

Bucks Free Press

Friday, May 3, 2024

Covering Wycombe, South Bucks, Chilterns and Aylesbury since 1856

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Killer who stabbed man 38 times is jailed for life



Tragedy of boarder's detention fear death



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Panic as fire rages on

Blaze at housing site leaves villagers choking

By Isabella Perrin

A FIRE at a building site has been raging for a week - sparking widespread concerns about the impact on residents.

The blaze, which started last Thursday in Amersham Road in Hazlemere, has flooded the village with plumes of thick smoke, leaving villagers - including young children - choking.

Piles of waste at Bellway Homes' Penwood Grange development have now been burning for seven days, with neighbours fearful about health implications.

Susan Jamson told the Free Press: "My disabled daughter is choking. Nothing burns for seven days and the government guidelines say a fire should be put out in four hours. We just want to know what this is."

The fire service say Bellway Homes is 'managing' the fire and needs to remove the piles of smouldering rubble.

Full story: Page 3



Tony Antonio's garden backs onto the site of the fire



ercol
OUTLET

Late Night Shopping Event

Monday 13th May 16:30 - 19:30

Celebrate the start of our May Sale with refreshments at our Princes Risborough showroom

Sale ends 17th May 2024
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Win a Pebble
Nest of 2 Tables
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Redeem a raffle ticket with every £300 spent in the late night event

Sport

SPORT: RACING

Go-karter, 12, faces championship bout

AN electrical wholesalers in Aylesbury has announced it'll continue to sponsor a 12-year-old local go-kart sensation.

Grant & Stone, which has a two building sites, an electrical outlet, a plumber service and kitchen/bathroom showroom in the South Bucks town, will help Hallie Findlater as she embarks on another season competing in the UK IKR Championship.

Hallie first began karting when she was four years old, started racing at the age of five, and competed in the British Kart

Championship in the bambino class at seven years old.

Turning 12 this year, she has transitioned to the Honda Cadet 200 class and is one of only two girls competing in her category.

She secured an impressive seventh place finish out of 30 competitors in last year's UK IKR Championship.

The championship takes place across the UK between March and November with drivers competing in nine rounds of races on six different circuits.

Grant & Stone's sponsorship helps to maintain Hallie's kart and covers the cost of her competing in every race.

Hallie said: "A lot of my friends do dancing or gymnastics, but I love racing and being able to compete equally against boys."

Greg Taylor, Branch Manager at Grant & Stone Electrical Wholesalers in Aylesbury, added: "At Grant & Stone, we take pride in supporting young talent within our community, and we're thrilled to continue our sponsorship of Hallie."



Hallie Findlater in action

TEAM ENGLAND CHEERLEADING

Holmer Green sisters win gold medals in America

By Isabella Perrin

TWO teenagers from Holmer Green won gold medals with Team England at the cheerleading world championships, astonishingly beating the USA on their home soil.

Jelena and Arianna Ljubisic attend Beaconsfield High School and are part of the Chilterns Cheetahs club based at the same school.

Their victorious team included fellow Cheetahs Laila Southgate from Chalfont St Giles and Sky Andrew from Wraysbury.

Competing against teams from around the globe, they secured their victory in the Youth All Girl Advanced category.

The young athletes have only been involved in cheerleading for less than five years, having previously been gymnastics aficionados.

The latter sport, perceived as disciplined and individualistic, lacked the frequent competitions, energetic team spirit and fun they were craving for.

Their dad Marko Ljubisic said: "While attending gymnastics lessons at their local gym, they discovered the cheerleading side filled with addictive energetic music, team-work, lively stunts and dance routines."

"As a result, Jelena and Arianna decided to make a decisive shift to cheerleading during the summers of 2019 and 2020 respectively."

"Jelena took up the role of a 'base' and tumbler in cheer routines while younger Arianna became a 'flyer', a role typically filled by the smaller or younger team members to complete stunts while being hoisted up high by their teammates."

Before being selected for Team

England, they underwent a gruelling two-day trial last October.

