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Sport

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Can Wright
score the runs
to inspire
another title
for Wycombe?

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Friday, May 8, 2009

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Now I want to sign six more Blues

Taylor turns his mind to League One

WANDERERS boss Peter Taylor wants to sign six players this summer as he plots his assault on League One.

Taylor guided the Blues to their first promotion in 15 years on Saturday as he equalled Neil Warnock's record of five promotions as a manager.

And he celebrated his achievement later that evening by mapping out his plans for next season when the Chairboys will take on the likes of Southampton, Charlton and Norwich City.

He said: "I'm very proud to have five promotions but I don't want to stop there. You have got to have targets and if I didn't have those targets I might as well pack it all in."

The 56-year-old, who achieved back-to-back promotions with Hull City, is determined to make sure the Blues are competitive in League One following their dramatic elevation on goal difference, by a single goal from Bury last weekend.

He said: "Everyone has worked so hard to get here that the first thing we want to do is to make sure we stay there and,

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

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who knows, if we sign the right players we could have a really good season.

"It's a big step up but it is not impossible as Peterborough United have shown this season by going straight up again following their promotion last season."

Taylor released nine players on Tuesday – including veteran goalscorer Scott McGleish and defender Will Antwi – to create room on what he is hoping will be an improved budget.

Striker Magno Vieira, defender Leon Crooks, Robbie Rice, Callum Botham, Darrell Ellams, Jamie Turley and Scott Shulton have also been shown the door.

Taylor will now sit down with managing director Steve Hayes to discuss next year's budget and

Taylor said: "We've got a very good squad with 17 or 18 people signed up but we need to improve a few places. I want to sign half a dozen players.

"It is going to be a very busy summer for me. I have got a lot of work to do and I have got to make sure I get it right because you can only spend your money once.

"I will be patient because there are going to be a lot of players out there and once you spend your money it is gone."

Wanderers managed just 54 goals all season and one of Taylor's biggest priorities, having released McGleish and Vieira and seen seven-goal loanee John Akinde return to Bristol City, will be to increase his firepower.

'I have got a lot of work to do and I have got to make sure I get it right because you can only spend your money once.'

For more Wanderers news
bucksfreepress.co.uk



HOPE AND SPRAY: Blues boss Peter Taylor celebrates promotion after what he describes as the longest five minutes of his life ended in jubilation on Saturday

Town wrap up Premier Division

WYCOMBE Town wrapped up the Sunday Combination Premier Division title with two wins in a week.

They beat King George V 4-2 (Lee Thompson, Adam Paget, Mitch Woodward and Ben Glasgow) before a 6-2 win over Chinnor Exiles (JP Jamil 2, Paul Shone, Billy Mason, Andrew Barnes and Adam Davis).

At the other end of the table, Stuart Macellan, Karl Lewis and Greg Bartholomew sealed a 3-2 win for Beacons Bottom over FC Dun and Bradstreet (Adam Marshall, Baz David).

In Division One, Queens Head Rangers were crowned champions with a 5-1 win over FC Beaconsfield Reserves.

Scott Vincent, Mitch Andrews (2), Graham Potts and Dan Maude scored for the champions, who saw off a late surge from Happy Union.

Union beat Horse and Jockey 7-1 thanks to Grant Newell (3), Dean Stenning, Ali Nicholl, Matthew Wojtowicz and Craig Belson.

Bucks FC are Division Two winners after a 4-2 midweek win over Three Horseshoes, while AFC Wellesbourne's Phil Clarke, Wayne Booth and Steve Goddard sealed a 3-2 victory over Wycombe Town A.

In Division Four, champions FC Disraeli overpowered AFC Downley (Mark Owen) 5-1, while Villagers were 3-2 Subsidiary Cup semi-final winners over Golden Irons.

Goals from Kai Barnes (2) and Ian Goose booked their place against Holmer Green on Sunday.



TRACK SUITED: Wycombe Phoenix Harriers starlet Marissa Robertson won two silvers and a bronze to go with her relay victory

Full results at bucksfreepress.co.uk

ATHLETICS: Wycombe Phoenix Harriers were in action on Sunday with their young stars taking to the track, many for the first time, in the National Youth Athletics League at Perivale Park.

