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New bills fight over tax protest



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£8.5m legal row over insurance claim for hotel fire



Historic venue stays shut as firms fight on payment

By Charlie Smith

STOKENCHURCH'S historic Kings Hotel remains closed while its owner sues the insurer for losses caused by a huge fire.

The 16th century coaching inn on Oxford Road was gutted by a huge blaze in 2021, which quickly spread from the kitchen of the newly reno-

vated building to the roof. Now, the owner of the hotel and wedding venue, Stokenchurch Property Ltd and its operator, Kings Hotel Trading Ltd are suing their insurer over the fire.

They claim UK Insurance Ltd breached its policy by refusing to compensate them for losses.

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Sport

CHALFONT ST PETER UNDER 9S

Local team secure Lynxes cup hat-trick

CHALFONT St Peter AFC's U9 squad celebrated a remarkable triumph on Saturday as they secured the Lynxes Cup for the third year in a row.

The young footballers, who hail from local schools in the area, showcased their prowess in a hard-earned 5-0 victory over St James Raptors on their home ground.

This impressive feat underscores the team's unwavering commitment and unity, having played together since their U7 days. Over the past three years, they've

demonstrated remarkable consistency, reaching three consecutive finals and emerging victorious each time.

The latest win stands as a testament to their exceptional teamwork and resilience, supported by both the club and the local community. Despite facing a formidable opponent in St James Raptors, the Chalfont St Peter side remained composed throughout the match, with an early goal from forward George Bainbridge setting the tone.

Keeper and captain

Raushan Dhillon's heroic saves proved pivotal in maintaining their lead, while stellar defensive performances from Monty Shack and Archie Wheeler ensured the opposition's attacks were repelled. As St James pressed on, the team rallied, with crucial goals from Michael Moon, Rajvir Gill, and Hugo Jenkins sealing the victory.

In recognition of their outstanding contributions, Dhillon and midfielder Jack Murphy were jointly awarded players of the match, with Murphy's tenacity and skill



A picture of the team: Archie Wheeler, George Bainbridge, Hugo

FOOTBALL

Promotion edges closer for Chesham United after draw

THE Generals were held to a 1-1 draw in an entertaining encounter against mid-table Basingstoke.

The hosts had won their previous four games, but Chesham took an early lead and dominated the first 20 minutes.

However, Basingstoke fought back and ultimately deserved a draw despite what seemed to be a poor decision for their equalising goal.

With Callum Adebisi ruled out, Eoin Casey came into the centre of defence alongside Kieran Murphy who was making his 200th appearance for the club.

The only other change saw Ricardo German recalled in place of James Harding.

Chesham took a seventh-minute lead following some neat play down the right between Jordan Edwards and Bradley Clayton, and the ball came to Alex Lafleur who cut in from the left and shot right-footed past keeper Simon Grant's left hand.

Chesham continued to push forward but without creating any further chances. Basingstoke gradually got a foothold in the match and on 43 minutes the referee ignored what looked like a clear foul on Bradley Clayton leaving Elliott Bolton to fire past Zaki Oualah from just inside the area to level things up.

The opening minutes of the second half were rather scrappy, but on 54 minutes Basingstoke came close to scoring when Brad Wilson's cross found Liam Ferdinand, but the header clipped the top of the bar.

Chesham's Ryan Upward then nodded on a Roddy Collins pass to Ricardo German who blazed

By Andrew Westlake

the ball over the bar with only Grant to beat.

As the game went on chances became rarer.

Chesham had a spell of pressure and Alex Lafleur shot into the side netting from just inside the area.

Lafleur then crossed low from the left just ahead of Zak Joseph at the far post.

Basingstoke had a stoppage time shot from substitute Shamar Moore deflected behind for a corner but it came to nothing. Full time and a point a piece.

Chesham United now have six games left and sit 14 points clear of Gosport Borough in second place.

With two games over the Easter weekend (Hayes & Yeading at home on Friday, March 29 and Harrow Borough away on Easter Monday) The Generals have a big weekend in prospect.

Chesham United FC Women had their game at the weekend postponed so they next face AFC Sudbury, at The Meadow in the FA Women's National League on Sunday 31st at 2pm.

To read more about the latest news regarding the sports in Buckinghamshire, go to www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/sport.

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If you have a sports story, send it in to our 'send us your news option' via the website.



Picture by Steve Gridley

FOOTBALL

Much needed win for Windsor

A 1-0 win for Windsor in a 'six pointer' fixture against Spartans Youth as they moved away from the relegation zone.

Dai Matani, Alex Peapell and Kingston White-Glean are masters at placing long pin point passes into the channels and created myriad chances for The Royalists in the first half.