The process saw hundreds of cheerleaders from across the country compete for around 70 available team slots.

Their unwavering dedication went beyond regular training sessions; on top of their four times a week club training with the Chilterns Cheetahs, the cheerleading sisters also managed additional training with their Team England teammates, attending local practices, and taking further training during the Christmas, February half-term and Easter holidays.

Returning from the USA on Monday, April 29, the sisters' excitement reportedly matched the community's shared joy at their groundbreaking victory, affirming that their journey to becoming world champions was not only an individual achievement but one that galvanises their local community in Holmer Green.

Proud dad Marko conveyed his feelings, adding: "Caroline and I are so incredibly proud of their hard work and dedication which has ended up with them becoming not only international athletes but World Champions!"

"The most pleasing aspect is they've completed this incredible journey together as sisters."

This momentous achievement in the world of cheerleading signals new beginnings for the sport in the UK, with Jelena and Arianna at the forefront.



Holmer Green sisters with their parents in Orlando

CHARITY

Wheelchair user aims for 200km in May

A paralysed mum and her daughter are aiming to push and run 400km during May to raise vital funds for spinal research.

Book publisher Sally Poulson's life changed in an instant 14 years ago when she suffered a spinal stroke - and in a matter of hours became a full time wheelchair user.

"I was driving to pick my son up from Scouts and my legs suddenly went a bit dead and I started to feel unwell. Within 10 minutes of getting back home I couldn't move my legs and we were heading to hospital," said Sally from Chearsley near Thame.

"Part of the cartilage in one of my discs had come away and, unusually, had lodged between my spine and spinal cord causing a spinal stroke. You're twice as likely to win the Euro Millions as you are for this to happen to you."

"Nothing prepares anyone for such a life changing situation and the effect it has on you as a person, your family and friends. Being told you will never walk again feels like a life sentence and propels you into a world full of challenges just to live a life that most people are blessed to take for granted."

Before her stroke Sally, 59, was a fitness fan and keen runner. But it took her a long time after her injury to find the confidence and the opportunity to return to decent exercise. During Covid she began more active wheeling and is now joining her daughter Emily on their marathon May fundraising challenge.

Sally is aiming to complete 200km in her wheelchair while Emily will run 200km. The amazing mother and daughter duo aim to raise thousands for Spinal Research, the leading UK charity funding research into new treatments for spinal cord injury.

Sally added: "I was delighted that my daughter has caught the running bug too we're really want to raise as much as possible to create a little more hope for others like me who suffer spinal cord injuries. This world is not really designed for wheelchair users and only pushing on with research can we open up opportunities for improvements in our lives."

The mother-of-two has continued to travel all over the world in her role as Managing Director of children's publisher Priddy Books. And, while she will complete most of the 200km on accessible routes near her home, Sally is also planning to clock up some miles during a work visit to New York in mid-May.

Emily, 27, will be running mostly around her home in Bath and hopes her Mum will be able to join her on a couple of routes. "It will definitely be a challenge for us both to do 50K a week but it's a lovely thing for us to do together. And for such a great cause."

Louisa McGinn, Spinal Research Chief Executive, said: "Sally is an inspiration and it's brilliant that she and her amazing daughter have come up with a fundraising challenge they can do together."

"We're in touching distance of functional restoring treatments for people paralysed after a spinal cord injury."

GYMNASTICS

Aylesbury gymnast to miss Paris Olympics



Onidine Achampong

BRITISH Olympic gymnastics medal hopeful Onidine Achampong looks set to miss this summer's Games after tearing her anterior cruciate ligament.

The 20-year-old was part of the women's team that won silver at the 2022 World Championships, alongside team golds at the 2023 European Championships and the Commonwealth Games in 2022, where she also claimed two individual silvers.

The Aylesbury Gymnastics Academy athlete took home four titles at the British Championships earlier this year and was on the cusp of her first Olympic team selection, but now faces a long journey back to competition fitness.

She revealed her injury on Instagram, writing: "As most of you know I had to pull out of the European Championships earlier this week."

