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Wycombe victorious over Burton Albion

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers will spend the opening weekend of the 2022/23 League One season in first place after they defeated Burton Albion 3-0 at Adams Park.

A David Wheeler strike and two incredible goals from Anis Mehmeti and Josh Scowen gave the Chairboys a healthy lead on the campaign's inaugural Saturday.

Gareth Ainsworth's men had fire in their bellies from as early as the 37th second, as Mehmeti was dragged down by Deji Oshilaja in the penalty box, but Gavin Ward waved away the appeals.

A frustrating start, Wycombe regrouped and took the lead through Wheeler on seven minutes.

The utility player was brilliantly put through by a reverse pass from Scowen, and the 32-year-old was on hand to toe-poke his shot underneath Ben Garratt.

Eight minutes later, Wanderers doubled their advantage as Mehmeti scored what could be one of League One goals of the month already.

After winning the ball of the left-hand side, he weaved in and around four Burton players and smashed the ball beyond a stunned Garratt, in what was the Albanian's first appearance for the club since April.

Burton just could not get going and despite a few half chances that tamely tested debutant keeper Tyla Dickinson, the half belonged to Wycombe.

On the half-hour mark, Wanderers scored their third through a brilliant strike by Scowen.

A cross from Mehmeti was headed away by the Burton backline, seemingly from danger, but the 28-year-old smashed in a stunning first-time half-volley to make it three.

The goal was his first at Adams Park since returning to the club last season, and his first at the ground since October 2014, a total of 2,842 days ago.

The second half saw Hasselbaink's men improve after what was a dismal opening 45 minutes, but there was nothing substantial that really caused the Chairboys any concern.

The final 15 minutes of the second half saw D'Mani Mellor make his Chairboys debut, with Nick Freeman also getting minutes after his 11-month absence with an ACL injury.

Up next for Ainsworth's men is an away trip to Bolton Wanderers on August 6.

Wycombe Wanderers (pictured against Charlton Athletic in September 2021) are top of the League One table after a 3-0 win over Burton Albion (PA)

Manager happy after victory

'It really does pay dividends'

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has reiterated that signings from previous season will 'pay dividends' for the Chairboys this campaign.

So far this summer, Wanderers have secured the signatures of Christie Ward, Jasper Pattenden, Josh Blunkell, and D'Mani Mellor, whilst Jack Young signed a permanent deal from Newcastle United.

Rumours are ongoing that Nathan Bishop is expected to sign for the club from Manchester United on a season-long loan.

And after a brilliant opening day victory over Burton Albion, which saw the Chairboys race into a 3-0 lead by minute 30, the boss repeated the notion that squad depth is not an issue, due to players such as Tjay De Barr, Ali Al-Hamadi and Connor Parsons returning from their respective loan spells.

Nick Freeman has also returned to the frame, after missing the last 11 months with an ACL injury.

TOTW spots for Wycombe

FOUR Wycombe Wanderers players have been included in the inaugural League One Team of the Week for the season.

The Chairboys easily defeated an under-par Burton Albion 3-0 at Adams Park on the season's opening day, which has sent Gareth Ainsworth's men to the top of the League One table.

Chairboys captain Joe Jacobson, along with the game's goalscorers in David Wheeler, Anis Mehmeti and Josh Scowen were all included in EFL's starting 11.

Speaking on his side's opening day win, Ainsworth said: "We did want to add to our tally as we did have some chances in the second half, but today it was about the boys and they deserve all the credit and my staff have been brilliant.

"We had a plan, we put the plan in place and it worked."

Wanderers are top but for how long?

One down, 45 to go. But Ainsworth is not getting carried away (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Gareth Ainsworth refused to get carried away after a 3-0 win over Burton Albion started their League One campaign in style.

Goals from David Wheeler, Anis Mehmeti, and a Josh Scowen half-volley from 25-yards inside 30 minutes have sent the Chairboys to the top of the League One table.

And even though it was a brilliant day all round for the club, as it was the highest opening home fixture since 2009, and finically the busiest day Wanderers' club shop has ever had, Ainsworth remained level headed.

He said: "It's a good start, but that's all it is."

"There's no getting carried away.

"We know what it takes to achieve in this league and we're going to have to be on it week in, week out and hopefully we can get the results.

"One game doesn't make a season, but it's a nice start.

"I think it's a nice barometer yes we're fit, yes we understand the tactics. But we're going to have to do that when we come up against some big, big sides in this league.

"I've got the depth that I've wanted, but it's now about keeping everyone fit and in the zone.

"Training this week has been really good, the boys have been really on it.

"I just wish the boys had kicked on in the second half and added a few more, but we'll save them for next week."

