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Bucks Free Press

Friday, February 11, 2022 | *Covering Wycombe, South Bucks, Chilterns and Aylesbury since 1856* | £1.30

'A FIVE-STAR MEAL'

Our verdict as gastropub is included in the new Michelin Guide - *page 46*

PLANS FOR NEW 24-HOUR DRIVE-THRU

- New restaurant will be based at Asda in High Wycombe
- Supermarket car parking will be reduced

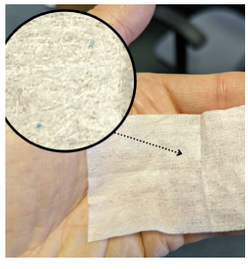
Full story on page 24

Future queen pays visit to county

Men admit to killing 'peacemaker' grandad, 55

Page 4

Investigation: How clean is our town?



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Chairboys fighting cancer

By Stephanie Wareham

A HIGH Wycombe man who survived cancer as a child has reflected on his battle - and how a gift of football boots gave him strength to fight.

Tom Starck, 25, was an energetic, sports-mad 12-year-old - until he woke up one morning in 2009 with a lump on his neck.

Later that same day, after several blood tests, Tom was transferred from High Wycombe hospital to Kamran's Ward at John Radcliffe, accompanied by his mum.

"I remember going in and seeing loads of really sick children, about my age," said Tom. "I was thinking - they've sent me to the wrong ward. I shouldn't be here."

Sadly, Tom and his family were soon told that he had Hodgkin Lymphoma – a type of cancer which develops in the networks and glands of the immune system.

Tom began chemotherapy that week, but the diagnosis and treatment took a toll on his mental health.

He said: "I was too young to fully understand, but I was old enough to be scared. Whenever I was taken out of school for treatments, I would look at the other kids still working and feel so jealous. When I was about halfway through my treatment, my mum asked what I would wish for if I could have anything. That's when Make-A-Wish UK came in."

Make-A-Wish UK creates life-changing wishes for children who have a life-threatening condition. Tom, whose wish was for a shopping spree and a day in London with his family, said: "It might not seem like much, but it was just about doing something outside of hospital and feeling normal for the day. Remission wasn't guaranteed, but the wish was, and so I had something to be excited about that could take my mind off all the chemo."

Tom and his personal shopper

Tom, Jake and Laura now

Tom, his parents, and siblings Laura and Jake travelled to London on September 25, 2009 for his wish. Tom was given a personalised pair of Nike football boots during his shopping spree, which he still has today.

He said: "It sounds so materialistic, but just having those boots made me feel really special. It made me excited to get better so that I could play football again.

Tom's sister Laura, 27, remembers: "It was the loveliest day. I'm two years older than Tom, so as an older sibling I felt very protective of him when he got ill and hated that I couldn't make him better. When your sibling is ill, your parents obviously have to prioritise them, so we hadn't spent much time together as a family for a long time. For us to have that day all together, for me and my younger brother Jake to feel included too, was so special. It was amazing to see Tom so happy despite what he was going through, but it was really an outlet for all of us. I'll never forget it."

A few months after Tom's wish, he was at last told that he was in remission. Now 25 and working as a Ferrari mechanic, Tom is preparing to run the London Marathon on October 2 to give back to Make-A-Wish UK. He hopes to raise at least £2,500.

Support Tom's journey to raise vital funds for Make-A-Wish UK at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tom-starck-london-marathon.

Whipping up a pudding that's fit for the Queen

EXCITEMENT is running high at Chalfont Lodge Nursing Centre in Chalfont St Peter - where residents and staff have been cooking up a storm to enter the Queen's Platinum Jubilee pudding competition.

Details of the competition were announced on January 10 and the home immediately got busy to come up with, what they hope, will be a pudding fit for a Queen.

The competition is being run by Royal Warrant holders, Fortnum & Mason, to create a pudding that the whole nation can bake.

Staff and residents at the home put their heads together and donned their aprons to come up with a scrumptious pudding that they think encapsulates the Queen's reign and what it has meant to the nation.

