after his three goals saw off the challenge of Lincoln.

The full-back opened the scoring with a sublime on free kick on four minutes before scoring direct from corners, his hat-trick goal looping right into the top corner before Jacobson soaked up the adulation from the fans.

The Welshman said: "It is strange. I have never scored a brace before, let alone three goals in a game.

"It was pretty awesome but it was stuff we have worked on. Putting balls on the goalkeeper and seeing what happens.

"I don't aim for putting them in corners but right on target and fortunately they went in.

"The performance was awesome from everyone. Everyone knew what was needed from us and we did it to a tee and that was the most pleasing thing."

The win kept up Wycombe's 100

per cent record at home this season, with four wins from four and Jacobson explained that there has been a real turnaround in their fortunes at Adams Park over the past couple of seasons.

He added: "I have been here five years and for the first couple of years it was our away form that was really special but for some reason we have changed it and turned it around.

"I think having better home form is better for us. It means the fans can get right behind us and the occasion was incredible for this game.

"We knew it was one of the biggest games in the country and we wanted to put on a performance.

"If we can make this place a fortress and teams come here and change the way they play, that will only breed more confidence for us."

Jacobson added: "You look at the two boys who came in [Aarons and Ofoborh], they are incredible signings.

"It is great that these players come to us and help us out."

Gaffer keeps feet on the floor

Wycombe Wanderers

WYCOMBE boss Gareth Ainsworth admitted he went through every emotion possible as his side beat Lincoln 3-1 to go top of League One.

An incredible hat-trick from Joe Jacobson condemned the Imps to defeat and saw the Blues rocket to the summit of England's third tier.

After a rollercoaster afternoon at Adams Park, Ainsworth explained that he went through a range of emotions, including being choked up after seeing club captain Matt Bloomfield stretchered off after a serious-looking head injury.

He said: "To say I am proud is an understatement and I don't know if there is a word to say what I am feeling.

"I went through every emotion with that game and I am not embarrassed to say I almost choked up going in the dressing room with Matt, seeing his mum and the state he was in.

"Some things are bigger than football and I will always say that but this is brilliant to see the club top of League One."

Although Wycombe are top, Ainsworth kept his feet firmly on the ground, insisting the challenge still remains to better last season's finish of 17th place.

He added: "I have got the squad to do that, definitely.

"How high they can go is up to them but believe me, feet are on the floor. It is a really good squad and I am excited, I can't deny that.

"I want the fans to dream and I want to see Wycombe shirts at schools and kids wearing them and I hoping I can put shirts on kids backs and we are proud of what we do and at the moment there is no better team in lower leagues."

Ainsworth was also full of praise for Jacobson, after his trio of goals saw the Blues to victory, including two direct from corners, with the Chairboys boss admitting it was a plan to put set-pieces close to Lincoln keeper, Josh Vickers.

He said: "It is a special day for Joe.

"He is a great man and a great acquisition. He was one of the first signings I made and he has been evergreen.

"You don't need to be electric pace-wise when you have it in your head, and he has got it in his head.

"Those deliveries we have been seeing for years and he deserved his hat-trick.

"We knew that Lincoln have conceded a lot from set plays but we saw a weakness there and it has been exploited by Joe."



Joe Jacobson celebrates his third goal. Photo: Liam McAvoy

CHAIRBOYS: Cowley credits Wycombe's 'aggression'

Holloway pays tribute to Ainsworth following victory

IAN Holloway has heaped praise on Wycombe Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth after the Blues went top of League One after their 3-1 victory over Lincoln on Saturday.

Ainsworth's side beat off the challenge of the Imps in style at Adams Park, in a game dubbed the 'biggest in the UK' over the weekend.

The TV cameras were in attendance in south Bucks and Holloway, who managed Ainsworth at QPR, paid tribute to the job Ainsworth is doing.

Speaking on Quest, Holloway said: "Hell of a start for him. It's about his personality and who he is, that's why people want to come here now."

Lincoln boss Danny Cowley also admitted that Wycombe were the best side his team had faced this season.

He said: "It was a crazy game to be honest.

"Our goal shouldn't have been allowed. That was a crazy goal, I thought the second goal shouldn't have been allowed for a foul at the near post.

"It is a big step for us and Wycombe are probably the best team we have played so far this season.

"The goals, they were from corners. We can't concede those goals, but we have. Even the free-kick. We knew they were a threat from set-pieces and we spoke about it all

By Nicholas Tunney

week, about being disciplined and not giving away unnecessary set-pieces, but we came off our feet on the edge of the area and it then went right through our wall.

"I'm disappointed, but I want to credit Wycombe. I thought they played with aggression and energy while we were devoid of that.

"Wycombe were very, very good. They were a real handful, but we're really disappointed with ourselves, conceding early and not playing with enough personality."

Ainsworth was also quizzed about the jump from League Two to League One level, adding that although a harder league in terms of quality, more football was allowed to be played so more time on the ball was able to be had.

He commented: "There is a big step.

"There is a lot more football played at this level. Some of the teams with some real stature play in this league.

"You watch League Two games on TV and it can be a bit long ball. In the second half here at times, it was a battle.

