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SPORT

New face at the club

WYCOMBE Wanderers' goalkeeping coach Erbil Bozkurt has revealed why he decided to make the move from Queens Park Rangers.

The coach, who is of Turkish descent, spent the last five-and-a-half years with the West London outfit before joining the Chairboys at the start of February.

He replaced the outgoing Lee Harrison who departed at the back end of last year to join Matt Bloomfield at Colchester United.

Speaking to the Free Press, Bozkurt said: "It's been great so far.

"I have really enjoyed working with the goalkeepers and meeting all the other members of staff.

"It's a very tight group so that is always a positive and it's been a good first week."

On his time at the former Premier League club, he added: "I was at QPR for five years, initially working with the U21 and U23s, but in the last three-and-a-half years, I was lucky enough to work with the first team where we produced some top keepers.

"But recently, I thought it was the right time to move on and when I spoke to Gareth about my intentions, he told me about the club.

"He told me what he is doing here, what he aims to do, and what the club is about, I thought it was the right moment to join."

Royals knock out Rams

READING Under-21 beat Beaconsfield Town 2-0 to progress into the semi-final of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup.

Already the reigning champions, having beaten Ascot United in last year's final, just one more opponent stands between Noel Hunt's men and successive finals.

An Adrian Akande second-half brace secured victory, although it could have been more with the forward having good chances and Ben Purcell hitting the crossbar.

Other last-eight ties are yet to take place, with the likes of Wycombe Wanderers, MK Dons and Hungerford Town still in the competition.

Speaking to the Reading Chronicle after the match, former Royals striker Noel Hunt said: "We're very happy, I thought our boys were very good.

"From our back four all the way through I thought we pressed with a real aggression and at the right times, as often as we could.

"In the first half I thought our final pass let us down a couple of times."

Checking up on the Chairgirls



It was a busy weekend of football for the Women's team at Wycombe Wanderers as two sides won but one fell to a defeat (PA)

HERE is how the Chairgirls fared out last weekend:

Eastleigh 0-1

Wycombe

Wanderers Women

The Chairgirls secured a brilliant away win on the South Coast as they defeated Eastleigh 1-0 thanks to a Kine Anderson free-kick.

Assistant Coach Dan Weber said: "Our Player of the Match was Gemma Dunn.

"This was her league debut for the Chairgirls and she brought a calmness and maturity to the back four.

"She has been hugely influential in her short time already with Wycombe and she has a 100% winning record in her 3 games".

He continued: "This was a win we have deserved in the league for our recent performances.

"We have had a strong start to 2023 and want to take the momentum in to the last couple of league games.

"We have Bournemouth next week in the League Cup and will go there looking to put in another strong showing."

Next game is away at Bournemouth Sports on Sunday, February 19 at 2pm.

Kingsclere 1-2

Wycombe

Wanderers

Reserves

By Craig Anderson

The game started and ended with Shannon Read giving the Chairgirls the lead with a shot from just outside the box, before Molly Carter, who was returning from injury, poked home to make it 2-0 just before the break.

The next goal came from a returning Molly Carter, who was put through on goal and toe poked it into the side of the net to give Wycombe a two goal lead.

Kingsclere pulled one back but the afternoon belonged to Wycombe.

The Player of the Match was Emily Norfolk

Next game is at home vs S4K FC Berks County Ladies, February 19th at 2pm.

Ascot United 3-1

Wycombe

Wanderers Women

Under 18s

The Chairgirls were given an early scare when Ascot missed a penalty in the opening moments of the contest, but the Berkshire team put this behind them as they took a two-goal early on in the first half.

Wanderers pulled one back through Jess Fuller, who scored a fantastic goal from range, but Ascot wrapped up the win in the last few moments of the game.



The Chesham United shirts are from the 2019/20 season, and they have been sent to Ghana to help those living in Accra (Kit Aid)

Chesham's gift to those living in glorious Ghana

SEVERAL football kits belonging to a Buckinghamshire club have been donated to citizens in an African country.

Chesham United, who play their home games at the Meadow within the town, decided to give some of their 2019/20 home and away shirts to those living in Accra, Ghana.

The shirts were donated to the non-profit organization, Kit Aid, before they were sent to the West African nation at the end of January.

A spokesperson from the

charity said: "It was really pleasing to see these wonderful kits donated by our very first Ambassador Club, Chesham United, starting their journey from our frozen containers to a much warmer place in Accra, Ghana."

The shirts will be given to several local teams within the city to be used as a new kit.

Kit Aid have done several work with a number of Buckinghamshire-based football teams, which include Chesham, Beaconsfield Town, Aylesbury Vale Dynamos and Wycombe Wanderers.



Lewis Wing (pictured against Derby in September 2022) scored a brace against the Rams on February 11 at Adams Park (PA)

Two sides of Wings

LEWIS Wing's performance in Wycombe Wanderers' 3-2 victory over Derby County was another example of the midfielder's integral role in the team.

