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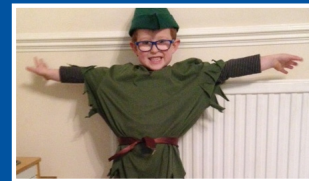
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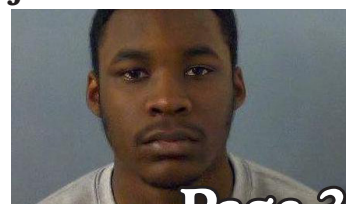
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Special report: Pages 4 & 5



CRIME

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NEWS

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FOOTBALL: Ainsworth reacts to Doncaster defeat 'Offside' goal was a turning point in defeat at Doncaster

By Robert Folker

ADEBAYO Akinfenwa scored his 54th goal at Wycombe Wanderers to become the club's all-time Football League top goals scorer in a 3-1 loss to Doncaster Rovers on Saturday.

Wycombe lost their seventh game away from home this season and it came to a Doncaster side who will be quietly eyeing up the play-offs towards the end of the campaign.

The Chairboys dominated the first half but found themselves 1-0 down at the break after Niall Ennis slotted the ball home.

Akinfenwa's record-breaking goal brought the visitors level but it was not enough to secure all three points as goals from Kieran Sadlier and an own goal from Jason McCarthy meant Doncaster went on to win the game.

Wycombe manager Gareth Ainsworth was delighted with his team's first half performance, believing his side deserved more from the game.

Ainsworth said: "For 43 minutes, we dominated, we really did, some of the best play we've had.

"Doncaster if I'm honest, I don't know if they'll be honest, but I'm sure they felt quite lucky to go in at half time 1-0 up.

"Unfortunately, that happens in football but, even in the second half when we back to 1-1, I was really positive and thought we were going on to win the game."

Ainsworth was unhappy with the awarding of the second goal claiming VAR would have disallowed the it for offside.

The manager said: "It was a sloppy third goal but the second, for me, the linesman has to get it right, there's an offside.



Gareth Ainsworth is gutted to have lost but believes the second goal should have been ruled out for offside.

"I've looked at it and I'm not one to really go on about this, but VAR gives that and it's still stays 1-1. It's a big turning moment in the game.

"We're all professionals and if he's got it wrong, he's got it wrong, and unfortunately Sadliers put it in

when he did start in an offside position.

"So, it's one for my referee's report to highlight but it doesn't change the result now.

"We're gutted and we will be back against Burton."

Wycombe slip down the table to fourth having a two-point buffer from seventh place; with 10 games to go.

Ainsworth's side now have a week off before travelling to Burton on the 14th of March.

Charles to help mentor young

SPORTS & EDUCATION TRUST

DARIUS Charles has signed up to become an official ambassador for the Wycombe Wanderers Sports & Education Trust – the charitable arm of the football club – helping to mentor young people across a wide range of projects.

Charles, 32, is able to call upon his own experiences in football, most notably overcoming a chronic hip injury to defy doctors' expectations by prolonging his career with The Blues this season.

He kicked off his involvement with the Sports & Education Trust by assisting students from The Beaconsfield School on the Future Goals Project.

Charles said: "I would love to come in as a good role model and as somebody who can help advise young men and women, help them set goals and have something to work towards.

"Footballers are put on a pedestal because of what we're fortunate and blessed to be able to do. Having had that taken away from me, even just for a short time, showed me that who you are as a human being and how you make people feel is incredibly important.

"I feel it's my duty to pass on love and wisdom to other people, and that's what I'm going to do with this group.

"I'm really happy to become an ambassador for the Sports & Education Trust and have already learned a great deal about the fantastic work they do across the whole community. To play even a small part in that would be a privilege and I'm excited to have started."

Paul Foley, Head of the Sports & Education Trust, said: "It's fantastic to have Darius come on board as an ambassador of the Sports & Education Trust.

"We're delighted to have his support behind our activities particularly relating to mentoring young people who, like him, have had to overcome challenges and obstacles in their lives.

"The students on the current Future Goals project were thrilled to meet and learn from a professional footballer. They became more and more engaged with the advice he was able to share, based on his experiences both in sport and in his everyday life.

"On behalf of everyone at the Sports & Education Trust, I'd like to thank Darius for agreeing to become an ambassador. I'm excited to see the impact that I know he will make on the lives of many young people."