Sam Brabham, Michael Smith, Liam Rooney, Rhys Rowley and Rasham Hector were among the winners for the boys, while Tash Rooney, Sean Huxtable, Jordanna Wetenhall, Alice Freeman, Ellie Wells, Sophie Matthews, Georgina Russell, Rachel Oseitut, Marissa Robertson and Maria Denny were all victorious for the girls.

It was also a good day for Pippa Woolven, competing in the 1,500m, she finished in 4:46.08 to finish second and qualify for the prestigious English Schools competition.

SKIING: Harry Sutherland has been selected for the Great Britain Children's Ski Team for 2009/10.

The 11-year-old Gayhurst pupil is one of just five pupils to be called up after a superb showing at the British Alpine Children's Ski Championships over the Easter weekend.

He will represent GB at international events in Italy, Czech Republic, Slovenia or Andorra, competing in slalom, giant slalom, super G and combination races.

First up though, is a summer training camp in Switzerland in the next few months, where he will undergo a series of fitness tests.

SWIMMING: Wycombe District Swimming Club scooped 18 gold medals at the Alan Eyles Development Meet at Reading on Saturday.

Between them, the 56 swimmers added a further 18 silver medals and 19 bronze medals.

Golds came from Emily Cannon, Chloe Summers, Chris Harbour, Harry Engall, Rory House, Kieran Evans, Katie Cannon, Georgina Harper, Calum Taylor, Charlotte Bril-Edwards, Madeline Harris, Cameron Roberts and Cara Evans.

First time swimmers Amy Coates, Ellie Melrose, Freddie Eastman, Grace Cox, Mel and Jo Downes and Theo Wapshare were also among the medals.

FOOTBALL: Seer Green U13s are on the brink of winning the league and cup double in their first season.

The newly-formed club have already won Division Two of the Berkshire Youth Development League with a 100 per cent record and tomorrow they take on Wokingham and Embrook in the league's cup competition.

● AFC Lightning U9s were crowned South Bucks County Cup winners on Sunday when they overcame Marlow Youth in the final.

CRICKET: Bucks U11s were beaten by Hertfordshire U11s

After inserting Herts, Bucks were looking good as their bowlers kept a lid on Herts early on.

But then 39 runs in seven overs took Herts to 129-9 and Bucks failed to chase that down as they were bowled out for 100 runs in 40 overs.

Jack Rustmire led the bowling figures with 3-4 while Jack Whelan of Amersham CC top-scored with 17.

BOWLS: High Wycombe Bowls Club made up for last weekend's defeat by beating Flackwell Heath convincingly on Saturday, winning all the rinks, before making it a double on Sunday with a win over Chesham by 18 shots.

Training rolls on

WASPS have another week of skills training before they go on a month's holiday.

Pre-season starts on June 15, and although Ian McGeechan and Shaun Edwards will still be on Lions duty and Leon Holden and Tony Hanks will have gone, it will not affect the schedule as the first weeks are committed to fitness and taken by the club's conditioning staff.

● Wasps have released prop Michael Holford. He joins London Welsh, for whom he has been on loan at various stages this season.

● Joe Simpson [v Bristol] was beaten to the Try of the Season Award by David Lemi [v Bath].

● Wasps are one result away from next season's Heineken Cup after Bourgoin beat Worcester in the Challenge Cup semi-final on Saturday. If they beat Northampton in the final on May 23/24, then Wasps will take the final Heineken spot.

● Wasps have unveiled a series of new season ticket packages for next season.

For details and to book tickets go to wasps.co.uk

'This is magnificent for the boys and the club'

But skipper yet to sign new deal

DAVID McCracken has been offered a new contract at Wycombe Wanderers but their captain and defensive lynchpin has yet to commit himself despite leading the team to promotion this season.

The Scot, who was being watched by Championship side Crystal Palace on Saturday, played a huge part in the successful campaign, appearing in 41 games, 21 of which were clean sheets.

And going up could well convince him to stay.

After promotion to League One was confirmed on Saturday, the 28-year-old signed from Dundee United said: "This is why I came down here, to try and win things. We were unlucky last year but it's made us more determined this year. I knew Wycombe were a club that could achieve this."

And McCracken says the spirit within the dressing room is what has ultimately got them over the line.

He said: "This is absolutely magnificent for the boys and the club, and I think we totally deserved it."