"I landed a bars dismount at one of our final control competitions at Lilleshall and following an MRI scan it was discovered that I've torn my ACL. I feel devastated.

"My competition preparation has been so positive all year and I really felt as ready as I could possibly be leading up to this summer.

"I wanted to share this news today – well ahead of the women's European Champs starting – to answer any speculation so that the girls in Italy can fully focus on having an incredible competition later this week, I'll be cheering my girls on from home."

South Devon's Abigail Martin, making her major senior championship debut, was previously announced as Achampong's replacement at this week's European Championships, with the team selection panel set to convene in May and announce the Paris-bound squad in early June.

FOOTBALL

Double trouble for Chesham as Generals

IT was another busy weekend for Chesham United's senior teams as The Generals travelled to Gosport Borough and the women's team were at home to Norwich City Women FC in the FA Women's National League, writes Andrew Westlake.

The men's team rounded off their Championship season with a third consecutive defeat but still finished nine points clear at the top. The game could have finished with many more than six goals, but still provided great entertainment for a large crowd.

Chesham made five changes to the starting eleven – Avan Jones, Alex Lafleur, Ryan Upward, Ogo Obi and James Harding came in for Lewis Rolfe, Steve Brown, Jack Connors, Bradley Clayton and Ricardo German. Kieran Murphy also made his 200th start for the club on his last appearance before retirement.

Chesham made a bright start against a Gosport team

who were looking for a win to improve their play-off position. Chesham made the breakthrough after 9 minutes as Jordan Edwards seized on a loose pass inside the Gosport half and fired a shot into the roof of the net. 10 minutes later and Gosport's Danny Hollands forced the ball over the line from a corner to equalise.

On 24' Dan Wooden gave Gosport the lead again with chances continuing to come and go at both ends in a very lively first 45! It was Chesham's Eoin Casey who then scored with a headed corner to level the scores at 2-2 - Chesham's 100th goal of the season in all competitions. However, there was to be one more twist before half-time when Harvey Rew won the ball in the Chesham half and set up Rafael Ramos who fired into the top corner of the net to make it 3-2 to Gosport.

Things calmed down in the second half although Chesham continued to create

lots of great opportunities. Ricardo German and James Harding came close but it was the home team that prevailed with a deciding 4th goal in the 95th minute with the tie ending 4-2 to Gosport Borough.

Chesham United will now prepare for the new season in National League South.

Elsewhere Chesham United FC Women welcomed Norwich City Women FC to Chesham. Norwich, are unbeaten in the league this season without securing promotion (AFC Wimbledon will be going up). They were a very strong and organised outfit and it showed on the day. Due to heavy overnight rain the match was moved to Chiltern Hills Academy and Norwich came out comfortable 1-6 winners on the day with Chesham's goal coming from Becky Fraser. With Norwich receiving a £200k cash boost in the last few weeks they will be a force to be reckoned with next season!

The next game at The Mead-



Picture: Richard S. Brown, all rights reserved

Glory on the court as cup final win is secured

MILTON Keynes took the epic third match-up between them and Team Solent Kestrels, beating the South coasters, 86-68, to seal NBL Division Two glory.

For two teams who topped the league's scoring charts this season and combined for 200 points in their previous meeting last month, this clash lacked that offensive might as both teams shot below 40% from the floor.

Still, it was South champions MK

who we left standing tall come the final buzzer thanks to a standout one-two punch from Chris Tawiah and Jordan Spencer.

Either would have been a worthy MVP selection but it was Spencer's triple-double of 26 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists that got the nod over the forward's 21/15 double-double.

As well as the league and playoff title, the Breakers became the first team from outside NBL Division One to win the NBL National Cup since

1973 this season.

Breakers' Head Coach Billy Beddow-Patel, said: "I feel amazing. The crowd going crazy at the start gave us a real boost to keep pushing.

"The [National] Cup took it out of us this year, and the one goal was the league and when we got that we almost felt relieved. And then you try and find the second, third gear to push for [the their third title].