■ Read the full article online today at bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport

FOOTBALL: New owner builds team for the future Howard returns to help build the Phenomenon



Andrew Howard has returned to the club

WYCOMBE Wanderers Chairman, Rob Couhig, is pleased to announce the return to the club of Andrew Howard in a role relating to the football side of the business.

Couhig explained: "I've asked Andrew to join Pete Couhig, Gareth Ainsworth and Richard Dobson as they work on plans to expand the squad and widen the pool of players that are available to the club so that it can be sustained at the highest possible level in a fiscally responsible manner.

"While I will be ultimately responsible for the decisions the club makes, it makes good sense to use all the talent we have available to us so

that our decisions are as informed as possible.

"Andrew's executive experience in his business, with the club, and in his motorsport profession has amply demonstrated his ability to put together a solid business plan and have it be implemented.

"Peter, as the club's Chief Financial Officer and the person responsible for the day-to-day operation of the club, plus his own background in developing and executing successful business plans, makes him a natural for this work.

"Gareth and Richard have already demonstrated their ability to devise and execute a plan to advance the

club, so they will be invaluable to the process.

"Of course, the fact that they will be on the front line of living with the plan means they deserve to be intimately involved in its creation.

"None of this work will distract from the present opportunity - to continue this magical season and push for a successful conclusion.

"I will continue to discuss this season and the development of the future plan with them as a group, and as individuals, as they develop the plan through the end of the season.

"At that time, working together, I expect we will have a solid plan for the club."

SPORT

Doncaster give Wycombe



DONCASTER ROVERS 3
WYCOMBE WANDERERS 1

A 3-1 defeat on the road against Doncaster Rovers came in the game that Adebayo Akinfenwa scored his record-breaking goal in a Wycombe shirt during the English Football League (EFL) era.

Niall Ennis opened the scoring for the hosts and, although Akinfenwa drilled home his 54th goal for the Blues - taking him above Nathan Tyson into top spot - Wanderers fell to defeat when Kieran Sadlier tapped home and Jason McCarthy diverted a cross into his own net.

The travelling Chairboys began the game with plenty of intent on the attack. The first chance fell to Alex Samuel. Going down under a challenge made by a Rovers player, the resulting free-kick was whipped into the area by Jason McCarthy with Samuel attempting a bicycle kick from close range but the ball evaded his boots.

As the 15-minute mark approached, the same duo threatened again. This time, McCarthy's low cross from the right found Samuel in front of goal and able to brush the ball at Seny Deing in the Rovers net.

Moments later, Paul Smyth got in the act as he looked to put the Wanderers ahead. The ball fell kindly to the midfielder in space, he struck the ball twice at Dieng between the sticks but couldn't find a way past the keeper.

The home side spent little time inside the Chairboys half in the opening half an hour, however, a chance fell their way in the shape of a free-kick on the right of the box. The set piece was delivered low into the row of attacking Rovers men in front of goal, Devante Cole was looking to make a clinical connection but the ball eventually rolled into the palms of Ryan Allsop.

Struggling to find their rhythm in the game, the ball fell to Cole once



again on the edge of the area allowing him to twist and turn and set himself up for a shot but unable to do the latter allowed the Wycombe defence to clear the danger.

Despite the Chairboys' best defensive efforts, on the stroke of half time the home side found a break-



the Blues in away defeat



through. The ball found the feet of Niall Ennis in front of goal who tapped the ball past Ryan Allsop to give Rovers the advantage.

Rovers began the second period with pace going forward, setting up a brilliant opportunity for Jacob Ramsey to slot the ball beyond Allsop but he couldn't find a clean connection and the chance was gone.

The home side continued to press for a second goal. The ball found the head of Tom Anderson in a good area but his loss of balance allowed David Wheeler to read the movement of the ball and hook it clear of danger.

However, the Chairboys managed to find an equaliser on the 67th minute. Adebayo Akinfenwa made an impact from the bench to finish the ball coolly past the Rover's keeper and become the Chairboys all-time leading scorer in the EFL era.

This lead wasn't to last long. Ben Whiteman whipped a free-kick towards the back post where Kieran Sadlier was left unmarked to fire into the bottom corner and allow

Rovers to regain the advantage.