"Throughout the season there has been a real togetherness. There have been some games where we probably didn't deserve anything because we played that badly, but we still ended

up getting a result and that's what has got us through.

"It doesn't matter whether it's by one goal or 15 or 20 points. We've achieved promotion and it's a massive thing."

But that was thrown into huge doubt when County scored an 89th minute winner, leaving Blues' fate in the hands of others.

McCracken said: "I was totally devastated. You saw the reaction of the boys, and the fans when they scored again."

"There was a total silence. I don't think anyone expected it."

"But that's in the past now. We didn't want to be relying on other results, but if we'd been asked at the start of the season if we'd take it this way then of course you'd take it."

"At the end of the day we're promoted and that was the main aim. We're playing in League One next year against a few really big clubs. It's going to be a massive year for us."

Follow Blues this summer at bucksfreepress.co.uk

'We're playing in League One next year and it's going to be a massive year for us.'



SEVEN WONDERS: David McCracken slots home Blues' equaliser but he wouldn't know that would be good enough for another 40 minutes



TENSION MOUNTS: Gary Holt waits for news in the changing room

'Boys' grew into men, says Holt

WANDERERS ace Gary Holt says the experiences of their fraught promotion campaign will benefit Wanderers' young team in League One next season.

Their young stars battled against the odds more than once before a tumultuous final day tested them to the limit.

But they came through it and Holt believes it could be the making of them.

The 36-year-old Scot, who has seen it and done it all during a career that has taken him from Stoke to Wycombe via Kilmarnock, Norwich and Notts Forest, said: "There are a lot of boys who have come in this year and they have had to grow up quickly."

"It's been a big ask, but they've done it and it will stand them in good stead for next year."

And while Holt insists the youth of the side did not contribute to their final day defeat to Notts County, he does concede that the pressure of the occasion affected the team.

He said: "We maybe got a bit nervous

towards the end and tried to keep the point, whereas I think if we'd built on the goal we scored when we were on top we might have got a few more."

"But everyone gets caught up in the occasion. I was trying to get us pushed up, but emotion takes over, people get a little bit twitchy and you start to defend just a little bit deeper."

"Those five minutes after the match were not great, not great for the heart."

"I was a wee bit angry then and not many people spoke to me. It's a hard one to weigh up because we're all gutted that we didn't play well enough."

"But it's done and dusted now. It wasn't pretty to watch, we all want to win games, we all want to put on a show and win three or four-nil, but it doesn't happen and as long as you're up, you're up."

"So it's job done. I've been a bit grumpy, but people keep reminding me it's 46 games not one and this hasn't been the make or break of the season - it's been the 45 games before this."

Pittman provides interval insight

JON-PAUL Pittman, below, has provided a fascinating insight to what it was like inside the Wanderers dressing room during half-time of their match with Notts County on Saturday.

Needing a point, they were 1-0 down and for the first half-hour had been largely out-played.

Pittman says: "We were very nervous. It was panic stations all over but the gaffer calmed us down at half time."

"He's probably been in that situation many times before and has a good head on his shoulders."

"He just told us not to panic

and to keep believing that the goal would come.

"We know we're good enough to score against any team in this league so we knew the goal would come."

"He told us it would happen eventually, as long they didn't score in the second half."

The goal Taylor promised came after 52 minutes, and although County did snatch a winner it didn't matter in the end.

Pittman said: "We are very disappointed that we didn't get the result but the main thing is that we're up."

"We've got great team-spirit. We've dug in when the chips have been down and I think we're ready for League One."

Harrold: I could've been a hero

WANDERERS striker Matt Harrold is the club's top-scorer this season, and he's quite happy to accept that one of his 12 goals was the one that made all the difference.



He said: "Yes, I like that. I like that slant on it. I'll go with that."

However, it was the 13th that he really wanted and after hitting the net against County after coming on as a second-half substitute he thought he'd scored it.

Harrold challenged for a bouncing ball on the edge of the County area before whipping it into the corner of the net, only to have it chalked off.

He said: "I could have been a hero. I was wheeling off with my hand up. It was ruled out for a high foot [left] but I thought the defender put his head down so I was a bit disappointed with that."

"But the last game doesn't matter now. It's been a great day and we'll look forward to next season."

'The few minutes after the game were possibly the worst of my life'

LEWIS Hunt tasted promotion for the third time on Saturday, but he admits achieving it was hell.

