

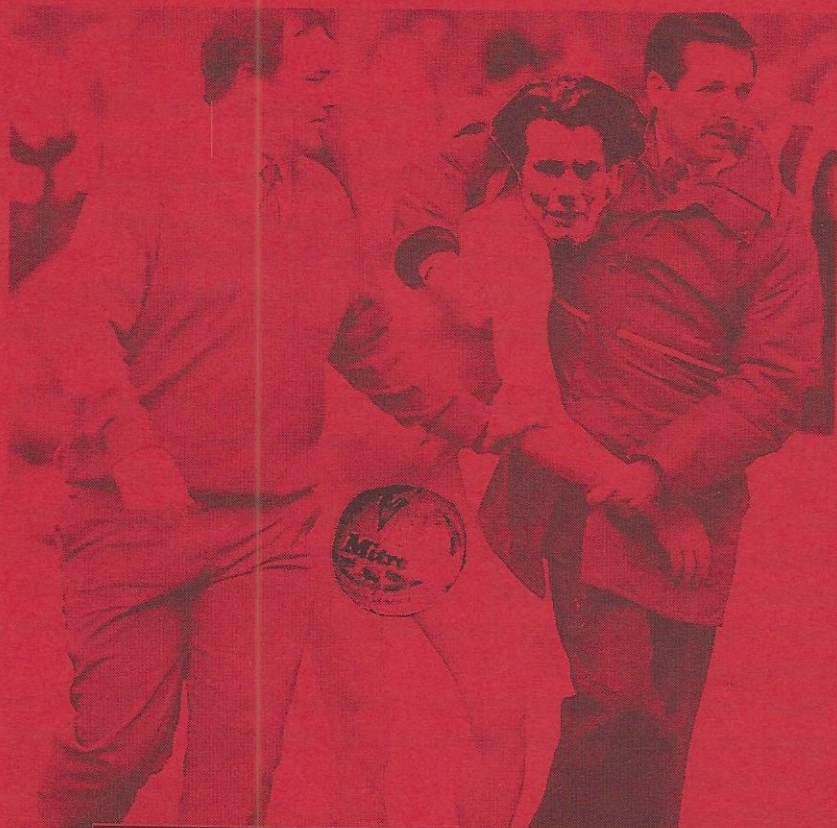
The **ADAMS FAMILY**

ISSUE 20....

DEC/JAN 95/96....

60p....

BUMPER CHRISTMAS ISSUE... 32 PAGE SPECTACULAR



Gary Patterson is ejected from
the ground after celebrating a
hatrick in style

WYCOMBE WANDERERS FANZINE

The ADAMS FAMILY

P.O. BOX 394, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS HP13 6HT

TECHNO, TECHNO, TECHNO, TECHNO !

Yes indeed missus ! Those were the words spoken so prophetically (or is that pathetically ?) by none other than **Ray** from top pop combo "2 Unlimited". Had he seen the future ? Had he received a vision from god, whereupon man rested in leisure for seven days a week as robots served him tea and cakes ? Or was he merely desperate for a rhyme ?

Yes it probably was the latter but who cares, for the Dutch answer to Ice T. had spoken words of wisdom, and would not let it be. (Damn this Beatles revival)

Still not convinced ? Well prepare to be won over as I tell you that not only Ray is thinking this way, but also sharing similar thoughts is the wisest man in pop ! No madam, not Hank Marvin, but the Shamen's Mr C.

And if that's not enough his colleague Colin, the only man in a band who looks like Gordon Brittas, refuses all interviews except ones on the Internet. Anyway, enough of this baloney. The point of all this is to tell you that "The Adams Family" has forged ahead once again and can now receive your ramblings and muse via E-Mail.

If there's anything you want to say to us, but a phobia of post boxes has stopped you in the past, now is your chance. Send letters, suggestions, hate mail etc to this address.

ad088@mdx.ac.uk

Contributors

Andrew Dickinson, Jon Dickinson, Neil Peters, Douglas Peters, Dave Chapman.

Thanks to the BFP for the Pics.

terrace TATTLE

Wembley, Wembley, we're the famous Wycombe Wanderers and we've, um, urh, only got one more chance out of a possible four of going to Wembley.