Their fabulous puddings are a Trio of Pies, called 'Long May she Reign!' which consists of an apple and elderflower pie decorated with pastry hearts, plaits and twists surrounded by strawberries and roses, a black cherry pie decorated with a pastry crown and glacier cherries and a strawberries and cream pie.

The delicious pies

A lot of time and effort went into the design and baking process

Can you help support Rennie Grove charity?

THIS winter, Rennie Grove is promoting two ways for you to make a difference to local families - and neither will cost you a penny.

The charity is actively seeking donations for its charity shops, as well as recruiting volunteers to support all aspects of its service caring for families affected by life-limiting illness.

Deborah Gould explains: "When you donate items for us to sell in our shops, you're helping to fund life-changing care in your local community.

"By keeping patients out of hospital and at home with their families you'll help them make precious memories when every moment matters."

To help fund its unique service, Rennie Grove relies on its shops taking almost £3 million in sales each year.

As well as donations to its shops, Rennie Grove always welcomes the gift of time, and is actively seeking volunteers to fill various roles.

Susan Lewis, Volunteer Services Advisor, explains: "We couldn't help all the families who need our care without the time our volunteers give. We have a range of volunteer roles available, with varying time commitments to suit people in different circumstances, but please don't feel defined by these roles.

"If you have skills you'd like to use – or new skills you'd like to learn – do get in touch. We'd love to chat with you about how we might be able to help each other."

Dedicated volunteers keep Rennie Grove's charity shops thriving

From birthdays, marriages, deaths and other important milestones and events, we want to know about your family occasions. Call 01494 755096 or email stephanie.wareham@london.newsquest.co.uk

Fantastic Forino on his future targets

By James Richings

GARETH Ainsworth was full of praise for Chris Forino after the young centre back put in another great shift in for Wycombe Wanderers.

The 21-year-old, who gave up a place at Loughborough University to sign for the Chairboys last April, was named as the man of the match following the goalless draw at home to Shrewsbury. on February 8.

This is his second MOTM accolade of the season, as he was named the team's best player when Wycombe defeated Burton Albion 2-1 just before Christmas, which happened to be his Football League debut.

Speaking after the draw at Adams Park, Ainsworth said of the defender: "Chris Forino came in and he is becoming this player that I am really excited to see, but it was a case of everything but the goal and that happens sometimes.

"He is an all-round player that hasn't been touched in his younger years.

"He is a raw, what you see is what you get, type of defender, is Chris Forino.

"He just loves defending.

"I think he has got more steps him for the Championship and Premier League as I think he has a great chance, as well as Mehmeti and people like that.

"I am very happy that the development squad is paying off.

"I can't thank the Couhigs enough for giving me these resources and I am to pay then back with a high finish."

Since making is professional debut in the 3-1 home loss in the Papa John's Trophy fixture against the Aston Villa Under 21s back in August, Forino has slowly crept into the first team, before getting his chance in the autumn.

With injuries to Anthony Stewart and Ryan Tafazolli in between November and the start of January, the centre back was drafted into the side and has since played eight times since his debut in the summer.

In fact, in his five league appearances so far this campaign, he has been awarded with two MOTM awards, as well as securing two clean sheets.

And even though he is the talk of the town, the defender remained modest since becoming a first team regular.

Speaking after the draw, Forino said: "I set myself a target by January to be involved in the matchday squad once, which included being on the bench and I am very happy with the way the season has gone.

"I wasn't expecting this.

"I was at university for seven months but I dropped out when I had my trial about a year ago, and I said, whether I get in or not, I am going to chase the footballing dream at 20.

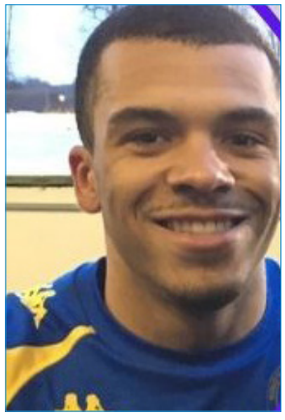
"It was a brave decision and I do not regret it one bit.

And on his plans for the rest of the season, he said: "First and foremost, it is to be promoted and if I don't play again if it means getting promoted, then I would take that. But for me, personally, I would like to get into double digits now.