"It was a beautiful derby everytime we played [Team Solent Kestrels].

Matt Guymon's an awesome coach; we always knew it was going to be tactical playing them and we weren't just going to come out and play hard the whole time.

On what's next for the Breakers, Beddow-Patel, who is also a GB Basketball junior age group coach said: "Summer. Cuddle our children and kiss our wives and have a little rest. And then get training again. We want to put on a show in [National Basketball League] Division One."

FOOTBALL

Helping save the FA Cup

WYCOMBE Wanderers are one of several teams across the English football pyramid to sign an open letter following the soon-to-be changes for next year's FA Cup.

It was announced in April that the world's oldest football competition would undergo a revamp, in which replays from the first round will be scrapped.

In addition to this, fixtures in the cup will only take place on weekends, which includes the fifth round.

The latter has been played on a weekday for the past five campaigns.

However, the alterations were met with universal criticism across many teams from the Football League, as the move was only discussed with the 20 Premier League sides at the Football Association.

Following the news, many teams, which included Wanderers, have signed a letter to the Culture Secretary, Lucy Frazer, about how the Premier League 'influenced' this decision.

An extract of the letter reads: "The Premier League's influence in this decision is yet another example of football's growing divide that has seen the gaps between and within divisions grow at all levels - this decision needs to be overturned."

RUGBY

Wycombe U12's sign off with three trophies

WYCOMBE U12s sign-off their season with trophy number three!

At what was a cold and blustery Aylesbury Festival, High Wycombe Rugby's U12 boys finished their season off in style with their third trophy.

Wycombe started the day with a dominant win over a strong Banbury side, followed by a penalty-laden draw with Beaconsfield.

Two further wins against Fullerians and hosts, Aylesbury, saw Wycombe top their group to make it through to the final against Buckingham.

The final was a tightly contested affair, which Wycombe eventually won 2 tries to 1. Overall, thanks to some resolute defending and pace in attack, the team finished the day having scored 17 tries and conceded only 3.

Sport

RUGBY

Old Saltesians 28 Beaconsfield 29

A few injuries and availability issues meant a last minute rejig of the Beaconsfield squad that travelled up to Birmingham for round two of the Papa John's Cup.

The best laid plans were then further blown off course as Beaconsfield's talismanic flyhalf, prayer coach and playmaker Aled Lewis had to depart after an early contact. Old Saltesians dominated the opening exchanges, taking a quick two try lead from a long range interception and a very impressive solo effort from their full-back.

But co-captains Henry Revill and Rhys Amos then very effectively rallied the troops, and tries soon followed from the ever effervescent scrumhalf Alex Spring and the ubiquitous flanker Tom Rendell, bringing the half time score to 14 10.

The hosts were resurgent after the break, and a couple of missed tackles out wide saw them score again to increase their lead. The match was proving to be the sternest challenge of the season, a long way from home, and Beaconsfield not

performing at their best. However, Beaconsfield rallied a second time, lead time and again by the inspirational and tireless burly Kiwi loose-head, Braiden Broughan.

The lighter but fitter Beaconsfield pack began to wear down the hosts, and a slew of quick ruck ball and powerful carries opened up the space for winger Sam Mark to dance over in the corner. Confidence, and handling, improved, and Beaconsfield's trade-mark willingness to trade-run anywhere paid off, with



Tom Rendell.Pic Richard Gommio

ROWING

Great Britain win four golds at rowing championships

TWO-TIME Olympic champion Helen Glover revealed that her fifth European gold was the most composed she has ever felt in a boat.

The rower combined with Rebecca Shorten, Sam Redgrave and Esme Booth to deliver a dominant performance in Szeged, Hungary.

This was the mum-of-three's first major title since returning to the British Rowing Team last year to target a fourth Olympics at Paris 2024.

"Gold was definitely what we were after, but it was also the most composed I've ever felt in a race," she said. "I've got a lot of confidence in our crew, and I had this sense that it was still a learning progress and even mid-race I thought, 'this is interesting in terms of the big picture.'"