Well maybe that's a bit harsh, after all we were hardly likely to win either the Coca Cola or FA Cups, but the Autoglass would have been a decent one to have a go for. Because let us not forget, a trip to Wembley is what the great Wycombe public want, indeed you can probably put that down as the main reason Wycombe's attendances aren't troubling last years. No fun day out to the national stadium, no flags to wave and blue wigs to don, no easy little trundle down the train line and no opposition to take part in the Wanderers victory.

I've said it before but I think it needs clarifying, Wycombe Wanderers fans have been spoilt rotten over the last few years and now we haven't won anything for a criminally long stretch of about one year, a lot of them can't take it.

Of course I'm not talking about the people who moaned bitterly when Wycombe shamed their supporters at Wallsall and Gillingham by playing with all the passion of a dead hedgehog, after all I was one of them. No, the folk I am aiming at are the ones who actually look gutted when Wycombe do well. These are people who have become so bitter at the fact that Wycombe don't piss all over their opposition, that they have come to see defeat and seem to love it.

They are worse than the glory seekers who sniffed around when things were

spiralling upwards and have now returned to shopping in MFI or watching the "A team" like they always did. At least they have the decency to keep their sourness under wraps

and not inflict it on the rest of us.

I'm talking about a group of people who the TAF clan have the misfortune to always be standing near, but I'm sure that everyone reading this must know a similar bunch of losers. I've no idea why they bother to come, but if they must couldn't they go and stand in the away end where they would be more at home? So have there been any bright points since our last issue? Well I can't think of that many but as the Wanderers are still highly placed in the league why are so many people, myself included, thinking so negatively?

For a start you'd have to be blind not to have noticed the on field bickering and ill spirit displayed by the players, perhaps they too have become used to winning every week. It was always a good thing about watching Wycombe that the team wasn't full of moaning gits, I was always proud that we didn't have any Ken McKenna types who constantly harped on at other players faults. Unfortunately this disease seems to have spread into the Wycombe ranks. Terry Howard, fine player that he is, seems to do little for team spirit by screaming foul abuse at anyone in earshot. Steve Brown is constantly moaning at Miguel Desouza for not chasing after his over-hit long balls and the general feeling is one of ill will and sourness.

Still there was one cracking day for all of us, in the shape of our annual visit to the Manor ground, Oxford. How choked their fans must be when we turn up and beat them, just a few years ago they were trading skills with

the cream of British football, now they are losing to a team that couldn't even have been considered as rivals in those days.

On the day in question I risked being arrested by buying a ticket from an evil ticket tout, ie a bloke with a spare ticket. This, of course, is a horrific offence punishable under the criminal justice act but thankfully the copper who saw the money change hands wasn't as sad and tragic as the politician who dreamt this law up.

Anyway if I hadn't the ticket would have gone to waste and Oxford would have ended up with an extra £7.50, enough to buy ten more Paul Moody's I shouldn't wonder !

At half time, 3-0 to the good, I thought back to that blisteringly hot pre-season friendly against Oxford City and remembered a loud mouthed cretin blathering on about how crap Desouza was compared with Moody. I wondered if this tragic specimen of humanity was at the ground to see Mig's power headed goal, but concluded he was probably being treated for psychological problems at the nearby John Radcliffe Hospital. Then again, is anyone who thinks that ugly sack of spuds a great player treatable ? I think not.

A cracking weekend was finally rounded off by the spectacle of Jim Rosenthal on "The Sunday Match" looking like the proverbial man who has lost a pound and found a penny. "I was at Oxford to see Alan Smith's Wycombe give United a right turning over" muttered Jim with a look of total dejection on his face. How I laughed, that depressed and it's only the start of the season. Wait until winter sets in and the condensation starts dripping on your head from that mouldy old "Grandstand" of yours, just as you go 3-0 down to Brighton.

Sadly as Wycombe have stumbled of late Jim is looking a good deal more cheerful,

and was almost beside himself with delight when he introduced the goals from Carlisle. A "Couldn't be arsed to go" commitment meant I was unable to get to the match, but I feel that stay at home fans still suffered as Rosenthal and Harry Redknapp chortled into their microphones.