The 25-year-old has started 25 of the Chairboys' 29 league games so far this season, and has bagged seven goals.

This includes scoring a brace against the Rams on February 11, which has taken his tally to five strikes in the last six fixtures.

A forgotten man at Middlesbrough who had a nightmare spell at Sheffield Wednesday last season, Wing is once again showing his individual talent in front of the Adams Park faithful, and manager Gareth Ainsworth has revealed that

securing his services were down to the Couhig family.

Speaking after the win over Derby, which ended their 15-game unbeaten run in the league, the boss said: "Lewis Wing is a terrific player and he's above this level without a doubt.

"We're lucky to have him and he's one of the reasons why I am so grateful for the Couhigs.

"In the past, we have had to try and get youngsters or players nearing the end of their careers in.

"So to bring in a name who is very much in or around their peak, being in their mid-20s and producing amazing performances is tremendous.

"

Alan Parry's Previews: The Battle with Bolton



Wycombe take on Bolton (PA)

WITH Wycombe fans still buzzing over the sensational 3-2 win against Derby County at Adams Park, Wanderers now host another League One promotion contender when Bolton Wanderers come to town on Saturday, February 18.

Gareth Ainsworth's men produced their best performance of the season to beat Derby, and followed it up with a gritty 2-0 win at Accrington Stanley in midweek.

They have won their last four league games, but Bolton are also in great form with five wins in-a-row, including successive 5-0 hammerings of Peterborough United and MK Dons.

That impressive run has seen them move up to third place in the table, nine points ahead of Wycombe, but the Blues have two games-in-hand, making this clash even more important.

The clubs have met only five times before with Wycombe winning the first four meetings before a 3-0 defeat at Bolton in their first away game this season.

Bolton have a long and distinguished history.

Founder members of the Football League in 1888, they have appeared in no fewer than seven FA Cup finals, winning the famous trophy four times, the last in 1958.

More recently, they spent twelve seasons in the Premier League, finishing in the top eight on three occasions and qualifying to play in the UEFA Cup.

They were relegated from the top-flight in 2012 before financial problems and failures on the pitch plunged them into a downward spiral that ended with demotion to League Two, the lowest point in the club's history.

Their upturn in fortunes began with the appointment of current manager Ian Evatt. Once a no-nonsense defender for Derby, Queens Park Rangers and Blackpool, Evatt guided them to promotion in his first campaign in charge, and they finished a respectable ninth last season.

They have one of the best defences in the division and can be ruthless in attack as they showed in their last away game, a 5-0 win at Peterborough United.

Dion Charles scored a hat-trick and Ricardo Santos got two goals in Bolton's biggest away win for 22 years.

This promises to be another Adams Park classic.

Another victory for in form Wycombe



Garath McCleary (pictured against Portsmouth) scored Wycombe's second in their 2-0 win against Accrington (PA)

WYCOMBE Wanderers won for the fourth league game in a row as they defeated Accrington Stanley 2-0 at the Wham Stadium.

Josh Scowen's brilliant strike in the first half and Garath McCleary's goal in the final minute was all that separated the two sides, as the Adams Park club recorded their eighth clean sheet in 13 games.

The visitors began their trip to the North West with a flurry of chances inside the opening 15 minutes, as Brandon Hanlan forced Lukas Jensen into a brilliant save after just three minutes.

The chances kept on coming as Lews Wing fired over from range whilst Chem Campbell, who was making his first start for the club, had an attempt go just over the crossbar.

And it didn't take long for the Chairboys to get their goal as on 18 minutes, Scowen smashed home from 25-yards to give Wycombe the lead.

After Jason McCarthy's cross was deflected into the path of the former QPR man, he fired home his second of the season.

Accrington improved as the half went on but Max Stryjek produced several comfortable saves, but the hosts did beat the Polish international on 28 minutes.

Captain Sean McConville slotted home from close range, but thankfully for Wycombe, the strike was ruled out for offside.

The hosts started the second period the better side with Rosaire

By James Richings

Longelo causing the Chairboys numerous problems.

His crosses, long-range efforts and ability to beat a man led Gareth Ainsworth to change from a four at the back to a five, as Accrington showed no signs of backing down.

However, despite the possession, dangerous deliveries, and numerous attempts, Stryjek was on hand to thwart any sniff of an equaliser, as he denied Shaun Whalley, Tommy Leigh, and Longelo.

The victory was then sealed for the Chairboys in the dying embers of the game, McCleary slotted home his seventh of the campaign.

Wycombe move on to 50 points for the season, winning 15 of their 30 league games.

