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Friday, December 27, 2019

£1.10



YEAR IN REVIEW
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CHRISTMAS HEARTBREAK



Tributes to boy, 13, killed in horror car crash just days before Christmas as driver appears in court charged with causing his death - **Full story: Page 5**

NEWS

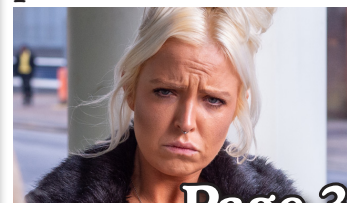
Shock election fraud claims



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CRIME

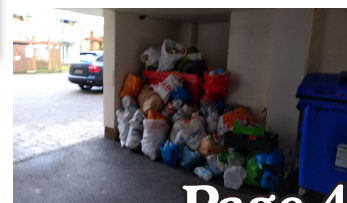
Woman admits plane crimes



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NEWS

Anger over bin collections



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WANDERERS

Akinfenwa sees Red as

OXFORD UNITED 1
WYCOMBE WANDERERS 0

JAMES Henry's first-half strike ensured Oxford United started the Christmas schedule with a bang as they downed leaders Wycombe Wanderers, writes David Pritchard.

A typically feisty clash also saw Adebayo Akinfenwa sent off for an altercation with John Mousinho, leaving the Chairboys to play with ten men for over an hour.

United were superb in the first half and could feel a little aggrieved to go in at the break only one goal ahead.

They were less impressive after the break, but Jordan Archer was solid when Wycombe threatened an equaliser.

United never got the second goal which would have killed the game, but they did enough to get over the line.

It moved them back into the Sky Bet League One play-off places, just three points off second.

Karl Robinson made four changes in a bid to keep his side fresh, just three days on from the Carabao Cup tie with Manchester City.

Wycombe had no such concerns, having played just once in December, and Scott Kashket warmed Jordan Archer's palms with a stinging shot in the second minute.

But the visitors were forced into an early change as Dominic Gape went down off the ball and had to be replaced by Nnamdi Oforiorh.

While the Chairboys arrived with an incredible defensive record, the early signs were good for United as they moved the ball quickly and found space.

The hosts had threatened before taking the lead midway through the half.

A stunning pass from Shandon Baptiste began a sweeping move which saw Cameron Brannagan's shot parried by Ryan Allsop. The



goalkeeper also saved James Henry's follow-up, but the U's top scorer made no mistake with his second attempt.

It was the first league goal Wycombe had conceded since October 22 and they were rocking again three minutes later.

Alex Gorrin caught Kashket on his follow through, sparking a melee which saw Akinfenwa grab John Mousinho, who was floored.

The big striker had already been booked, but referee Lee Swabey appeared to show a straight red card, while Gorrin and Mousinho were cautioned for their involvement.

United were already on top, but the dismissal meant they were thoroughly dominant for the rest of the half.

Gorrin and Fosu fired off target from 25 yards as Wycombe were made to chase.

The hosts' movement off the ball was particularly impressive, dragging the visitors all over the place to create space.

It took two saves from Allsop to prevent a second goal late in the half. While his parry to keep out Fosu's fierce shot was unconvincing, the goalkeeper made a stunning save to tip Mousinho's header from

the resulting corner over the crossbar.

Gorrin was replaced at the break to remove any danger of him collecting a second booking, with Mark Sykes coming on.

United would have been hoping for more of the same, but while they still saw most of the ball, the performance was not at quite the same level as in the first half.

Though Fosu fired off target twice, Wycombe began to threaten on the break.

Matt Bloomfield got away from Dickie but then fired tamely at Archer, while United began to concede set pieces around their box.

A big chance arrived for David Wheeler in the box 19 minutes from time, but Archer stood up well to make a smart save.

The scare was a reminder the game was still alive and United went on to regain their control, Fosu forcing Allsop into another save.

Substitute Matty Taylor did get the ball in the net from Chris Cadden's 75th-minute cross, but an offside flag cut short the celebrations.

It mattered little, as United did enough to see the game out in the closing stages.



Chairboys lose at Oxford



Wycombe Wanderers (blue) remain top and seven points clear in League One despite a narrow 1-0 defeat at Oxford United on Saturday, when striker Adebayo Akinfenwa saw red. PHOTOS: Andy Rowland.

SPORT

Football

Burnham give rivals the Blues in derby win - p37



FOOTBALL: Star sees red in a rare league defeat

Ainsworth: Oxford 'goaded' Akinfenwa



Adebayo Akinfenwa (centre in blue) shoves John Mousinho of Oxford resulting in a second yellow card and his dismissal in the 1-0 defeat at the Kassam Stadium on Saturday. PHOTOS: Andy Rowland.

OXFORD United did a 'professional job' on Adebayo Akinfenwa which led to his red card, according to Wycombe Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth.

The veteran striker received his second booking in the 26th minute for grabbing John Mousinho by the throat.

United, who had opened the scoring three minutes earlier, won 1-0 to inflict only the second defeat of the season on the Sky Bet League One leaders.

The flashpoint came during a melee sparked by a tackle from Alex Gorin which Ainsworth felt deserved more than the caution it received.

He said: "There's a major inci-

By David Pritchard

dent in the first half and I believe if you watch it again the tackle on Scotty Kashket warrants a red card.

"And I think they've goaded Akinfenwa to get him sent off.

"It's part of the game and Bayo's really gutted he reacted. But if you're going to goad someone it's not nice."

He added: "You watch the footage and it's a professional job on him.

"That happens and we take pride in the fact that people now no longer think it's just Wycombe coming to town.

"It's a huge game and the scenes

at the end of the game are really respectful for Wycombe - for them to be cheering and giving us so much stick because they beat us 1-0 and we had ten men for 75 minutes.

"They were keeping it in the corners at the end with 11 men against ten.

"At free-kicks they weren't putting anyone in the box.

"They were trying to get it in the corners and waste time - that is a huge compliment to the ten men of Wycombe Wanderers."

James Henry, who scored the decisive goal, said: "I didn't look at John's reaction, but he's a senior pro and if someone does that to you, then you have to go down.

"Teams have done it to us. Shrews-

bury came here and wasted as much time as possible."

U's boss Karl Robinson, who knows Akinfenwa well, was surprised in the forward's reaction.

But given the nature of the fiery contest, he confirmed bringing Gorin off at half-time was to avoid the risk of a second booking.

He said: "We brought Alex off because he has to play on the edge.

"He would definitely have been sent off (if he had stayed on).

"It's a bit unfair of me to say that, but if I was Gareth and he was still on the pitch then one of my sole aims would be to make sure the next challenge he does there would be an expectation the referee should do something about it."



Scott Kashket has been charged.

Kashket is charged by the FA

WYCOMBE WANDERERS

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Scott Kashket has been charged with misconduct under The Football Association's betting rules.

The 23-year-old, who joined Wycombe from Leyton Orient, is alleged to have placed 183 bets on football matches between 3rd September 2014, and 22nd August 2016, contrary to FA Rule E8.

Kashket joined the Chairboys on August 31, 2016.

In a statement on Twitter, Wycombe Wanderers said: "Wanderers acknowledge the statement below and continue to give Scott Kashket our full support on the matter, which relates to a difficult time in his career prior to joining the club."

The striker, who has played 94 matches for Wycombe and has scored 27 goals, has until Tuesday 31st December to respond.

The news was announced two days before Wycombe's Boxing Day trip to Portsmouth.

Wycombe will end the year at home to Coventry on December 29.

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