By the way, does anyone else think it unlikely that Jamie Redknapp is the product of father Harry's loins ? I have to agree with the great body of women who think that Jamie is a bit of a looker, especially when he's modelling those chunky sweaters in "Top Man". (What's the matter man, you're turning into Ron Barnett...ed) Er, anyway, one thing you couldn't accuse Harry of is being a bit of a looker, that would be akin to calling Chesham United Buckinghamshire's premier football team.

But who are we to say ? That said if I were Harry I'd keep an eye on the local milkman.

But finally, Christmas is coming and maybe it's a chance for the blues to build on their good league position and start turning in some exciting performances. We know they can do it, I thought the first Gillingham game was a turning point but it hasn't been. Hopefully some big crowds will be in evidence over the festive period and this may spur on the Wanderers to greater displays, with a bit of luck it might get us a few more supporters.

Then again it might not, especially if they have the misfortune to stand on the

Woodland terrace next to a certain group of "Hilarious" men, one of whom smokes a pipe and starred on the back of TAF's issue 3. If you're reading this please, please, please just shut your mouth for 5 minutes, It'll be the best Christmas pressie I've ever had.

DIARY

Food For Thought: When the news about the new stand was produced, one councillor stormed away saying that this was obviously the first of three new stands. Well I hope it is. Travelling up and down the country watching Wycombe brings this situation into perspective. Wycombe's ground is on the edge of town, a good mile from the nearest house. I'd be more than happy to live near it, and I think the residents should be proud that the one good thing in Wycombe is just up the road. But what about the Gillingham residents. Do you see them moaning about the bright floodlights and the noise? Did you see them gawping out of their windows like they'd seen a bunch of deranged aliens. No, and a lot of them lived a mere 20 metres from the ground. If I lived in Sands I'd personally be more worried about spawning a four headed mutant due to all the chemical factories round there.

Big Ron: It's good to see that Big Ron Barnett in the BFP has ceased his fantasising about the Wycombe changing room in recent weeks. In fact he hit on a good point when he suggested that WWFC do a joint promotion with Wycombe 6 Cinema, surely this would bring in a few extra punters. I mean we get those tacky mascots UC and I mincing around the pitch before the game, so why don't we strike a deal? And perhaps as a treat for Big Ron himself Mark Austin could tie in a trip to a kinky strip bar in Soho where he could release his passions once and for all.

TAF beat WWISC: Bob Officer and his army down at WWISC may well be doing a good job with all concerned but if I was a Wycombe player I wouldn't be wanting to be sponsored by them next season. Since going under the sponsorship of WWISC Matt has suffered the worst injury of his career, whereas your wily hosts at TAF have seen Gary Patterson play the football of his life, score one of the finest goals in soccer history and disrobe himself in anti-FA fashion... all in the space of a month. Better luck next season chaps.

Ooh Terry Howard: Its good to see that Terry Howard has turned his hand to book writing. I don't know much about his soon to be released autobiography but if the hype is to be believed it should be a good read. Although we are still awaiting a review copy at TAF (hint, hint publishers) it was good to hear Terry on Alan Hutchinson's sometimes excellent "Sportsline" on 1170AM. Terry

was in good form and told listeners how he used to hate Terry Evans at Brentford, and that he remembers seeing Tel throwing a few punches in the tunnel once in his early Brentford years. Surely not Big Tel, the most savoury man in football. If you want to buy this book of blasphemy, which apparently includes a bit about Wycombe, I think it's about £11, but as we're still awaiting our copy I guess I can't be any more precise!

On The Fiddle: A strange thing happened at the recent Gillingham home game. On purchasing my ticket imagine my surprise when the gate man forget to rip off the tag. I had a whole ticket, as did many others in the crowd. I thought this a tad strange and I also thought that the gate was a little on the dubious side. So it was no great surprise when I received this article in "Kent Today" questioning the attendance. If the computer was broken then how was the attendance gauged. Did they count ticket stubs, many of which were in peoples pockets. C'mon Wycombe surely we aren't going back to Loakes Park days when turnstile operators were only too willing to squeeze two of you through for an extra couple of quid. Any chance of an explanation?

Turnstile error led to gate dispute

Exclusive

ACCUSATIONS over the attendances for Gillingham and Wycombe's two FA Cup, first round clashes rumble on.

Wycombe reported an official attendance of 5,064 for the first match at Adams Park on November 13. Gillingham declared an official attendance for the replay on November 21 as 8,585.