Attendance: 1,900

Wycombe's upcoming fixtures

Feb 18: Bolton (H)

Feb 25: Shrewsbury (A)

Feb 28: Bracknell (A)

Mar 4: Exeter (H)

Mar 7: Fleetwood (H)

Mar 11: Burton (A)

Mar 14: Bristol R (A)

Mar 18: Barnsley (H)

Mar 25: Charlton (A)

Apr 1: Milton Keynes (H)

Apr 7: Ipswich (A)

Apr 10: Forest Green (H)

Apr 15: Morecambe (A)

Apr 18: Cambridge (A)

Apr 22: Lincoln (H)

SPORT



Gareth Ainsworth was full of praise (PA)

Awesome defensive display as Wanderers win at Accrington

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth has praised the defensive display in his side's 2-0 away win at Accrington Stanley.

Goals from Josh Scowen and Garath McCleary settled the score at the Wham Stadium on Valentine's Day, as the Chairboys recorded their 15th league win of the season from their 30 games played.

The victory in the North West also saw Jordan Willis and Chem Campbell make their first starts in a Wycombe shirt, and Ainsworth was happy with the performance.

He said: "It was a really tough performance, but I am really pleased with how things are going at the moment."

"Jordan Willis came in and he hasn't played in a long time,

so when he was cramping up after half-time, this is normal when you haven't played for a while but when he was called into action, he was imperious.

In place at the Wham Stadium as Wycombe Wanderers take on Accrington Stanley in League One.

"He was replaced by Chris Forino who again was brilliant. "Chris has been in and out of

the team but today [February 14], you can see why I think he will go far."

"But everyone played their part and I do feel sorry for Jack Wakely, as he's part of the squad but we have so many good players at the moment."

"He will get his turn but I am proud of how we played."

Up next is Bolton Wanderers on February 18 at Adams Park.

Thank you for the memories, Alfie

GARETH Ainsworth has paid tribute to Alfie Mawson following the defender's retirement at the age of 29.

The news was confirmed just hours before Wycombe Wanderers' away match at Accrington Stanley was due to kick-off on February 14.

The fan favourite had been battling persistent knee injuries since 2018, and after missing the club's last seven fixtures prior to the 2-0 victory against the League One strugglers on Tuesday night, the central defender decided to call time on his playing career.

Mawson, across two spells with Wycombe, featured in 72 competitive games and scored seven goals.

Incredibly, six of those strikes were across a 15-game spell at the end of the 2014/15 season, which ultimately secured the club a place in the League Two play-off final.

However, they would go on to lose the Wembley showpiece against Southend United.

Speaking to the press after the victory over Accrington on Tuesday night, Ainsworth said: "It's such sad news."

"Time has been called on Alfie's career."

"He started at Wycombe, he finished at Wycombe, he loved football at the start, and now he loves football at the end because of Wycombe."

"I'm really happy and proud to have got some brilliant displays out of him, and play a part in his career."

"When he got called up to the England squad, I was the first

By James Richings

person he rang up to offer free tickets to.

"My son and I went to the lounge [at Wembley] and sat with his family."

"It shows how humble the Mawson family are."

"They are a credit to football, and his mum has already said that she will continue to support Wycombe even if Alfie is not playing."

"I also think Alfie will continue to have an affiliation with Wycombe."

Speaking on his decision, Mawson added: "I will always be a Wycombe fan."

"I don't want to just say goodbye and leave, because I owe this club so much and I will miss the boys."

"Words can't do this club justice and what the staff have built here is incredible."

"I want to stay amongst the boys and be a shoulder to lean on and offer advice and knowledge."

"I knew this day was going to come – it's just sooner than I had hoped. But there's a lot worse things going on in the world and that makes you realise that at the end of the day, it's a job."

"I've loved it and it's been a hell of a journey."

"I've dedicated my life to it and I'll be forever grateful to the people that helped make that possible."

Mawson's last match in a Wanderers shirt was the 1-0 victory over Ipswich Town on December 17, 2022 at Adams Park.



Alfie Mawson confirmed his retirement on February 14 (PA)



Gareth Ainsworth (PA)

Changes made at the back

GARETH Ainsworth has revealed that the defensive changes in Wycombe's 2-0 away victory at Accrington Stanley 'had to be made' in order to secure the victory.

After Josh Scowen put the Chairboys a goal up on 18 minutes, the hosts began to take control of the match and enjoyed numerous space on the left flank.

Most notably, Rosaire Longelo caused club captain Joe Jacobson several problems before Ainsworth altered his back line near the hour mark from a four to a five.

New signings Jordan Willis and Chem Campbell were replaced by Chris Forino and Jordan Obita respectively, which allowed Jacobson to slot alongside the latter in a five-man defence with Jason McCarthy and Gack Grimmer.

Ainsworth said: "The players will have Wednesday off and they will come in later on Thursday as we're now getting to the stage where we are playing three games a week."

"We have Bolton on Saturday which will be another huge game and all these fixtures in quick succession does take its toll on the players."

On the win against Accrington Stanley, which was Wanderers' fourth in a row, Ainsworth added: "I'm proud of the boys and I thought the changes had to be made at the time because of how Accrington were coming at us."

"We knew that this was going to happen, and we knew that they were going to come at us to find a goal."