

Monday 20th
February 2023

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

All the news from Roundwood ahead of this weekend's match action against Sunderland



Matt Taylor

On what he liked and what he didn't in the Coventry performance...

"We liked the first half performance. That warrants a goal or certainly more chances. The goal seemed to take the stuffing out of us early in that second half and then we're forced to chase the game.

"We like probably belief in our execution and confidence within that. We had some good opportunities to put the ball in dangerous areas and it didn't materialise.

"In the second half, we couldn't have any more attacking players on the pitch and we really went for it. We fell foul to the second goal trying to chase the game.

"It was a disappointing end but there were plenty of positives to take. We had 40 opportunities to get balls and entries into the opposition box. We did that 20-plus times but within those only a handful were good moments for us.

"Cast your mind back to Jordan's header and the set piece goal which was disallowed.

"In terms of the intent and the structure of the team, I was quite pleased."



Matt Taylor looks on at Saturday's game with Coventry City at AESSEAL New York Stadium.



Jordan Hugill is still on the hunt for his first Millers goal but is improving week-on-week according to boss Matt Taylor

Matt Taylor

On Jordan Hugill's fitness and hunt for a first goal...

"That could have been Saturday [his first goal] but it wasn't.

"Hopefully it will be tomorrow night. Jordan has a responsibility but so have the team.

"It's not just up to Jordan, it's up to all of our attacking players. When we got Georgie Kelly and Tom Eaves on the pitch at the end we wanted crosses into the box, but not just any crosses, crosses with a bit of quality and to be as close to the opposition goal as we can get that ball.

"We have to keep on improving each other's games and Jordan does a fantastic job from box-to-box, but as with all centre forwards, you're recognised and rewarded with goals, but I'm sure they'll come for him.

"I think the last couple of games we've seen a marked improvement on the back of a bit of an illness as well.

"It wasn't only a lack of game time. He's looked fresher, brighter and like he has more energy within his body and now we're at a point where I think we can look to keep him on in games for longer periods of time.

"He's a focal point of our team, but there are a lot of other players we need to keep on getting right."

Last Meeting
Sunderland 3 v 0 Rotherham

Wednesday 31st August 2022

The hosts ran out as comfortable victors in this late August meeting between the sides at the Stadium of Light. Ross Stewart's brace was added to by Jack Clarke as the Black Cats recorded all three points in the North East.

Last Five Results
Sunderland

W D W W D

Loch Ness Drogha sidelined
The latest updates
Sunderland's Scottish ace Ross Stewart won't be available for the game at AESSEAL New York Stadium

Matt Taylor

On facing an in-form Sunderland side... and trying to take the game to them here on home soil...

"They're a fantastic side. They've invested well and recruited well and got some good players for the level.

"They have a couple of loans in there as well who have certainly improved them.

"We're at home and we have to make the running. We have to put them under pressure. We know their style and what they'll want to do when they come to our pitch. We have to make it 'our pitch' like we did for the first half on Saturday.

"We put a good team [Coventry] on the back foot. We just couldn't quite break through them. We have to try and do the same to Sunderland.

"It feels off the end of the last game and on the back of two losses that we could be in such a different position because the last six or seven games the performance levels have greatly improved from where they were, but we always want a point return.

"We have to believe we can compete and show that. We have to be at our best if we're going to take anything from any game at any level.

"We have to make sure we're fully charged and not only energised, but executing our game plan and our quality moments.

"The fine margins that any games comes down to are just costing us at the moment at both ends of the pitch, but generally, from box-to-box, we're structurally pretty good at the moment."



Sunderland celebrate their goal at the weekend and arrive in South Yorkshire in fine form



The Millers boss says that it will be important the share the workload amongst the squad in this busy schedule of fixtures

On sharing the workload to keep the squad fresh...

"I think physically as the second half went on on Saturday you could see the demands of the league taking it's toll.

"Some of those players haven't played three games in a week for a little while.

"It was our lowest physical output for several games and that wasn't for the want of trying.

"They just didn't have it in their bodies.

"Some are certainly on the edge, both injury and fatigue-wise. We have to try and get some energy back on the pitch in certain areas.

"Some players will move in and out of the team - not rotation-wise just in terms of selection for each and every game.

"We have to find a way - certainly in our home games - of maintaining a certain energy."

Matt Taylor

On finding ways to take points after going behind in games...

"I think we have to keep improving the belief within the group. It wasn't a game where we just defended our box and camped in our half of the pitch.

"Their centre halves and the goalkeeper probably didn't get their kits dirty enough and they weren't overworked or physically asked questions of.

"We have to find ways of improving that output and that's something we're aware of.

"At any level - especially Championship level, it is very difficult to chase a game and to break a team down when they're camped in.

"It's something we have to improve and I think in my time in coming to the club we've got two, possibly three equalisers under our belts so to speak. We have to improve that ratio because when we do go behind in games, we have to believe we can get back into them."



Matt Taylor has called on his side to have a 'belief' they can get back into the game after going behind in the Sky Bet Championship