On both occasions, supporters were surprised on learning the official attendance as there seemed to be more in the grounds.

Gillingham earned a £13,000 cut from the away gate while Wycombe's cut from the Priestfield attendance was £16,000.

Wycombe secretary John Reardon admitted last night that the club's turnstile printer had broken down on the night but stood by the official figure.

"The Gillingham chairman Paul Scally was surprised by the attendance and asked to see the print-out," said Mr Reardon. "Unfortunately, we could not oblige because of a fault.

"But there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that the gate was accurate. I predicted 5,000 for the replay.

"People tend to forget that ours is a compact ground and in the dark a small crowd can look a lot bigger than it really is.

Two Gillingham scouts came to our home game the following Saturday afternoon and remarked that the two crowds were much the same.

"In fact, we had 4,800 for the match against Bristol Rovers."

Mr Scally retorted: "If Wycombe say that there were 5,064 for the first match then we must take them at their word — as we do with all clubs when we play away.

"I know that Wycombe, a Division 2 club, were grateful to receive more from a Division 3 club in FA Cup receipts. I was delighted with the attendance for the replay."

"A crowd of 8,585 made the noise of a crowd of 11,000."

REASONS TO BE SPONSORED

As I'm sure you are all aware the Adams Family has decided to release a small proportion of it's huge bank balance to join in the fun of sponsoring a WWFC player. Obviously that player is midfield maestro Gary Patterson, and we at TAF take great pride in the lads revival under our financial benevolence. You'll remember that El Gaz was on the fringes of first team action when we signed him up and has since gone on to dominate the Wanderers midfield, culminating in his wonder goal against Gillingham in the FA Cup.

Who knows if the backing of Wycombe's premier (ie only) fanzine has assisted in this career renaissance, but I know if I were a player, the thought that someone liked me enough to shell out £200 for the pleasure of associating their name with mine would have me chuffed to bits.

Therefore, how soul destroying it must be to be one of those players left in the "Still available for sponsorship" section. There are parallels aplenty; at school were you ever the last one picked for the footy team at break time? Have you ever entered the works canteen, sat at a fresh table and found that everyone else goes and sits at another? Did your female classmates need counselling after you caught them in a game of kiss chase?

If so you may know how those not sponsored feel; think about it, it's not very nice is it?

There are plenty of people watching WWFC who have pots of cash, so why have this lot been ignored.....

DAVID KEMP

Well in all honesty you'd have to be stinking rich **and** at the gin 24 hours of the day to even consider sponsoring "Kempy". Even though assistant manager, his media profile is about as high as Mike Yarwood's is these days. I'm sure I'm not the only Wycombe supporter who wouldn't recognise him if he walked up to me, kicked me in the knackers and proclaimed, "I'm David Kemp you bastard !!!". Maybe I'll get to test out my theory when the man himself does the aforementioned to me after reading this! In summary, and this summary assumes you own a business of some sort,(?!) a sign outside saying "Sponsors of David Kemp" would do little to increase sales of your service.

BRIAN Mc GORRY

Almost a TAF choice for the sheer obscurity of it, Brian has failed to win over the hearts and minds of Wanderers fans as he did at previous clubs such as, er..... well can't think of any at the moment, maybe next issue eh? After a few dire performances "Mac" has been out of favour ever since, and investing £200 in the blonde midfielder would be akin to telling Nick Leeson your current account PIN number in case you forget what it is!

JOHN WILLIAMS

We at TAF didn't bother enquiring about John as we thought he would have been snapped up immediately. How wrong we were and we weep and wring our hands at missing out on this popular utility man (Centre forward, Winger, Substitute, Left at home). What is the matter with you lot, can't you see a bargain when it stares you in the face? (Obviously Mr. Smith thought he could).

CHUCK MOUSSADIK

OK since the change in rules regarding substitutes the Moroccan Megastar doesn't even get to sit on the bench, but it surprises me that no-one has come in for Chuck. He may look a bad bet now, but potential sponsors should be aware that It's prime time advertising all the way at the end of the season. Yes, you've guessed it, "The Evening Standard Fives". Not only is this fine tournament covered thoroughly by a London newspaper but it also goes out live on Sky. Chuck can always be relied on to play a blinder, and the media loves him because he portrays the plucky underdog that the British public loves. So sponsor Chuck now and reap rich rewards later!