Gareth Ainsworth's side were quick out of the traps as they were 3-0 up against Burton inside 30 minutes at Adams Park (PA)

Ainsworth's analysis

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has said that his squad 'delivered' for him after his side brushed aside Burton Albion at Adams Park.

Strikes from David Wheeler, Anis Mehmeti and Josh Scowen gave the Chairboys a solid opening weekend victory, which has sent them top of the table.

As well as the goals, the defence also played particularly well with Wheeler playing as right-back, with Ryan Tafazolli and Jack Grimmer being assured whenever Burton went on their rare attacks.

The match will also be a special moment for Tyla Dickinson, as the 21-year-old made his Wanderers debut one year after joining the club.

Speaking on his side's performance, Ainsworth said: "They were great goals and hopefully for Josh, that's not his one a season!

"I said to him that he usually gets one a season and let's see if he can get the biggest tally he has ever got as he's that brilliant holding midfielder that stops everything.

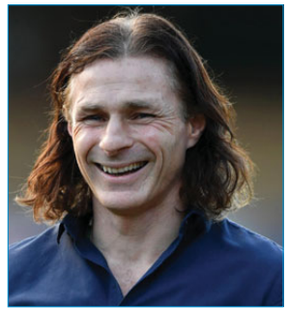
"The song about him without the swear word is brilliant as he is, and today, he was in the right place at the right time to get his goal.

Excellent start to the season for Wycombe as they beat Burton Albion 3-0 with all goals coming in a frantic opening half an hour.

"The boys delivered for me and I am proud of them.

"I'm really excited about what we can do this season."

All smiles from the boss after Burton win



Gareth Ainsworth (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has praised Tyla Dickinson after the goalkeeper made his league debut for the club in the Chairboys' 3-0 home over Burton Albion.

Dickinson, who joined the Adams Park outfit last season, looked confident, assured, and dominant when collecting crosses, corners, and blocking shots.

Ainsworth said: "We didn't get our goalkeeper across the line, but I thought he was outstanding.

"I made the decision yesterday to go with Tyla because I didn't want to panic over not getting someone over the line and that h

"But there was no panic and no worries and for such a young boy to come in, Tyla stepped up.

"His tactical management of the game and his positioning were brilliant."

All of Wanderers' goals were scored by the half-hour mark and if it wasn't for Burton's keeper in Ben Garrett, Wycombe could have their lead increased.

He added: "I asked the boys for a quick start and we steamrolled them in the first-half."

The Boys from Bucks get ready for Bolton

Jack Grimmer scored his first Wycombe goal in Wanderers' 2-0 win over Bolton in January this year with a brilliant left-foot finish(PA)

By Alan Parry

GARETH Ainsworth's team could not have asked for a better start to the new season than the 3-0 demolition of Burton Albion, but now comes their first real test with a visit to former Premier League club Bolton Wanderers.

That the two clubs now lock horns in the same division tells the remarkable story of their contrasting fortunes over the last decade.

When season 2011/12 got under way, they seemed worlds apart.

Back then, Bolton were a highly respected Premier League club having enjoyed a glorious spell under Sam Allardyce when they finished in the top eight in four successive seasons and qualified for Europe.

Wycombe had spent the majority of that period in the bottom division, struggling to make ends meet.

As Bolton began their 11th consecutive season in the top division with fixtures against Manchester City, Liverpool and Manchester United, the Chairboys faced the less glamorous prospect of opening games against Scunthorpe United, Colchester United and Leyton Orient in League One.

It was to be a miserable campaign for both clubs, Bolton being relegated from the top-flight and Wycombe suffering the drop back into League Two.

However, while Wycombe began moving up the divisions in the ensuing decade, Bolton went in the opposite direction and came close to financial disaster.

In the space of just eight years, they fell from the Premier League to League Two and suffered several winding up petitions that threatened the club's future.

As recently as the 2020/21 season, they looked in danger of going out of the EFL altogether when they sat a lowly 17th in the table at the halfway stage.

Their form since then has been truly remarkable, as good as almost any team in the country.

They rose from just above the relegation places to finish third and gain automatic promotion and then began this campaign with an impressive draw at Ipswich, who are highly fancied to win the League One title.

Wycombe have won all four previous meetings without conceding a goal, but this promises to be a much tougher test against a revitalised Bolton team the bookmakers rate as promotion contenders.

Bolton have come a long way in 10 years – but so have Wycombe.

● *To read more about the latest Wycombe Wanderers news, as well as the Non League clubs in the county, go to the Bucks Free website (www.bucksfreepress.co.uk), are follow James Richings on Twitter (@James_BFP).*

JFH angry after his side lose at Adams Park

BURTON Albion manager Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink has praised the way Wycombe Wanderers played in their 3-0 loss at Adams Park.