Rovers added to their lead inside the last ten minutes of normal time. Substitute Jason Lokilo delivered a cross into the area and the ball was diverted into the back of the net by

a McCarthy.

Gareth Ainsworth's men now have a week away from the action before making the journey North to Burton Albion in two weeks' time.



Wycombe Wanderers suffered a 3-1 defeat at Doncaster Rovers in League One on Saturday, leaving them in fourth position in the table with 10 matches still to play this season

SPORT

THE RAMS
BEAONSFIELD
THRASH TIVER-
TON - PAGE 56



FOOTBALL: Akinfenwa reacts to his record goal 'The Beast' is a Blues all-time record scorer



Wycombe Wanderers striker Adebayo Akinfenwa (centre) is now the all-time record goals scorer in the Football League.

By Robert Folker

ADEBAYO Akinfenwa has become Wycombe Wanderers all-time EFL record goal scorer by scoring his 54th goal for The Chairboys breaking Nathan Tyson's previous record.

Wycombe Wanderers is the forwards 14th club but the 37-year-old hasn't scored made more appearances or scored more goals anywhere else.

"The Beast" joined the Adams Park outfit from AFC Wimbledon in 2016 at the age of 34 and not many strikers would find the time to become the clubs all time EFL goal scorer.

The record goal came in a 3-1 defeat away to Doncaster which saw The Chairboys drop down to fourth but Wycombe are still in the

fight for promotion.

The talisman was disappointed with the defeat but acknowledge the feat he has achieved and is not planning on stopping any time soon.

The striker told the 'Ringing The Blues': "I don't know about club legends but 54 goals later.

"I sat down with the gaffer last week, he asked me has it gone better than I thought it was going to and I keep saying when I came in I had a point to prove, not to myself but a point to prove to say listen I can still play this game.

"I'd be lying if I think I'd score 54 goals at my age but I know what I'm good at and what I'm not so good at and I always have said this

and try and concentrate on what I'm good at.

"Don't get it twisted I'm blessed and I'm honoured. I said this when I equalled Nathan Tyson's record and then to beat him, listen, I'm honoured.

"And I will hundred percent sit back and embrace this when the time is right.

"I'm not stopping now, 54 and counting, I've got to set my own record, there's still a bit more miles in my legs and this head of mine so 54 and counting."

Many critics believed Akinfenwa was signed by his manager as a PR stunt but 54 goals later and the frontman has repaid Gareth Ainsworth's trust in him.

The Chairboys manager said:

"He's unbelievable on and off the pitch, I couldn't be without him.

"I'm proud to have overseen all his goals, he's just an absolute hero for me at Wycombe Wanderers.

"The greatest league, since the league days, goal scorer we've had, it's a special moment for him"

"Unfortunately, it's a defeat but we'll be back and I'm sure it won't be the end of Bayo's goal scoring at Wycombe Wanderers."

Wycombe don't play again until the 14th of March and Akinfenwa will be hoping to help his side get back to winning ways as well as add to his record goals tally.

Akinfenwa has never reached the Championship but will be hoping his goals continue to fire Wycombe up the divisions.



Manager, Gareth Ainsworth

Boss: We will be in the mix

FOCUS IS ON LAST 10 GAMES

AFTER a disappointing loss to Doncaster last weekend, Gareth Ainsworth wants to focus on the final 10 season defining games, writes Robert Folker.

Wycombe have got themselves into the playoff places coming into the final stretch of the season, sitting in fourth.

The Chairboys were favourites to be relegated at the beginning of the season but the Championship is becoming a reality as every game goes by.

However, the manager is focused on the remaining 10 games but believes his side are strong enough to maintain their playoff spot.

Ainsworth said: "10 games to go, we're fourth place, it's just brilliant, it really is and I believe these boys can achieve this season.

"I think we've got some really winnable games but a couple of real tough ones but ones at home.

"I think we're going to be right in the mix at the end of the season, I'm positive with this bunch I've got.

"They're gutted today and that shows everything away to Doncaster after last year, we've come a long way but unfortunately we didn't get anything today."

Wycombe have struggled away from home this season and with six away games remaining on the fixture list The Chairboys will be hoping to string a run of results together.

The Chairboys don't have a fixture this weekend and Ainsworth now must wait a week until they face Burton on the 14th of March.

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