JASON'S ROWBOTHAM & SOLOMAN

Both christened Jason, both not sponsored, the two Jason's require loving adopters to help them settle at the club. Says Rowbotham, "Having a sponsor will enable me to smile and occasionally make a decent pass to a fellow teammate." Says Solly, "Having a sponsor may give me the confidence to break back into the team and stop my career spiral that will soon end in ignominy at Slough Town."

THE NUMBER 13 SHIRT

Who on earth would want to sponsor a shirt that had no player assigned to it, surely only a madman? Correct for ten points Sir, the madman in question is "Ringing the Blues supremo Alan Hutchinson, who has either been boozing heavily or is attempting to be obscure.

*"Oi,
I'm David Kemp you
B*****d!!!"*



ALAN'S 'PACKAGE

We all know that Alan's always going on about the package that he's trying to create for us the fans, so I guess its only fair to let him know how its going. I've looked at ten things that I think make an entertaining package and a successful season, and I've marked each one out of ten to let us see what's been achieved thus far. Let us then unwrap the package of Mr. Smith and see what he has delivered.....

Pre-Season Rhetoric: Every club needs a pre-season boost. Some good news and a bit of blarney to keep the fans optimistic. The arthritic Keith Ryan and the dodderly knees of Tel Evans coupled with the loss of Martin were huge blows to WWFC. But in came Alan Smith, a well respected name in soccer. As we all know Alan can handle the media better than any manager in the business. A flash press conference and an appearance on The Big Breakfast were handled with style (Al was decked out in WWFC training top which he purchased on the day of his appointment). Yes here was the man who was going to take Wycombe onto greater things. Hurrah. * 8 points *

Pre-Season Performances: The dream team emerged. The players played with verve and passion. A beautiful evening in Poole saw a 5-0 drubbing. Ok, so it was only Poole Town we were playing, but here was the start of a memorable build up to a memorable season. Surely McGavin and Desouza were going to terrorize defences and score a hatful up front. * 9 points *

Signings: Mmmm, I believe the panels still out on the big man John Williams yet I believe that he can and will get better (Yes I know he couldn't get much worse!). Dave Farrell to his credit has at times looked devastating, but if only he could shoot he would be a genius. Jason Rowbotham has occasionally looked like a guru (Bristol City away) and quite often looked like a donkey, whilst Brian "Mitch" McGorry has not really set the place on fire as yet, in fact I doubt that many people even know who he is. * 5 points *

Cup Performances: The less said here the better. There's nothing better than a good old cup run to bring the meteor-like fair weather fans darting back to Adams Park. Not this year folks. Humbled by Walsall and outbattled by Gillingham, the only bright spark came in the excellent 0-0 at home to Manchester City, but a 4-0 thrashing was soon to follow up at Maine Road. * 3 points *

Enjoyment of Home Games: There hasn't been an awful lot to cheer about for the home support this season. On the odd occasion when we have played excellently, a lack of fire-power has always seen the team fail to capitalise on this. Therefore everyone goes home depressed, when in fact we have played rather well. On other occasions we've simply been outclassed. ** 5 points **

Enjoyment of Away Games: Wycombe have always had a fairly decent away following, and when we're all housed in the right environment i.e. a pokey little terrace with a roof on it like Brentford, we can certainly make ourselves heard. This year has seen two outstanding performances at Bradford and Oxford where the players have played with skill and passion rarely seen. Walsall, Carlisle and the gutless Gillingham performances aside our awaydays have been a fairly attractive proposition. What's more there's nothing more joyous than winning away. Seeing Big Tel Evans striding towards you with his arms aloft can erase all memories of the past few games/months, and acts as a big morale boost for all at the club. ** 7 points **

Rapport with the fans: Alan hasn't endeared himself to the fans quite like Martin, and I don't think it helped when he spent the first few games sitting up in the stand. Most people were too busy trying to find out where he was sat, instead of watching the game. All this transfer talk with fans favourite Paul Hyde, and the sidelining of Super Simon Garner haven't worked in his favour, but us fans are a fickle old bunch and a good spell over Christmas could see us singing his praises in the new year. ** 5 points **