Laim Jenkins came closest to opening the score for Windsor on 12 minutes when Allesandro Peliccia picked up the ball in the left channel before crossing immaculately to the near post, only for his downward header to beat Eric Megraph in the Spartans goal before bouncing up over the bar.

In the 14th minute, Peliccia was this time on the end of Nathan Green's cross as he flashed a header just wide of the left-hand post.

Spurned half chances and near misses became the story of the first half for the home side with Spartans limited to just 1 shot on goal.

Certainly, the visitors led something of a charmed life on 25 minutes when, Green, Max Jarzabek and Jenkins had successive shots cleared in the melee that resulted from a Windsor corner.

Sure enough in the second half Spartans matched Windsor for chances with imposing centre forward Samuel Dodoo proving to be more than a handful.

But Matani was in imperious form at the centre of the Windsor defence and consistently out thought his physically stronger opponent, before turning defence into attack by spraying numerous, immaculate passes into the Spartans defensive third.

As the half wore on, you always sensed that Windsor might rue not taking those first half chances with just one well taken opportunity looking likely to settle the affair.

As it was that chance fell to Windsor in the 82nd minute.

Substitute Melvin Kambamba's sheer persistence won a free kick 40 yards out on the left.

Jamie Watson took the free kick and superbly found Jousef Al Shabasi at the near post, who glanced a sublime diving header neatly into the right-hand corner of the net.

Whilst they are not mathematically safe from relegation, Windsor are in a good position with only a few games of the season left.

These fixtures include at home to Molesey on March 30, then an away clash against Eversley & California on Easter Monday, before facing London Samuraj Rovers two days later on April 3.

SPORT: TRIP TO THE USA

Financial target set for gymnastic group



The gymnasts are all hoping to visit the USA this summer (Image: NA)

A fundraising page has been set up to try and send 17 High Wycombe gymnasts on a trip to the United States of America.

Booker Gym Club is fundraising for the Women's Artistic squad, which consists of athletes between the ages of eight and 22, to fly over to the USA, have accommodation and compete in the United States Association of Independent Gymnastics Clubs (USAIGC) World Championships.

The club have been fundraising to cover expenses for their journey across the Atlantic, including airfare and accommodation during the championship.

The target is to reach £15,000 ahead of this year's event, which will take place between June 25 and July 2.

Together, the club has fundraised over

£10,000 by organising and hosting a Gym and Dance Show, holding cake sales, and raffles and through the in-house competition which saw pre-school children through to squad levels competing.

Kate Duttall, says: 'It has been amazing to see the Booker families pull together to support our Girls' squad set on competing at the World Championships

'We have some fantastic hampers up for grabs in our silent auction, plus PT training sessions, Zumba classes, Riding Lessons, Haircuts, Sushi Classes, Rider Development Sessions, Gymnastic Holiday Camp & a 6 Week Judo Beginners course.'

To donate, go to www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/IGCWorldChampionships.

AP'S PREVIEWS

A bumper month for Wanderers

WYCOMBE'S hectic end to an eventful season starts with the visit of league leaders Portsmouth to Adams Park on Good Friday, March 29, the first of nine games - including a Wembley cup final - in just over a month.

Wanderers next four matches are all against teams chasing promotion- Portsmouth, Blackpool, Peterborough United (in the Bristol Street Motors Final) and Derby County, a severe test of their much-improved form since the start of the year.

First up are Pompey, on course to return to the second tier of English football for the first time in twelve seasons. They have led the table for most of the campaign losing only four of their thirty-nine league games.

They arrive at Adams Park with an away record that reads W10 D7 L2, their only defeats coming at Bristol Rovers and Cheltenham Town.

The Chairboys were unlucky to lose the reverse fixture at Fratton Park in October last year, going down to a disputed goal eight minutes into stoppage time.

Josh Scowen gave Wanderers an early lead that was wiped out when Colby Bishop equalised, and Connor Shaughnessy grabbed the winner after a challenge on goalkeeper Max Stryjek which Pompey boss John Mousinho later admitted was a foul.

Wanderers took four points off Pompey last season with a 2-0 win in a televised game at Adams Park, and a 2-2 draw on the final day of the campaign at Fratton Park, Garath McCleary scoring for the Blues in both matches.

This will be the twentieth meeting between the clubs in all competitions with the Chairboys winning five compared to Pompey's seven victories, the other seven games ending in a draw.

Wycombe's second fixture over the holiday period sees them make the long journey north to Blackpool on Easter Monday, April 1.

The Seaside are challenging for the play-offs and have one of the best home records in the division with only three defeats in nineteen league games at Bloomfield Road.

Wanderers won 2-0 in the reverse fixture at Adams Park in September last year with goals by Sam Vokes and Brandon Hanlan.