He said: "The few minutes after the game were possibly the worst of my life. We thought we'd thrown it away. "Coming into the game and only needing to win or draw...it was quite a surreal day.

"But we're promoted and that's all that matters. How we've done it is irrelevant and the league table is over the

whole season and we deserve to finish third despite what happened today."

For Hunt, it is a glorious conclusion after the way his Wycombe career began.

After injuring his groin during only his second training session, the right back signed from Southend didn't play his first game until last October and then he missed another three months after breaking his metatarsal during the Boxing Day draw with Exeter.

He said: "To get promoted is one of the best feelings you'll have in football. I've been lucky enough to do it a couple of times before and this one's just as special.

"This day seemed like a long way away when I got injured, but this is why you put in all the hard yards during the season.

"All those hours of rehab, this is what you do it for, waiting for days like these." It so nearly slipped away

from Blues though, and they would have only had themselves to blame.

Hunt said: "We should really have played a lot better than we did. At half time Peter Taylor made us realise that we weren't doing what we are good at and what we've been doing all season.

"We came out in the second half and started really well and got the goal but, for whatever reason, we stopped doing it.

"I think the occasion got to us

a little bit. It was very tense in the ground.

"The fans felt it and the players felt but when it's tight like that it's inevitable

"We went back to playing how we played in the first half, just sitting back, and I think if we'd carried on doing what we were doing we could have gone on and won the game comfortably.

"In the end we paid the price with the late goal, but other results went for us."



RELIEF ALL ROUND: Jamie Young is mobbed by fans after Wanderers were promoted on goal difference on Saturday

Young 'saved' by his skipper

Wanderers
by Alan Feldberg

JAMIE Young will relax in the Brisbane surf this summer without a care in the world – but he knows he dodged a bullet on Saturday that could have proved fatal for his Wycombe career.

The keeper dropped a clanger in their final League Two fixture when he let John Thompson's 25-yarder squirm through his fingers in a 2-1 defeat to Notts County.

He said: "It moved two ways. One of our players ducked out the way of it but it's definitely one I should have saved and I'm disappointed not to, especially in the circumstances of the game.

"But I always remind myself that that's goalkeeping, it can just turn for you.

"It was important I didn't go into my shell after that. I had to get to grips with it and get on with my game.

"But as a keeper you do rely on other people to score for you and it was great that Cracks [David McCracken] could help me out."

McCracken's goal made it 1-1 and Wycombe were home and hosed on that scoreline until Young conceded again in the 89th minute, when Thompson curled home a beauty that would have beaten most glovesmen.

He said: "I knew we were in trouble when he hit it and I couldn't explain how I felt when it went in.

"It was a really bad feeling and it was extremely difficult to play out the last few minutes. I really thought the way things were going it wasn't meant to be.

"But this sums our season up. We stick in there

and we fight and eventually just about get there. That's what happened today. And what would you take, a win like Bury got and not going up, or promotion?"

And Young admits he nearly fainted when news finally came through that Blues had done enough.

He said: "Rob the masseuse told me we were up, and I think I bear-hugged him until he passed out, then I almost passed out.

"I want to go home and see my family now. I haven't seen them for a year so I want to enjoy the moment then forget about football, go to the beach and really recharge my batteries.

"There would have been a lot of what ifs there if we hadn't got promoted and I would have gone back to Australia really disappointed.

"But it's wonderful now. I can go back and share this experience with them and tell everybody back home what they've missed."

For more player reaction
bucksfreepress.co.uk

'This sums our season up. We stick in there and we fight and eventually we just about get there. That's what happened today.'

Longest-serving Blue enjoys sweet taste of success

NO-ONE will have enjoyed Saturday's promotion party more than Wycombe Wanderers' longest-serving player, Matt Bloomfield.

The midfielder is the only member of the playing staff left over from their relegation campaign in 2004.

He played an unlucky 13 games that season after being brought to the club by Tony Adams, and he admits it's been long road back.

He said: "It's unbelievable, a great feeling. It's five years of hard work in this division and I never thought it would take this long.

"It's been a long road with two failed play-offs and a long-term injury for myself as well, but it all



makes it sweeter today and it's a fantastic feeling.

"The lows make the highs that little bit sweeter."