Formation/Style of Play: Not everyone's cup of tea at the moment, but maybe that's because it hasn't quite clicked into shape. Terry Howard said recently on 1170's "Sportsline" that the players take responsibility for hoofing it up in the air as they're certainly not under orders to do so. When the boys have knocked it around a treat: Bradford, Oxford and even Gillingham at home, we've looked a good outfit. I personally think that our left side (Bell&Farrell) has the potential to annihilate the opposition. However once again I think its fair to say that the panel is out on this one at the moment. ** 6 points **

League Position: Our league position is excellent considering some of the problems we've had in these early months. Crewe deserve to be up there, and we've still to meet Swindon. Alan must be satisfied with the position and I guess us fans are too. ** 8 points **

Attendances: A touchy subject this one with attendances on a downward spiral after several seasons of steady increases. True, we haven't played Swindon or Oxford at home yet and these will surely be full houses. I think that the decrease is due partly to the poor home performances and the fact that people are genuinely finding the increasing prices and the number of games hard to justify week in week out. Fact: We've had 13 home games in four months so far, and I estimate that the average fan could have spent up to or indeed over £130 on home games alone. If you break it down it's £7.00 minimum to get in, not forgetting extra costs for programmes, cups of tea, burgers, parking, fanzines(!), pre/post match beer. For a family this is a bloody expensive day out. And if your kids go home bawling about what a crap day out they've had you'll not be in a rush to return. I put my faith in the silky skills of Marketing maestro Mark Austin to see a healthy gate increase. For a start how about getting Blues News into "The Star" or the "BFP" both of which outclass the witless "Leader", one of the worst free papers ever seen. * 5 points *

So Alan's package has grossed a total of 61 out of 100. Or 6 out of 10. It's been an average kind of start for the man and maybe this will be a good thing for the club. The level of expectation was undoubtedly high at the start of the season and I think the recent weeks have taught us all that we don't have a divine right to gain promotion. We're all going have to do some hard graft to achieve the success of recent seasons; that's the players, the management, the staff and even us the fans. Only then will Alan's package truly deliver the goods.

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HOOK-SLINGING TIME

"We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when....", one of the most eternally optimistic songs of all time, originally crooned when loved ones knew full well they probably would *never* meet again - however when TAF learned that Steve Thompson and Tony Hemmings' services were no longer required at Adams Park, we found ourselves looking wistfully at old photos, remembering the good old days, and trying manfully to clear a lachrimose lump from the throat.

Yes, if and when we do come across Steve and Tone again, I hope they put one past Wycombe, as it seems they were merely victims of their own laddishness. The similarities didn't stop there - both were highly revered at their old clubs, both injury-prone, and thus both struggled to secure a truly regular first-team place at Wycombe, despite their obvious talents.

From the punters' point of view, both were a veritable delight to watch when on song. Thommo had possibly the shortest legs of any man bar Ronnie Corbett, but rather than make up for it by moving them twice as fast (a la Tim Langford), he would slope wearily around the midfield/attack waiting for the direct pass or the loose ball which he then brought to life, with mazy dribbles of labyrinthine (!?) proportions, the ball literally glued to his toes. If he only had a shot to match his natural skills, he would have been in the Beardsley class; as it was, whenever Thommo's trickery did cause the onion sack to bulge (well, ripple a bit then), he always looked somewhat bemused.

He seemed to have an alleged penchant for young girls, and when Tony Hemmo got caught drink-driving in Thommo's car, one can only wonder where and in what state scrumpy-loving Steve was. Good luck at (ambitious) Woking, Steve!

Appearances: 136 Goals: 15

Lasting Memory: A post play-off final interview revealed him to be a deranged cousin of Fred West (probably).

Tony Hemmings was a live-wire winger who never fulfilled his obvious potential, except for the odd inspired match, unfortunately. This made him a real tease, as he could merrily

make the most nimble defenders swipe air when he put his mind to it. However, a lack of effort when the chips were down, coupled with the worst case of Territorial Erratosis (Willy Procter says: "Yes, this is the more common term for players who always fall into offside traps") since Jason Seacole graced Loakes Park, meant that Steve Guppy was always going to be the No.1 choice for Martin O'Neill.

