

Academy rescue package falls through

A PROPOSAL to rescue Wycombe Wanderers' youth academy has collapsed this week for financial reasons.

A group including parents of academy players had tried to spark an 11th hour bail out to keep the club's youth set up going.

However, it is understood they have had to admit defeat after a closer look at the costs involved.

It might not be completely terminal for the rescue package though.

The parents group put forward their proposals to other parents of academy players at a meeting at Adams Park on Monday and were well-received.

It is understood discussions might yet continue.

A Wanderers statement said: "Wycombe Wanderers

can confirm that the club's position regarding the closure of the Centre of Excellence has not changed.

"The club were aware of an exploratory proposal presented on Monday at Adams Park. However, we regret to confirm that the decision to close the Centre of Excellence taken by the club and Wycombe Wanderers Trust will not be reversed."

Wanderers announced they were scrapping their youth academy three weeks ago after the Football League announced the introduction of the Elite Player Performance Plan.

Under rules of the EPPP, a £70,000 cap will be imposed on transfers of academy players

Wanderers were one of 22 clubs who voted against the EPPP last October.

Oxford match cancelled

WANDERERS have cancelled the fixture between their development side and Oxford City.

The match was scheduled for August 8 but Blues have called it off because they play Watford in the first round of the Capital One Cup just three days later.

The development side will still play Windsor and Wingate on Monday, July 23 and Wednesday, August 1.

Stanley game changed

THE season hasn't even started but already Blues have seen their first fixture change.

They will play Accrington Stanley at Adams Park on Friday, March 29, 24 hours earlier than first planned.

That is to give both teams an extra day to prepare for their Easter Monday games.

Kids for free at Forest

FOREST Green Rovers are offering all U16s free entry to their friendly with Wanderers on July 18.

To take advantage of the offer fans have to 'like' the Rovers' Facebook page and redeem the offer on site.

Former Blue Magno Viera could line up against his former team-mates after moving to Rovers recently.

Morgan, 11, has his dreams crushed again

'It's not just my little boy, there are 100 boys in that academy'

A PARENT of one of the Wanderers' academy players cut loose when the club decided to scrap its youth set up has spoken out about the confusion and anguish that has followed the controversial decision.

Wanderers were the only one of 92 clubs to ditch its academy entirely following the Football League's introduction of an Elite Player Performance Plan.

A group led by academy parents tried to step in and rescue the youth set-up, but after hopeful signs early on that too appears to have died a death.

Caught in the midst of it all has been Morgan Toney-Green, right, an 11-year-old from Princes Risborough who was only selected for the Blues academy seven weeks ago.

Now, after only a handful of training sessions and games, his dream is being torn up in front of his eyes.

Morgan's mum Abi said: "Andrew, my husband, is an avid Wycombe fan and goes to all the home games.

"For Morgan to be selected for his home team was a dream come true.

"It was snatched away from him when they announced the academy was closing. Then there was a glimmer of hope again and now that's been snatched away too.

"I'm absolutely disgusted.

By Alan Feldberg

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This is an 11-year-old boy we're talking about.

"When we told him it was closing the first time he burst into tears. Then we told him it was open again and I just haven't got the heart to tell him it's closed again."

Abi was given fresh hope at a meeting held at Adams Park on Monday, when two parents of Blues academy players gave a two-hour talk on how the youth system could be saved.

Also there were Richard Dobson, Wanderers assistant manager and former head of youth, and the Supporters Trust.

Abi said: "There were quite a few parents there, probably the majority of the academy parents.

"We all walked away thinking it was up and running. That's how it was left. That was the vibe, that it was all going ahead.

"We knew that obviously some fund raising would need to be done and parents were asked if they'd be prepared to contribute around £10 per week, which was more than acceptable."

But they had barely told a delighted Morgan the good news when it all changed for

the worse again.

Abi said: "On Wednesday we got a text from Morgan's coach [Sam Grace] saying an email had been sent out by the Supporters Trust saying they were sticking to their original decision [to scrap the academy]. That was it.

"Morgan only signed seven weeks ago so maybe we're not on their emailing system, but nobody has told us anything.

"Nobody seems to know what's going on. These are little children. It's disgusting. It's not just my little boy. There are 100 boys in that academy.

"And it's not only the boys. The coach that texted us had a job one minute and the next minute he didn't.

"We're thankful that he told us though because if he hadn't no one else would have and we're off on holiday for two weeks.

"We'd have gone away thinking everything was fine but we'll have to tell Morgan before we go now. It won't be pleasant."

During the uncertainty of the last few weeks, Morgan has approached other clubs and has been offered trials at Reading and Brentford.

Abi said: "The Centre of Excellence had such a brilliant reputation and the coaches there were fantastic. It's such a crying shame."



BELOW IS AN ABRIDGED LETTER SENT BY MORGAN'S DAD TO THE SUPPORTERS TRUST

To whom this may concern

AS a supporter of this club for 30 years I am disgusted with the way you have treated the staff and the young lads from the Centre of Excellence.

I can only assume you don't have a relation in the centre because what you have put my son and other boys through over these last couple of weeks is shameful and disgusting.

As a regular to Adams Park with three sons in tow you can only imagine one of my sons delight when only six weeks ago he got his dream of a schoolboy contract at his hometown club, only to find out a couple of weeks later on Sky Sports that you were shutting down the centre.

As he showed me the story with tears in his eyes I said, 'I'm sure it's just a knee jerk reaction to something and hopefully something can be done about it.'

So after attending the first meeting we came away with some sort of hope.

"To then attend the second meeting and be told by one of your top people that you were behind the proposal and that the centre could continue to run, my son was overjoyed, I haven't had the heart to tell him what you've done yet.

I would like to re-iterate to you that you are dealing with young boys lives, emotions and futures. They are not just a commodity they are human beings with feelings.

Andrew Green

AJ Accident Justice

personal injury department

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