Wanderers went up by having a goal difference one better than Bury, but had they been on the other end of that margin, Bloomfield would have been haunted by a miss-of-the-season contender against Darlington.

He said: "We can go back and think, what if that one had gone in or that one, or if we'd kept that one out, and Bury will be thinking it even more.

"To think that 46 games comes down to one goal is unbelievable."

And Blues' promotion is even

more impressive after they failed in the play-offs last year and then endured a summer of upheaval.

Bloomfield said: "When the lads lost in the play-offs last year and we lost the manager [Paul Lambert] and several first team players it was a little bit disappointing, but the new manager [Peter Taylor] has come in this year and been absolutely brilliant.

"He picked the lads up, signed some great players and put us in the position that we're in today.

"I'm was an Ipswich fan when I was younger, but five and half years makes you a Wycombe fan and it's definitely very close to my heart now."

League One fixtures out Akinde thanks his team-mates

WANDERERS fans will find out on June 17 when they will be playing the likes of Southampton, Charlton and Norwich City.

That is the date that the fixture list for the new season, which kicks off on Saturday, August 8, will be published.

Before then Wanderers will take part in the 12-team Errea Cup pre-season tournament in Devon and they are also close to confirming a glamour pre-season friendly on July 25 at Adams Park.

● John Akinde's seven goals in the run-in effectively steered Wycombe

to promotion, but the hot-shot striker says it's not all down to him.

He said: "I wouldn't score the goals without my team-mates. I came here to play well and score goals, and I think I've done that to the best of my ability.

"I definitely feel part of it now.

I've been here two months and ever since I got here the boys have been quality."

But Akinde says despite the triumph, he is definitely returning to Bristol City this summer.

He said: "I'm going back to Bristol next week."

LEAGUE TWO

	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Brentford	46	23	16	7	65	36	29	85
Exeter City	46	22	13	11	65	50	15	79
Wanderers	46	20	18	8	54	33	21	78
Bury	46	21	15	10	63	43	20	78
Gillingham	46	21	12	13	58	55	3	75
Rochdale	46	19	13	14	70	59	11	70
Shrewsbury	46	17	18	11	61	44	17	69
Dag & Red	46	19	11	16	77	53	24	68
Bradford	46	18	13	15	66	55	11	67
Chesterfield	46	16	15	15	62	57	5	63
Morecambe	46	15	18	13	53	56	-3	63
Darlington	46	20	12	14	61	44	17	62
Lincoln City	46	14	17	15	53	52	1	59
Rotherham	46	21	12	13	60	46	14	58
Aldershot	46	14	12	20	59	80	-21	54
Acc Stanley	46	13	11	22	42	59	-17	50
Barnet	46	11	15	20	56	74	-18	48
Port Vale	46	13	9	24	44	66	-22	48
Notts County	46	11	14	21	49	69	-20	47
Macclesfield	46	13	8	25	45	77	-32	47
Bournemouth	46	17	12	17	59	51	8	46
Grimsby	46	9	14	23	51	69	-18	41
Chester City	46	8	13	25	43	81	-38	37
Luton Town	46	13	17	16	58	65	-7	26

All pictures from the dramatic day at Adams Park taken by Anita Ross-Marshall.

What they said after:

JON-PAUL PITTMAN, striker:

'It was panic-stations all over, but the gaffer calmed us down at half-time. He's probably been in this situation many times before and he has a good head on his shoulders.'

'He just told us not to panic and that the goal would come eventually. We know we're good enough to score against any team in this league so we knew the goal would come, as long as they didn't score in the second half. Umm, yeah!'

MATT BLOOMFIELD, midfielder:

'When the lads lost in the play-offs last year and we lost the manager and several first team players it was a little bit disappointing, but the manager has come in this year and been absolutely brilliant.'

'He's picked the lads up, signed some great players and put us in the position that we're in today.'

LEWIS HUNT, defender:

'These days are why you put in all the hard yards throughout the season. This is what you do it for.'

'To get promoted is one of the best feelings you'll have in football. I've been lucky enough to do it a couple of times before and this one's just as special.'

'This day seemed like a long way away when I got injured. All those hard hours doing rehab, this was it for me, waiting for this day.'

GARY HOLT, midfielder:

'I think we got a bit nervous, a bit twitchy. There are a lot of boys who have come in this year and had to grow up quickly.'