"Having said that, you're still in a race to win it and it was nice being able to play around in different ways and be confident in winning.

"It was about making sure we were solid enough in the middle that we could do our own thing for the rest of the race."

Upon Glover's return, the women's four experimented with combinations in 2023, winning European silver and World Championship bronze. It now looks radically different from the crew that were crowned world champions in 2022, with Heidi Long and Rowan McKellar no longer in the boat.

With Booth, who doubled up in the pair and the eight last season, stepping in the four looks to have found its swing having claimed World Cup gold in Varese earlier this month.

The constantly shifting wind made for a very tough challenge

By Megan Armitage

on Hungarian waters with lanes having to be redrawn in the final Championship regatta before the Games.

The British quartet were able to turn the tables on Romania who beat them in a sprint finish at last year's Europeans, winning this time by more than 1.5 seconds.

"It's such a new crew that all races are going to be significant," she added.

"Varese was super significant in drawing a line in the sand and today has been significant in referencing last year when the Romanians went through us in the last 500.

"Moving onto the next race is going to be a big learning moment as more nations come in and people step up.

"I'm really excited that we are new and still have so much to learn."

Glover's gold was matched by Withiel rower Morgan Bolding.

Bolding, who was a reserve for the Tokyo Olympics, made it three European titles on the trot as part of the formidable GB men's eight.

Bolding joined forces with Sholto Carnegie, Rory Gibbs, Jacob Dawson, Charles Elwes, Tom Digby, James Rudkin, Tom Ford, and coxswain Harry Brightmore to take gold.

The GB Rowing Team enjoyed a fantastic weekend overall and finished top of the medal table with eight golds, one silver and one bronze.

Glover, Bolding and the GB Rowing Team will race once more before the Olympics at the World Cup in Lucerne in May.



Women's four. Pic by Benedict Tufnell

RUNNING

Woman completes London Marathon

A FLACKWELL Heath woman ran the London Marathon beating her target of £2,500.

Jasmine Boffin ran the London Marathon on April 21 for Helen & Douglas House children's hospice. She has raised an amazing £2,838 for the charity.

Jasmine decided to take on this challenge to raise money for Helen & Douglas House because of the wonderful care they gave Charlie, her brother, and the rest of her family.

Jasmine said "I have had the privilege of spending time at Helen & Douglas House with my brother Charlie, as well as working with them professionally as part of my job as a nurse at the John Radcliffe Hospital, so I have experienced first-hand the incredible work they do.

"My younger brother, Charlie, has a rare form of muscular dystrophy called Muscle Eye Brain Disease which he has had since birth.

"Now 23, Charlie is the happiest, liveliest young man who lives life to the full. Despite requiring 24/7 care, Charlie loves going out to safari parks, watching pantomimes and dancing along to Disney songs.

"We were introduced to Helen & Douglas House many years ago and it changed our lives. Charlie was able to go and stay at the hospice for respite, and we were allowed to stay with him too. He received the most exceptional care during his stays at Helen & Douglas House and he loved his time there. He has countless happy memories including late-night ice cream shop trips, splashing the staff in the spa and even answering office phone calls.

"Charlie still remembers the big red front door and we fondly remember walking through that door and instantly relaxing. Helen & Douglas House gave us a chance to create memories as a family without worrying about Charlie's care needs as the incredible team at Helen & Douglas House took care of everything.

"I have also been fortunate enough to work with Helen & Douglas House in a professional capacity by taking my patients and their families so they are able to spend incredibly valuable final days and weeks together. The work they do to support the whole family during this incredible difficult time is exceptional and allows families to create precious memories."

As a newbie runner, it wasn't easy for Jasmine but it was a "huge personal achievement for her" to take part.

She said: "Running the London Marathon 2024 was a massive challenge for me. "Although this was a huge personal achievement, raising money and awareness for this incredible charity is a honour.