The Brewers were dominated by the Chairboys on the season's opening weekend, which saw David Wheeler, Anis Mehmeti and Josh Scowen score before the half-our mark to seal all three points for Gareth Ainsworth's men.

Speaking to the club's media on July 30, Hasselbaink said: "They [Wycombe] played from second balls, that's what they do.

"They hit Vokes and you need to squeeze the pitch, you need to work harder and condense that as much as possible so they can't pick up the second ball.

Both Wycombe and Burton have played each other 16 times.

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Boss: 'We won't be paying over the odds'

Gareth Ainsworth (pictured against AFC Wimbledon in April) will not 'pay over the odds' for new players this summer (PA)

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has reiterated that the club will not pay 'over the odds' for new faces this transfer window.

The Chairboys have so far added four players to their squad at this current moment, with Jasper Pattenden, D'Mani Mellor, Christie Ward and Josh Blunkell all arriving at Adams Park from Worthing, Manchester United, Brockenhurst and Sudbury respectively.

Jack Young has also signed a permanent contract the club from Newcastle United.

Rumours on Alfie Mawson's alleged return to Buckinghamshire have gone quiet following his release from Fulham, whilst the club continue to search for a new goalkeeper with Nathan Bishop being the favourite to sign.

However, despite the all the gossip surrounding Wycombe's transfer activity, Ainsworth has restated that players will be signed if change is needed 'for the right reasons'.

Speaking to the press ahead of their trip to Bolton Wanderers on August 6, the 49-year-old said: "It is well documented that we are trying.

"We've tried for a few and have missed out but again, we won't be paying over the odds and ridiculous money for players that we don't think are that worth and that's what we are here.

"We are really pleased with what we have got at this moment.

"I think people love change just because it's change but for me, you need to change for the right reasons, but at the moment, I am pleased with where we are."

As well as the new arrivals, development players in Ali Al-Hamadi, Connor Parsons, Tjay De Barr and all returned to the team following their loan spells last season, and the boss confirmed that they will all 'get a chance' to showcase their talents in the first team.

The trio were in the Wycombe squad for the 5-1 away friendly defeat at Worthing on August 2.

Ainsworth continued: "It was a difficult game.

"The pitch (wasn't great) and four or five players didn't really know the boys well enough as it will take time for them to gel.

"I am disappointed but obviously it was a trial game with one or two bright sparks, but it's all about the first team games for me and we need to make sure we are competitive in those."

On the so-called fringe players, the boss added: "I am pretty sure that all of those players will get an opportunity to play in the first team without a doubt.

"The game was tough as we had trialists and you don't know who are you playing with so they didn't know each other's strengths, but with the contracted ones, I can't see them not playing this season.

"They will all get their chance."

Rob Couhig & Gareth Ainsworth

Why the boss wanted to stay at AP

WYCOMBE manager Gareth Ainsworth has revealed that his 'mind was made up' to sign a new contract with the Chairboys after having talks with the club's owners.

The 49-year-old penned a new deal with the Adams Park outfit at the end of June which will keep him in Buckinghamshire until 2025.

He said: "It's no secret that there were rumours with other teams, and without giving anything away, the club backed me, they were interested in me, and for me, my mind was made up that it was good thing to sign my contract extension.

"It's given me a little bit of security and it gives the players a little bit of knowledge that I am committed here, and the vision Rob, Pete and Missy have got here for this club is something I want to buy into.

"They really want to escalate this club into the Championship. We've had a little taste of that, maybe a bit prematurely, but that taste has really wet my appetite and I am desperate to get back up there."

Worthing smash Wanderers side

WYCOMBE Wanderers' development team suffered a heavy 5-1 defeat away at Worthing in a friendly match.

The Chairboys visited the South Coast to face the Non League side on August 2 as part of the Jasper Pattenden deal which saw the youngster move to Adams Park this summer.

Played in front of 729 spectators, the hosts took the lead in the eighth minute thanks to a Mo Jammeh goal, before Ollie Pearce got a second three minutes later.

Ali Al-Hamadi pulled one back for Wycombe before Pearce got his second and Olli White scored on 36 minutes to make it 4-1 at half-time.

Nodirbek Bobomurodov then made it 5-1 midway through the second-half to round off the win.

The Wycombe team that faced Worthing: Josh Blunkell, Jack Wakely, Connor Parsons, Jack Young, D'Mani Mellor, Tjay De Barr, Ali Al-Hamadi, Jasper Pattenden plus three trialists.

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