"The boys have been chomping at the bit to get out and back on the pitch as they want to play games to put things right, but I think we needed that break as it's a long season, we need to look at things but we are in a good position."

Chris Forino (pictured against Charlton) played the whole 90 minutes against Shrewsbury Town on February 8. He was awarded the Man of the Match award afterwards which was his second of the season (PA)

On loan striker on target



Malachi Linton

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Malachi Linton put in a man of the match performance in King's Lynn Town's 3-0 win over Weymouth on Saturday.

The 21-year-old, who is currently on loan from the Chairboys at the National League outfit, won and scored the spot kick in the Linnet's victory over the seasiders, which was their first win in five league games.

The strike was Linton's fourth of the campaign and his second in two games.

Lynn remain second from bottom in the National League, with this victory being only their fourth this league season.

Other loanees such as Adam Leathers made his debut for Dulwich in their 3-1 defeat to Chelmsford in which he started, whilst Andre Burley and Max Ram played in Hungerford's 2-2 draw at Slough.

Connor Parsons has joined Non League Bromley on a 28-day loan and former Wanderer James Clark has signed a permanent deal with Beaconsfield Town.

Lincoln up next for the Chairboys

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth has reveal he wants 'to bring back three points' when Wanderers travel up to Lincoln City on Saturday.

Speaking ahead of the match at Sincil Bank, manager Gareth Ainsworth, said: "Lincoln was one of the early games in the season; we started the season really well and had momentum from pre-season which helped us look fresh and get some wins under our belts.

"That was a tough game against Lincoln, but we got our early goal and did enough to see it out.

"That was the game that Nick Freeman picked up his bad injury, but he's back out on the grass now.

"So is Dominic Gape.

"Josh Scowen nearly made the squad on Tuesday night and could be involved this weekend."

Wycombe will visit the Abbey Stadium in April to face Cambridge United (PA)

New date confirmed for Cambridge clash

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed a new date for their rearranged fixture against Cambridge United.

The Chairboys were due to play the Us on Saturday, February 5 at the Abbey Stadium, but following Cambridge's FA Cup commitments, they fixture was moved.

This was after the League One outfit defeated Newcastle United of the Premier League in the third round of the competition.

They went onto to face Luton Town at the next stage.

It has now been confirmed that the battle between the two sides will take place on Tuesday, April 5.

This will mean both games between the two clubs this season will be played during the middle of the week, as the first match will occur on Tuesday, March 1 at Adams Park.

The fixtures will be the first time both Wycombe and Cambridge will play each other in the third tier of English football since the 2001/02 season, which saw each time win 2-0 at home.

They have met 20 times in all competitions, with Wanderers being victorious on 13 occasions.

Ticket details for the match will be released in due course.

Wycombe Wanderers manager revealed the good news after the 0-0 draw at home to Shrewsbury Town on Tuesday, February 8 (PA)

Midfielders to return

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has provided an injury update on three of the club's central midfielders.

Dominic Gape and Nick Freeman have collectively played just 11 times this campaign with the duo suffering lengthy injuries at the start of the season.

Freeman is currently battling a cruciate injury which was sustained during the Chairboys' 1-0 win over Lincoln City in August, whilst Gape has not played since the 2-2 draw against Hartlepool in the FA Cup.

This took place in November, with the former Southampton man failing to complete 90 minutes in any of his seven outings this season.

Another centre midfielder in Josh Scowen, who has played 25 games this season, has not featured since the 2-0 triumph over Oxford United on January 15.

He has only missed eight fixtures this campaign due to injury since returning to the club last summer.

When asked if we will be seeing the trio any time soon after the 0-0 home draw against Shrewsbury, Ainsworth said: "Very soon.

"He [Gape] is on the pitches now, along with Scowen, Freeman and Jack Wakley are all on the pitches now which is great news for us.

"We don't have any long termers anymore as the long termers are coming to the end but at the moment, I am really happy with the performance tonight [against Shrewsbury]."