RUGBY

Beaconsfield RFC crowned champions with 20th win

BEACONSFIELD made it 20 wins from 20 league matches, and surpassed 1,000 points for the season, but only after a fierce arm-wrestle with a very spirited Wallingford.

The first half was evenly matched, with the home side a little rusty, forcing off-loads and losing possession wantonly on the gain line. Defence too was uncharacteristically weak, with Wallingford repeatedly making good ground, and scoring an impressive try by the forwards, from a rolling maul. The highlight of the half for Beaconsfield was a try for current Colt, and first XV debutant, strapping young centre Alex Nagele, with his first touch of the ball.

Fly-half Aled Lewis slotted two penalties to take the score to 11 - 11 at half time.

The second half was a very different affair, with

the home side regaining their confidence and fluency in attack. A much improved set piece, and more intelligent, patient play in general, led to consistently better field position, more phases built, and more opportunities created.

Irrepressible try-scoring machine Tyson Evans-Peters was first up, with a trademark long-range effort, bumping off numerous Wallingford tacklers on the way. The returning man-mountain Pat Kuenzle, re-instated at number 8, was next over the line, taking the scoring pass from captain Henry Revill, and diving like Tom Daley in his prime. Revill himself, who also had an outstanding game, was next on the scoreboard, after a characteristic weaving run through despairing opponents in the centre. Wallingford rallied, and



Picture by Richard Gomme

dominated a substantial portion of the second half, but lock Harry Berryman sealed the deal with a try from a well-worked line-out move.

There were several candidates for Man Of The Match, including Rhys Amos, Tom Field and Joe Dunster in the pack, and Joey Thomas at 15, but it

was Aled Lewis, orchestrating the mid-field as intelligently as ever, who took the honours.

A weekend of hockey for the men and women

SATURDAY was a time to celebrate the women's 1st team having already gained promotion to the National League.

They were at home to the bottom team in the league Trojans 2 and the game was rather one-sided.

Marlow won 7-0 and if it had not been for a wonderful display by the visiting goalkeeper, who had played previously at top level, it would have been more.

Before the game, the team filed on

with mascots from the club's mini section to the delight of a suitably large crowd.

After that the 2nd team played Banbury 1sts and continued their late run of form in their fight to avoid relegation and also won 7-0. If they beat New Forest away on Saturday they have a good chance of staying in S. Central Premier League 2.

Other women's results. The 3rd team drew 1-1 with South Berk-

shire 2 away, 4s lost 5-0 to Bicester 1 away,

5s beat Wycombe 4 3-2, 6s beat Maidenhead 4 1-0 away, 7s beat Windsor 4 6-0 away.

Meanwhile the men's 1st were away to Haslemere and won 4-2. They are certain to finish in 6th place after an up-and-down season in which they have lost players to injury and three have relocated due to work.

The 2nd team were away to Fare-

ham 2nds and lost 5-1. They will achieve a mid-table position having been promoted last year.

Other men's results. The 3rd team lost 2-0 away to Windsor 1 away, 4s beat Windsor 2s 7-1.

5s drew 1-1 with South Berkshire 3 away 6s lost 4-2 to Yateley 3 away, 7s beat Yateley 4 6-1 away.

To read more about the latest sports in Buckinghamshire, go to the Bucks Free Press website (www.bucksfreepress.co.uk).

SPORT

0963-2336



Father and son to go head-to-head at championship



Carl (left) and Gary (right) will head to Wellingborough over the

A LOUDWATER father and son will go head-to-head this Easter at an annual motorbike championship.

Gary Hester, 56, along with son 24-year-old son, Carl, 24, will head to the Santa Pod Raceway in Wellingborough to compete in the ACU UK Drag Bike Championship.

The yearly event has seen Gary finish second on four occasions, whilst Carl won a trophy on his first appearance in the competition two years ago despite not winning the tournament.

And even though they'll be competitors during the Easter

weekend, the father and son hope it'll be a weekend to remember.

Gary told the Free Press: "It's really good riding along with Carl.

"He's been involved in racing since he was a kid and he's got better and better.

"But I've finished second four times and I'm aiming to get top spot this year.

"It's a knockout competition and the last time we did it, I knocked Carl out!

"It was very close but I just managed to beat him.

"Also, the ACU is also a great social event and we'll have a lot of family coming up to watch us."

Gary first started to take part in drag racing in 1989 after he had purchased his first motorbike.

Since then, he has entered events across the country and the Republic of Ireland, winning several tournaments along the way.

But participating in the same competition with his son has made the experienced rider 'proud' of both of their achievements.

On how he first got into racing, he explained: "I was about 21/22 years old, and I had just bought a road bike.