'It's a big ask, but they've done it and it will stand them in good stead for next year.'

JOHN AKINDE, striker:

'I didn't really have a target, but seven goals in 11 games is not too bad. I would have taken that when I first came so I'm happy.'

'I think my second goal at Brentford was my best because of the way I took it. I won the ball, then ran at the defender and scored. That was really good for me.'

JAMIE YOUNG, goalkeeper, on the first goal:

'It just moved two ways. One of our players ducked out the way of it but it's definitely one I should have saved and I'm disappointed not to, especially in the circumstances of the game.'

'But I always remind myself that's goalkeeping, it can just turn for you.'

'It was important I didn't stay in my shell after that. I had to get to grips with it and got on with it.'

STEVE HAYES, managing director:

'I'm absolutely delighted. It was a bit tight, but that's the way we do things, isn't it.'

'Our defensive record throughout the season is what's carried us through. We've been a tough team to beat and whether it's up by a goal or ten points, it doesn't make any difference. We are up.'

'The papers will say we're up and I will read all the papers tomorrow - all of them.'

FRANK SINCLAIR, defender:

'I've got a shirt from everywhere I've played and I will cherish this one.'

'I'll sit down and chat with Peter Taylor and we may be able to do something for next season, you never know. I wouldn't mind playing in the League One play-offs next season.'

DAVID McCracken, captain:

'Throughout the season there has been a real togetherness. There have been some games where we probably didn't deserve anything because we played so badly, but we still ended up getting a result and that's what has got us through.'

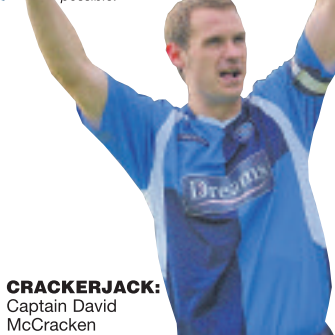
MATT HARROLD, striker, on his disallowed goal:

'It would have been great to score that goal. I could have been a hero.'

'I was wheeling off with my hand up. It was ruled out for a high foot but I thought the defender put his head down so I was a bit disappointed with that, to be honest.'

PETER TAYLOR, manager:

'This is a very good football club and we're looking to push on. We're not looking to finish bottom of Division One, that's for certain. Peterborough got promotion from this division last season and now all of a sudden they have gone into the Championship. It's possible.'



CRACKERJACK: Captain David McCracken

Patience pays off for Wycombe's Mr Reliable

Blues' only ever-present scoops double gong at annual awards night

PERSONAL triumph in a team sport is a touchy subject, but for Craig Woodman the 2008/09 season will go down as a startling individual success story.

The defender is the only Wanderer who played in every minute of their successful promotion campaign and if that was not enough, he was rewarded further with a rare double at the club's Player of the Year Awards night on Sunday, when he scooped both the Supporters' and the Players' Player of the Year gongs.

Remarkable as that is by itself, the achievement stands out further when considering the ashes out of which this triumph has emerged.

After being signed by Paul Lambert last season, the 26-year-old hardly featured in the first half of the year as Tom Williams and Sam Stockley kept him on the sidelines.

He was also publicly criticised by his manager for one particular error and it wasn't until Christmas before Woodman began to force his way into the side on a regular basis.

The Devon-born full back finished the season steadily, but he could not have predicted building on that with a season of such consistency - a buzz-word for every defender - that his manager has felt confident enough to trust him every single Saturday afternoon.

Rotation clearly does not apply

to Wycombe's unsung hero.

Meanwhile, the best goal of the season belonged to midfielder Gary Holt.

The former Scotland international's delicious lob from outside the box against Shrewsbury Town won him the Goal of the Season award.

Dan Fitchett walked off with the Youth Team Player of the Year award while Pietro Palladino took the Apprentice of the Year crown.

Nathan Ashton was presented with the Community Player of the Year Award.

Will Blues have a derby to relish with MK Dons next season? Follow their play-off game tonight at

mkdons.com.uk



ANXIOUS WAIT: Craig Woodman, right, and Matt Bloomfield wait for the Bury result to come in after Saturday's game



The 15 minutes of agony before the party started

NEVER mind a week being a long time in sport, how about 15 minutes?