"I cannot give enough thanks and appreciation for everything Helen & Douglas House have done for my family, and many other families I know. Any donations allows them to continue their amazing work and support many families in the future.

Julia Woodcock from Helen & Douglas House said "I would like to say a massive thank you to Jasmine for running the London Marathon this year."

ROWING

Marlow rower makes it to Olympics



Men's eight. Pic by Benedict Tufnell

MARLOW rower Rory Gibbs is poised to take a final step onto the Olympic podium at Paris 2024 after making it three European titles on the trot, writes Tom Harle.

Gibbs is on a redemption mission after finishing fourth as part of the men's four on Olympic debut at Tokyo 2020.

Now in the eight, the Bucks star joined forces with Sholto Carnegie, Jacob Dawson, Morgan Bolding, Charles Elwes, Tom Digby, James Rudkin, Tom Ford, and coxswain Harry Brightmore for yet another gold in Szeged, Hungary.

But Gibbs underlines that it will all count for naught unless they cross the line first in the French capital.

"It's never going to be enough until we take the last stroke of the most important race of the summer," he said.

"We're always striving for more and striving

to go quicker.

"We've got to believe, if we're not striving to win then what's the point in doing this."

The constantly shifting wind made for a very tough challenge on Hungarian waters but the British crew were the class of the field, holding off long-time rivals Germany to claim victory by around 2.5 seconds.

"We knew it was going to be tough racing this time," said Dawson.

"The Germans are hungry and want to right their wrongs from the last few years and it was very clear that Romania wanted to make a big push at these championships.

"It was about sticking to the plan and not getting flustered by what they threw at us."

The GB Rowing Team enjoyed a fantastic weekend overall and finished top of the medal table with eight golds, one silver and one bronze.

SQUASH

High Wycombe's squash star and national player

WHAT a great 6 months for Wycombe Squash and Racketball Club's (WRSC) very own national level player, Emily Coulcher-Porter, writes Ian Lee.

Emily won the British U17's squash title in November, the English U17's title in February and then gained a place and played at the European U19 championships in Romania in March.

These achievements, combined with her consistency and constant effort also saw her win the 2024 England Squash's Rising Start (Female) Award.

More locally she plays U17 squash for Buckinghamshire and is a key member of the Wycombe men's team – giving other members the chance to watch high quality games played in Emily's unusual ambidextrous style – swapping her racket from left to right hand and generally astounding people who see

her play for first time.

That is a great list of achievements but her passion for squash, and girls sport more generally, goes far deeper.

Emily loves squash – loves playing a sport that is a little out of the ordinary and one that she can really make a mark in. But she is also active in sharing her passion with others.

Known as 'the squash girl' at school she set about helping others find a love for the sport. As part of her Duke of Edinburgh award Emily set up a squash club at school, taught her fellow students how to play and even got teams together for the U16 and U18 national school championships. The best bit though, was the smile on her friends' faces as they progressed from barely having heard of squash, never having hit a ball with a racket through



Emily (left) playing squash

to winning their first games – "Seeing people enjoying exercise and the confidence they gain from learning to play a new

game is a great feeling"

While natural talent may be necessary, it also needs the right environment in which to grow and to

thrive. WSRC has proven to be that environment for Emily and she extends her thanks to the whole club for getting behind her.

Reaction after final day win over Charlton

FOLLOWING Wycombe Wanderers' home victory against Charlton Athletic on April 27, here is what both managers had to say.

A Luke Leahy penalty in the seventh minute secured a 1-0 win for the Chairboys on the season's final day, as the Adams Park side ended the campaign in 10th place – their fifth-highest finish since forming in 1887.

The game was the final time Wanderers fans saw Joe Jacobson,

who played his 400th game for the club, along with Dale Taylor and Nigel Lonwijk in a Wycombe shirt, whilst Freddie Potts and Gideon Kodua will also depart Adams Park this summer.

Jacobson leaves after 10 years of service, whilst the other four are on loan from Premier League sides. Here are Matt Bloomfield's thoughts:

On the season

"We wanted to evolve this season

and change, but we knew it was going to be hard.