"The step up now is big and the quality you have to have on the ball needs to be there and the next step up is even higher."



Gareth Ainsworth with Danny Cowley. Photo: Liam McAvoy

WANDERERS

A tactical masterclass



Wanderers analysis

WYCOMBE Wanderers are top of League One - and I am sure a few of their fans are dreaming already, writes Nicholas Tunney.

This, for me, was their best win of the season so far against a side with promotion ambitions, a big budget and a host of quality players to call upon.

From the off, it looked like the Chairboys' game plan was bang on the mark and the likes of Dominic Gape and Matt Bloomfield were dominating the midfield.

An early goal from Joe Jacobson with a clever free kick knocked the stuffing out of the Imps and they were chasing shadows for much of the game.

The tempo was high from the Blues and they were defending solidly against a dangerous attack.

The likes of Jacobson and Jack Grimmer looked to get forward as much as possible and the former put in a string of threatening crosses.

Another clear game plan was to get the front three of Samuel, Kashket and Wheeler to use their pace on the break against the Lincoln defence and it worked a treat with the game getting stretched.

What is excellent, in particular, about Samuel is the amount of free kicks he wins through his sheer tenacity. His selfless running really gave the Imps backline no respite at all.

Jacobson then added another, straight from a corner along with another in the second half.

To put the set pieces as close to Lincoln goalkeeper Josh Vickers as possible was an inspired idea as the young custodian was very shaky under the high balls.

In between, Wycombe's second and third goals, Lincoln scored. For me, this was hugely contentious. Referees have to make sure the safety of



the players is paramount. On this occasion, that was not the case.

Bloomfield appeared to be knocked out cold and whilst lying prone, the visitors scored. It should never have stood but hopefully lessons can be learnt from this.

It was a good move by Ainsworth to bring Adebayo Akinfenwa on af-

ter the front trio had tired the Imps defence with their constant running and movement.

Akinfenwa gave the centre halves a new problem which allowed the game to swing back into Wycombe's favour.

All in all, a hugely impressive display.



beats off Imps challenge



Wycombe surged to the top of League One with a memorable performance. Photos: Liam McAvoy

SPORT

Rugby

Chinnor set for very tough assignment
- Page 55



WYCOMBE: Manager excited over attacking options

Ainsworth: Teams are now wary of us



Ainsworth has seen his side storm to the top of League One. Photo: Liam McAvo

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth admitted it is a compliment that teams are now wary of his side's threat as their march to the top of League One seems the Blues take on Gillingham on Saturday.

The Chairboys are in the highest league position in their history and remain unbeaten in seven league outings this season.

On the road, the Blues have drawn all three games but Ainsworth has noticed a change in tactics from some of their opponents this term.

By Nicholas Tunney

He said: "We have better players here now and you can see the impact they are having."

"There have been times this season when we have faced sides and for the first time in my career, I am thinking that teams are now worried about us and that is a great position for us to be in."

"We have had some tricky trips on the road but I believe we could have done a bit better and picked up a couple more points."

"Having said that, we are in a great position heading into Gillingham."

The Gills have had a topsy-turvy start to the campaign but they are managed by the wily Steve Evans who Ainsworth knows all about.

He added: "Steve knows how to get results at this level and get the best out of teams."

"They are a good side with a lot of a dangerous players so it will be a tough game."

"We played fantastically there in the first half last season before they burst our bubble somewhat so we want to go there and get a positive result."

result."

The Blues look such a threat going forward with a variety of attacking threats on show, and the Wycombe gaffer believes that attack is the best form of defence, heaping praise on Adebayo Akinfenwa for his role.

He said: "I love my attacking players, having been one myself."

"With the attackers we have here, it is so difficult to select my best two or three to start but we can rotate."

"With Akinfenwa, he is different. There is no one like him in the country and people doubted him at this level. He is more than good enough."



Alex Samuel

Samuel: I am at my sharpest

Wycombe Wanderers

WYCOMBE forward Alex Samuel admitted this was the sharpest he has felt in his career after signing a new deal recently which will keep him at Adams Park until 2022.

Samuel joined the Chairboys in the summer of 2018 after being released by Stevenage but a series of impressive performances led to the Welshman being signed on a permanent contract.

Now, Samuel is a key focal point of the Wanderers attack and has started the season full of confidence and in great shape.

He said: "I am feeling fit and fresh."

"Saturday was a very demanding game but I am generally feeling fit and ready to go and it is probably the sharpest I have ever felt in my career so I am excited to see where it goes."

Last week, Samuel signed an extension to his current deal to remain at the club for another three years and he explained he was over the moon at putting pen to paper.

He added: "I am delighted to have signed."

"We had been in discussion for a few weeks but it went relatively quickly."

"The gaffer was a massive part in me re-signing as well as the staff and players, but the gaffer has been absolutely amazing since I came in on trial."

Wycombe are set to face Gillingham away on Saturday and Samuel is hoping that the Blues can replicate last season's first half performance at the Priestfield Stadium.

He said: "Last year, the first half in particular was one of the best we played all season so we can learn lessons from last year when we were 2-0 up [finished 2-2]."

"We can get the job done."

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