Wanderers needed just a point on Saturday to be sure of promotion and even if they lost Exeter and Bury would both still have to win their games to steal above them.

And at 4.30pm Blue was most definitely the colour. Wanderers were drawing 1-1 with Notts County while Exeter and Bury had both yet to score in their games with Rotherham and Accrington.

With just over ten minutes of the season left and the three key results all working for Wycombe, the 9,625 fans inside Adams Park were beginning to bounce.

Wanderers 1, Notts County 2 By Alan Feldberg

Their team hadn't played well but captain David McCracken had cancelled out John Thompson's opener and everything was going according to plan.

By 4.45pm though, their worlds had turned upside down.

Exeter started a hat-trick of horror by taking the lead at the Don Valley Stadium.

The significance of this goal was not immediately apparent. With their own scoreline and Bury's,

Wycombe had belt and braces backup and their fans greeted Exeter's goal without alarm.

They got fidgety though, when Thompson curled home County's 89th-minute winner and when news arrived moments later of a Bury penalty panic spread through the stadium like wildfire.

In a matter of minutes Wycombe's position of complete control had collapsed beneath them and now their only safety net was goal difference but, at plus 21 compared to Bury's plus 20, it was membrane thin.

Not knowing whether to stick or twist, the team played out the final minutes like zombies and when the

final whistle went they loitered on the pitch with no idea whether they'd blown it or not.

Bury were leading 1-0 and, as far as everyone inside Adams Park was concerned, they still had five minutes of injury time to score a second goal and consign Wycombe to gut-wrenching failure.

Finally though, at 5.04pm, a cheer went up in the Woodlands Stand and the tension exploded like a balloon.

Players hugged and fans danced on a pitch that, next season, will host League One football.

Read the full match report
bucksfreepress.co.uk/spo

Honest England is bad for your health

MANAGING director Steve Hayes has paid tribute to the honesty of English football – after seeing his team squeeze into League One by the tiniest of margins.

After 46 matches Wanderers clinched promotion by goal difference on the final day of the season, despite losing 2-1 at home to a Notts County side who had nothing to play for and only after enduring a horrible heart-stopping five minute wait for other results to confirm their promotion.

In their final three games Blues played matches against teams who all had nothing to play for.

But relegated Luton (2-1 Wycombe win), lowly Port Vale (1-1) and Notts County (2-1 defeat), all pushed Wycombe to the limit.

Hayes said: "Only in this country could that happen. Even teams with nothing to fight for give it absolutely everything they have got and play the matches as if they are title deciders."

"There are no easy games at all."

Hayes feared apparent no-hopers

Wanderers by Dave Peters

dpeters@london.newsquest.co.uk

Notts, who had lost all five of their previous games, had ruined the dream when they snatched a last minute winner at Adams Park on Saturday.

And with Bury leading Accrington 1-0 Hayes and the fans went through torment as Bury had five more minutes of injury time to get a second goal which would have pushed Wanderers down to the play-offs.

Hayes said: "I was tense beyond belief. It would have been gut-wrenching to have missed out after everything we've been through."

"We started the season so well and we should have buried it and had it all done by mid-April."

Now the going is set to get even tougher for Wanderers as they return to the division they were relegated from five years ago.

And Hayes is not looking to



THE LONGEST WAIT: Chris Zebroski and Jon-Paul Pittman wait anxiously for news to come in from Bury

stand still.

He said: "It's about progression and we want to progress. We want to get to a position at Christmas where we are there or thereabouts."

"I think it is realistic that we could get in to the play-offs, that's the aim."

See our promotion picture gallery
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MEDALLION MEN: Lee Sawyer celebrates promotion but he is not due a medal from the Football League

I'll give Lee my medal

BOSS Peter Taylor says he will give his record-breaking fifth promotion medal to midfielder Lee Sawyer – if the club can't swing an extra one for the on-loan Chelsea teenager.

The 19-year-old midfielder fell just short of qualifying for a medal – playing in nine matches not the required 11 – and Taylor says he will give him his gong if the League won't bend the rules.

Blues are entitled to buy extra medals – but only for players who have hit the 11-match quota.

Taylor said: "I will make sure he gets one. I am hoping we can get something sorted out and if we can't I would give him my medal."