"It has been clunky at times but it was good to see how we've finished the campaign.

"This is one of the highest finishes for our club's history so we need to be proud of that.

"There were some depths where we had to test ourselves, so to show that resilience throughout the year, to get to a Wembley final but lose in the final minute due to a miss hit

cross was tough, but we learnt a lot and we'll continue to learn."

On Jacobson's departure

"We are in the top six if the season started in January and this is pleasing for me.

"What JJ has done for this club

over the last 10 years has been nothing short of exceptional. "He has contributed to a lot of our recent success – it was just a shame he couldn't score from a corner!"

FOOTBALL

400 and out for Jacobson

JOE Jacobson made his 400th and final appearance for Wycombe Wanderers as the Chairboys defeated Charlton Athletic 1-0 at Adams Park.

There was a party-like atmosphere in South Buckinghamshire with both sides not in danger of relegation, and not in the hunt for promotion on the season's final day.

And it was Wanderers who started the game at an electrifying pace as they took an early lead.

Richard Kone, who has become a fan favourite since his move from Non League Athletic Newham in January, was tripped by Terrell Thomas and referee Elliott Bell had no option but to point to the spot.

Up stepped Luke Leahy who converted with ease to secure his 12th of the campaign, with it being his 11th in the league.

Wanderers should have doubled their lead as Harry Isted did well to deny Chris Forino, Jack Grimmer and Dale Taylor, whilst Charlton hit the through a Lewis Fiorini free-kick.

Wycombe end the season in 10th whilst the Addicks end the campaign in 17th.

FOOTBALL

Jones not happy with showing at Adams Park

CHARLTON manager Nathan Jones admitted that his side's showing against Wycombe Wanderers on the final day of the season was 'poor'.

He said: "Initially, we played OK but old habits came back and when they had their first attack, we dived in as we were lazy with our defending.

"We gave them the start and once they go ahead, they're very hard to break down.

"They slow the game down and do that really well as they're good at what they do.

"That's not a criticism of Wycombe, it's just what happens.

"We needed to generate flow but we didn't have that quality in the final third.

"Other than hitting the bar in the second half, we didn't show enough and we didn't have an end product.

"They had more nous than us and it showed."

"Overall, we were poor."

SPORT

0963-2336



Fantastic Freddie says farewell to the Wycombe fans



Freddie Potts scored twice for Wycombe this season (PA)

FORMER Wycombe Wanderers midfielder Freddie Potts has said he'll 'never forget his time at the club', following an impressive season at Adams Park.

The 20-year-old, who joined the Chairboys on loan from West Ham United, played 43 times and scored two goals in his maiden campaign in men's football, in which he was named the club's Young Player of the Year, along with the Supporter's Player of the Year.

His efforts were recognised at the recent End of Season dinner on April

25.

He had been expected to feature in the club's final game of the campaign against Charlton Athletic on April 27 but didn't make the matchday squad due to injury.

Speaking at half-time in Wanderers' 1-0 victory over the Addicks, Potts said: "It's a massive honour [to win the supporter's player of the season, especially with it being my first full season in men's football.

"I've loved every minute and a trip to Wembley was a huge bonus.

"I'll never forget my time at

Wycombe."

"It's been a great year."

Potts featured in 20 victories out of the 43 matches he played, with the central midfielder also missing roughly two months of the season.

During this period, Wanderers suffered their joint-worst run of league form since joining the EFL in 1993, as they went 12 games without a victory.

Many pundits and fans suggested the absence of Potts in the centre of Wanderers' midfield contributed to the poor run.

BBC 3 Counties Wycombe

commentator, Sam Avery, said:

"Watching Freddie Potts this season has been nothing short of joyful.

"He plays with such experience at a young age and has a bright future ahead of him.

"Technically brilliant, defensively assured and can simply run a game on his own terms... at 20 years old."

Both of Potts' goals for Wycombe came away from home – the first was in a 3-1 loss at Charlton on September 23, with the second being in a 4-1 away thrashing of Fleetwood on October 7.