"At the time, there was a magazine

called Superbike Magazine that did a competition where street bikes would turn up and race.

"I signed up and even though I didn't do a lot of winning back then, I was hooked from that moment and have loved it ever since.

"That was the moment when it all started."

His son, Carl, added: "This is one of my main hobbies I have and I get such a thrill when I race out of everything, I wouldn't be doing this without my dad.

"He's a great inspiration as he's helped me along the way a lot."

Getting prepared for the Easter weekend

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Matt Bloomfield believes the club are creating a new 'identity' and that they will be able to go 'toe-to-toe' with the top-of-the-table Portsmouth on Good Friday.

The Chairboys host the ex-Premier League outfit who currently sit five points clear of the League One standings with one game in hand over second-place, Derby County.

But Wanderers will be hoping to delay the inevitable promotion party for Pompey, as they head into the Easter break with three consecutive league victories.

Speaking ahead of the fixture, Bloomfield, whose team haven't had a game for two weeks due to the international break, said: "We've had some good days on the grass whilst having a few days off at home with our families resting and recuperating, as we know it'll be a very busy period between now and the end of the season.

"It's going to be exciting as we want more points to get up the table, but it's nice to have a bit of time to breathe and get energised ahead of the weekend.

"Only results will determine whether or not the break has come at a good or bad time, as we didn't want the game off against Cambridge – we wanted to play it as we were in good form."

"But you need to look at the positives in everything so we gave the boys a few days off whilst making sure we're ready between now and the end of the season.

"We've had a very busy period from Christmas until now and we're ready to go again.

On facing Portsmouth, who have ex-Wycombe midfielder John Mousinho as manager, he added: "We're up against the league leaders, so it's an exciting time.

"We've been creating good opportunities and I want us to continue with that, and we keep playing the way that

By James Richings

we have been since Christmas, we can go toe-to-toe with the teams we're up against until the end of the season.

"In Colby Bishop, they have one of the best number nines in the league as they can play into him whilst also playing off.

"They've got good pace out wide with a lot of dribbling ability in Marlon Pack, so they're going to bring a lot of quality.

"They're top of the league and with the gap they've got, it's only a matter of time before Portsmouth secure promotion – John [Mousinho] has also done a brilliant job there.

"Portsmouth have got a really good squad and they've been top of the table for pretty much the whole season for a reason.

"They're efficient in picking up results and we need to be on it against them.

"But I hope that we can continue this momentum as I've got high hopes for this club and belief in the players.

"We need to be as positive as I believe that we're creating an identity in the way that we want to do things, and for me, it's all about continuing that."

Finally, on the final month of the season which will see Wycombe play eight games across 26 days, he concluded: "As I've shown with Franco [Ravizzoli] in goal and with Nigel [Lonwijk] coming into the team, if you're in good form, it's up to the lads who are in possession of those shirts to produce the performances that keep you in the team.

"We've got good competition and after what we did in January, the players are thriving from it.

"Of course, players aren't happy with not starting but you want that as everyone needs to be chomping at the bit to be playing."



Matt Bloomfield's side have won three of their last three league games (PA)

Ainsworth backs Wycombe at Wembley

FORMER Wycombe Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth is 'sure' that the Chairboys will defeat Peterborough United in the EFL Trophy final next month.

The clash at Wembley will see the Adams Park team take on the Posh in their first-ever appearance in the competition's history.

Wanderers are unbeaten in their last five against Darren Ferguson's team, losing just one of their seven meetings.

Speaking to the club's media at the annual Harleyford Golf Club day in Marlow, Ainsworth, who departed Wycombe to take over as manager at Queens Park Rangers in February 2023 said: "I'm really looking forward to a week Sunday now, as I'm with the TV crew doing the game.

"It'll be fantastic to see Blooms and I'm sure we're going to win that game and I'm buzzing for him.

"He's had a brilliant first full season in charge, and even though they've stuttered a bit, they've found their form of late and I'm sure they'll be great at Wembley."

The ever-popular 50-year-old spent just over 13 years at Adams Park as a player, player-manager, then manager, where he achieved numerous success.

These accomplishments include winning promotion to League One as a player in 2011, taking Wycombe to the League Two play-off final in 2015, achieving automatic promotion back to the third tier in 2018, beating Oxford United in the League One play-off final to secure a place in the Championship, as well as an appearance in the League One play-off final in 2022.

However, his time at Adams Park came to an abrupt end after he joined QPR in February 2023, only to be relieved of his duties eight months later.

On his next job, he said: "I'm hoping it's not too long.

"There have been one or two opportunities that have come up but I'm not ready for them yet.

"Come the summer, I'm sure I'll be looking at getting back in [into management], and I'm sure they'll be a team that be ready to take on my style."