Grimmer wins monthly accolade

Jack Grimmer (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers right-back Jack Grimmer has won the club's Player of the Month award for January.

The 28-year-old Scotsman, who is in his third season with the club, played six times in the first month of the year, where he kept three clean sheets and scored twice.

Both of his strikes came away from home in matches against Bolton (a 2-0 win on January 11) and Morecambe (a 3-2 defeat on January 22), with the former being the first for the Adams Park outfit.

He was presented with the accolade before the Chairboys' 0-0 draw against Shrewsbury Town on February 8, which was their first fixture for the month.

Speaking on Twitter, Grimmer said: "Thanks to everyone that voted! Buzzing to win this with the players we have in this squad."

Since joining Wanderers from Coventry City in the summer of 2019, Grimmer has played 88 times for the Light and Dark Blue Army.

Ainsworth's analysis on Shrewsbury draw

Wycombe Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth was in an upbeat mood despite the stalemate between the Chairboys and Shrewsbury (PA)

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has credited Shrewsbury Town's defending following the recent 0-0 draw between the two sides.

The Chairboys dominated the match at Adams Park which saw them have 26 shots on goal with 10 of those attempts being on target, whilst the Salops only conjured up two attempts, with none of those shots testing David Stockdale.

Despite the positive performance, Wanderers are now winless in three, but Ainsworth remains upbeat following the stalemate.

On the side from Shropshire, he said: "Shrewsbury came here to get a draw, they were slowing the game down which we know all about.

"They were slowing it down in both halves as much as they could, and I've not seen a goalkeeper get booked that early for timewasting for a long time, but it happens and you have to give them credit.

"You have to credit them.

"Ethan Ebanks-Landell, Aaron Pierre, Matthew Pennington and the goalkeeper Marko Marosi all played really well as they stopped a team scoring a lot of goals.

"I have got to credit Shrewsbury and the way they have come here to shut up shop and that's what teams have to do.

"They want to stay in League One and Steve Cotterill is a good guy and manager and he's disciplined his team.

"You have to give Shrewsbury credit as they have left here with a point, but I am looking forward to getting the boys back in on Thursday and making them work the net.

"Fans were good, players were good, but we just didn't get the result we wanted."

"We did everything but score but we were suburb.

"Their keeper made some fantastic saves, we had one that hit the post and Pennington made an unbelievable clearance in the first half and I don't know how he managed to get to do that so close to the bar, but I was really proud of the boys.

"The lock out of just two shots with none being on target against us, with David Stockdale's last save for us being a couple of days ago in training which is brilliant for us."

Even though they were the better side on the night, Wanderers found themselves fortunate that results elsewhere saw them remain in the League One play-off places.

The Chairboys are currently in sixth place on 53 points, and with Oxford, Wigan, Sunderland and MK all dropping points, Wycombe are still in the pack for promotion.

Ainsworth continued: "As a manager, you can't be down about it and think 'oh no, we didn't score', because I am so positive right now.

"If we play like that again, we're bound to score and get wins and the results have semi gone for us tonight, and we're only three points off second at this stage of the season.

"You tell me that any Wycombe fan that wouldn't have taken that, because I knew I would.

"I can't wait for Lincoln on Saturday as it's a place that I know well and I love going up there, but I want all three points, and if we keep playing like that this season, then I think we will be fine."

Wanderers debut for Wycombe's Lewis Wing

WYCOMBE new boy Lewis Wing was praised by manager Gareth Ainsworth following the Chairboys' 0-0 draw against Shrewsbury on February 8.

The former Middlesbrough, Rotherham United and Sheffield Wednesday man, who signed for the club on deadline day, played 81 minutes and had several half-chances in the midweek contest.

Speak after the match, Ainsworth said: "Lewis did really well, in the first half especially as we saw some touches of class which we know he has got and we will be seeing plenty more of him.

"To see him, Kaikai, Akinfenwa and Mehmeti on the pitch and have Wheeler, Horgan and Stewart off the pitch is testament to where this club has come."