Boardroom member Pete Couhig retires

By James Richings

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed that Sporting Director Pete Couhig has stepped away from his boardroom duties at the club.

The American has been involved with the Chairboys since 2019 following the Couhig takeover, which has seen the Adams Park side reach three Wembley finals in five seasons, which includes a year in the Championship.

He was often seen in the town meeting fans and locals and was a regular cheerleader for the club during their year in the second tier, which was played behind closed doors due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

During his time at Wycombe, Couhig played a huge role in creating the club's development squad which saw the likes of Anis Mehmeti, Al Al-Hamadi, Chri Forino and Jasper Pattenden come through the ranks.

His uncle, Rob, who is also Wanderers' CEO, told the Wanderers website: "On a personal note, I have observed how much Pete and his family have sacrificed for the betterment of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club including living almost 18 months apart from his family during the Covid era.

"The Club, the supporters, players, and staff will miss his talent, energy, and enthusiasm.

"Much of Wycombe's success on and off the pitch is directly the result of Pete's work with the Club.

"Thank you Pete and also to Finney, Anna Reese, Buster, and Mac for sharing Pete with Wycombe."

In an open letter to the Wycombe fans, Pete said: "Dear Wycombe, it's time for me to retire.

"I have truly enjoyed my time

working with Wycombe Wanderers but after five of the most successful years in the history of the Club, it's time to move on.

"Before I say anything, I want to thank my family, Finney, Anna Reese, Buster and Mac have sacrificed an incredible amount over the past five years.

"To be brutally honest, without their support I would have been gone a long time ago.

"And I want to thank Rob for being crazy and getting us into the most insane business I have ever been involved in and giving me pretty much free rein to run the football side of things.

"I don't think anyone in our family would believe how well we work together, although Missy may vouch for it.

"But we do and I have enjoyed it greatly.

"Thank you Rob and Missy.

"This has been a great ride.

"My goal with everything I'm involved in is to leave it better than it was before I got there and I think it's pretty obvious we've done that here.

"The positive results on the field are too many to list so what I want to focus on is The Wycombe Way.

"I was lucky we found a club whose soul and approach to the beautiful game matched my approach to business and life.

"I was always the little guy, an underdog in most situations, and every great moment and success in my life was created through a very similar team-family hard-working approach I found under Gareth Ainsworth and that now continues with Matt Bloomfield."



Pete Couhig (right), pictured with manager Matt Bloomfield (left) has been on the Wycombe board since 2019 (WWFC)

Chairboys linked with Scottish left-back

WYCOMBE Wanderers remain interested in signing Dunfermline Athletic left-back Josh Edwards.

The 23-year-old defender has played 44 times for the Pars this season, in which he was named in Scottish Championship Team of the Year.

It's the second consecutive campaign that the Scotsman has been included in the best 11, with the ex-Airdrieonians player being included in the League One Team of the Year for the 2022/23 season.

However, Edwards' positive displays have gathered the attention of various other clubs across the EFL, with Wanderers' League One rivals in Blackpool and Barnsley also being interested.

According to the Daily Record, Barnsley 'failed' with a six-figure bid in the January window to secure the services of Edwards, whilst Oxford United, Wanderers' Thames Valley neighbours, remain interested.

Dunfermline manager, James McPake, told Press Sport: "I don't know how reliable they are (reports).

"I'm certainly aware of them but I've no interest in that."

Wanderers are looking for a new left-back following several departures this summer.

Long-lasting full-back Joe Jacobson will leave Adams Park after 400 games in 10 years, whilst Saxon Earley, who joined on loan from Plymouth Argyle in January, failed to make a single appearance for the Chairboys due to injury.

Wycombe started the campaign with Harry Boyes at left-back, but the on loan Sheffield United man departed in January to sign for Fleetwood Town, who suffered relegation back to League Two.

Luke Leahy, also played left-back this year, despite scoring 12 goals for the club in his maiden season in Buckinghamshire.