Sawyer played a vital part in Blues' end of season run in and without his equaliser on the penultimate

Wanderers by Dave Peters

dpeters@london.newsquest.co.uk

weekend of the season at Port Vale, Wanderers would be going through the tension of the play-offs right now.

Taylor would like to keep Sawyer at Adams Park and will try and broker a deal this summer.

But it could be a tough nut to crack. He still has one year left on his Stamford Bridge contract and Wanderers are not the only club interested.

Taylor said: "There would be interest from us, we like him but so do Southend."

Taylor favours a full-time deal but hasn't ruled out a loan option.

I want to keep Cracks

PETER Taylor has made it a priority to keep Dave McCracken at the club.

The skipper has so far stalled on signing a new contract and Taylor is hoping that winning promotion will be the deal maker.

He said: "We are desperate for him to stay. He's a great player and a great captain."

The performances of former Dundee United defender McCracken this season have made him a target of clubs north and south of the border.

Taylor said: "I think we have got a better chance of keeping him now that we've won promotion."

The Blues chief is hoping he can keep all his contracted players.

There has been speculation that clubs are hovering over midfielder Tommy Doherty.

Taylor said: "We will have to wait and see but I haven't had any offers."

The manager will also sit down with 37-year-old defender Frank Sinclair this summer."

Os offer terms to released striker

RELEASED Blues striker Scott McGleish has been offered a deal by Leyton Orient.

McGleish finished his season at Brisbane Road after being sent out on loan and has now been offered the chance to make it permanent.

He topped Blues' scoring charts during the previous season with 26 but fell out with boss Peter Taylor earlier this season after he was benched.

Taylor said: "We didn't start off particularly well but we shook hands after that."

"I think Scott has got to play every week and if I thought he was going to play every week I'd have offered him a new contract."

Meanwhile Taylor has not fully closed the door on centre half Will Antwi's career after letting him go.

Taylor said: "If I don't get what I want in

the summer I could be back on the phone to him."

Taylor says releasing the players was a tough job and he had big sympathy for striker Magno Vieira, who he also let go.

He said: "I brought him in during the summer and I know he can look at me and say I haven't really given him the chance."

"He needs to play first team football and I really hope he can find a club where can play every week."

As well as letting Leon Crooks, Robbie Rice, Callum Botham, Darrell Ellams, Jamie Turley and Scott Shulton go, the club have also decided not to continue with second year apprentices Jordan Lumsden, David Pearce, Craig Read and Jamie Reading.

Dan Fitchett and George Daly have been offered terms though.

Vegas beckons Blues

WANDERERS stars will celebrate the club's first promotion in 15 years with a club trip to Las Vegas later this month.

The victorious players will also share a £100,000 promotion payout.

The club bonus will be divided out on a pro-rata basis depending on how many appearances each player has made throughout the season.

Spend your savings

CHAIRBOYS MD Steve Hayes has called on fans to spend the money they would have spent supporting the Blues in the play-offs on buying a season ticket instead.

Wanderers were just one goal away from being forced down into the play-off positions where they could potentially have faced three more big matches this month.

The Blues have frozen the cost of season tickets meaning fans can watch the likes of Charlton and Norwich for the same price as they were watching Barnet this season.

Big-hearted Bury

BURY boss Alan Knill was among the first to offer his congratulations to Wanderers boss Peter Taylor.

Wycombe pipped Bury to automatic promotion by one goal last Saturday – but Knill was quick to text his congratulations to Taylor.

Many Bury fans thought they had pipped Wycombe to promotion when they scored a late winner to beat Accrington 1-0 – they didn't realise they needed a two-goal margin to overtake them.

Contract talks

BLUES MD Steve Hayes will discuss a contract extension for manager Peter Taylor when they get together in the summer.

Taylor, who has delivered promotion in his first year at the helm, is currently on a year's rolling contract.

Hayes said: "I would be very pleased if we could keep him for a good deal of time."

"We will be talking about every possible aspect in the next few weeks."

Sale saved season

SELLING star defender Mike Williamson to Watford mid-season saved Blues' promotion campaign, according to managing director Steve Hayes.

Blues sold him for £150,000 in January amid allegations that they had sold out from fans.

But Hayes said: "Selling Mike was the right decision. It would have been catastrophic for dressing room morale if we had stood in his way and denied him the chance to play two divisions higher."



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