SPORT

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Frustrated at home by Shrewsbury Town

Wycombe's Sam Vokes missed a flurry of chances as Wanderers dropped points against the Salops on Feb 8 at Adams Park (PA)

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers made it three league games without a win after they drew 0-0 at home to Shrewsbury Town in a match which they dominated.

The first-half saw one of Wycombe's most dominant displays this season, with the Chairboys peppering Marko Marosi in the visiting goal.

It was attack, after attack, after attack as the Adams Park outfit looked to bounce back from two straight defeats before their mini break last weekend.

Gareth Ainsworth's men started out of the traps and nearly took the lead on four minutes, but a Sam Vokes volley from a Jason McCarthy cross went wide from 10-yards.

The attacks continued just three minutes later, as Garath McCleary's quick feet saw him create space for a lofted cross but again, Vokes was denied a goal as his close-range header was easily caught by Marosi.

Steve Cotterill's men knew that they were going to have to defend for their lives if they wanted to leave South Buckinghamshire with a point, but, Wanderers were sniffing blood, as Vokes again missed a great chance to put the Chairboys ahead.

This time, he prodded over from a yard out after he met another McCarthy cross, and moments before this, a Joe Jacobson corner flashed just past the Salops goal.

Chris Forino, who was playing his first game in a month, then tried his luck just before the break, but again, another close-range effort went begging for the Blues.

Then, moments before half-time, Wanderers were given their best chance of the contest.

Brandon Hanlan did brilliantly to weave his way into the Shrewsbury box as he evaded three defenders.

He created the space to bend his shot from 10-yards towards goal, but amazingly, George Nurse managed to get a touch onto the ball to deflect the effort onto the post.

Wanderers were aghast at how they weren't at least one up.

The second half was a carbon copy as it was a barrage of Wanderers attacks on the Shrewsbury goal.

Jacobson saw a free-kick go just wide from 25-yards, Forino headed into the rams of Marosi, and Hanlan forced the Salops keeper into a great save before a goalmouth scramble followed from the resulting corner.

All of this happened in the first 15 minutes of the second half.

The contest fell flat for large parts of the second period before it sparked into life with 15 minutes remaining.

Sullay Kaikai, who made his first appearance since the 2-2 draw against Wimbledon in December, fired a thunderbolt at goal which was again denied by Marosi, before another Vokes header was saved by the keeper.

Wycombe continued to push on but it finished 0-0.

The result means Wanderers are sixth in League One, whilst Shrewsbury continue their torrid run at Adams Park, as they are now winless in 14 league visits to South Bucks (seven defeats and seven draws). The 0-0 draw was the first at Adams Park since February 2, 2021, when Birmingham City came to town.

Up next for the Chairboys is a trip to Lincoln on Saturday.

Bayo and James Richings at AP

Bayo with a Bucks Free Press paper

WYCOMBE Wanderers legend Adebayo Akinfenwa has thanked the fans who have showed him support following the offensive chanting that happened against MK Dons on January 29.

After he was targeted with a slanderous song from the opposing fans in the Chairboys' 1-0 defeat at Adams Park at the end of last month, we at the Bucks Free Press asked those who have had a picture with 'the Beast' to send them in.

This was because we wanted to show the ever-popular forward that he was loved in the town.

He took to Twitter to say that the appreciation he was shown was 'too kind' and even posed with a hard copy of the Bucks Free Press showing off the spread.

Bayo will retire from professional football at the end of the season.

Are you one of the attendees?

AFTER Wycombe's trip to Lincoln City on February 12, the club will turn their attention to the Berks & Bucks Cup.

The Chairboys have been drawn to play Long Crendon quarter-final in the regional competition with the fixture taking place at the ASM Stadium in Thame on Tuesday, February 15.

It has also been reported by a source close to the BFP that around 1,000 tickets have been sold for the match.

Speaking ahead of the match, manager Gareth Ainsworth said: "We have got to make sure that we have got a strong team out against Long Crendon because it is a big day in their history and we want to be strong and show what Wycombe Wanderers can do. "

Tickets will £8 for adults, £5 for concessions, and £2 for under-14s. Visit buytickets.at/longcrendonfootballclub.

The match will be Wanderers' first visit to the ASM Stadium since 2010.

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