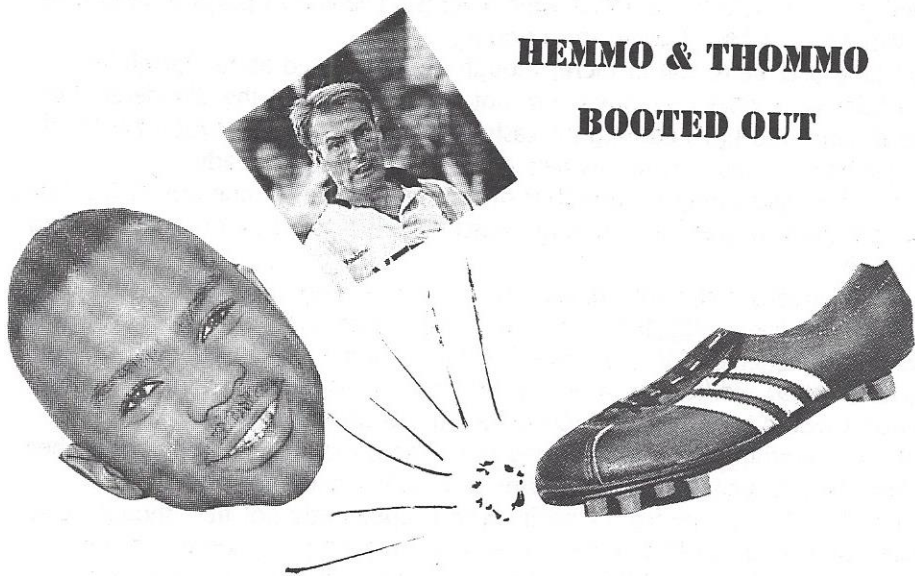
For me, Tone's best position was on the bench, and I don't mean that unkindly at all. With 20 minutes left, and Wycombe either drawing or losing, Hemmo would come on and give his all for the remainder of the match, gliding past players from either flank, or looking menacing up front. He will be missed by the majority of the Wycombe faithful, but like Thommo, his face did not seem to 'fit' at Wycombe under Alan Smith's regime.

However, as one sprightly old chap in the main stand was heard to say recently, "We've given away Thompson, Hemmings, Hutchinson and £250,000, and got Farrell, Williams and McGorry in return - where's the business *or* footballing benefit in that?" Wise words, pop-pickers.

Appearances: 66 Goals: 14

Lasting Memory: A literally brilliant display and 2 whippet goals against Crewe in Div.3 a couple of years ago.

HEMMO & THOMMO BOOTED OUT



A "Gill" Gloats

The following reports are from Keith Atkins, a devout follower of Gillingham F.C for 30-odd years who took the opportunity to observe the ties for TAF. With little knowledge of WWFC and a huge bias to those fouling goons from the Medway his diaries make interesting reading for all present.

Wycombe 1 Gillingham 1

I arrived at the impressive Adams Park at 7PM well on time for the kick off, only to be shunted up a slag heap for car parking, which was later going to take 45 minutes before we could start the car owing to the poor supervision in the car park.

Boy did we have some support tonight, and to be fair we outshouted you lot, didn't we? With all the razzmatazz of Sky being at the ground there was enough entertainment prior to the game to think that this was worth £50,000 to each club. Lets hope the game is worth it. We were disappointed when a "large" steward insisted on standing facing us causing much consternation, I thought at least the twat could have knelt down.

Our lads were up for this one as big fat Jim, who was our hero of the night, was throwing himself around at some belters being hit by Lindsay Parsons the Gills assistant manager during the pre-match stretch.

8PM..and here we go. Not only are our supporters fired up, but the players are too. Without sounding too cocky we are pressing hard and all this with a makeshift forward line too, with no LEO to unsettle the Wanderers defence. Mind you it should be said that your "Everest" Evans isn't playing tonight so its about even when it comes to mugging.

Half time and we're still in there, though I'm concerned about Farrell in particular who looks very quick. I'm not concerned about the Wanderers front two though. Big Jim's earning his cash between the sticks, maybe Alan Smith should have signed him up, as he's got 11 clean sheets already.

Second half and surely it's a matter of time before we go one down. Our back four are playing manfully, although Ratcliffe is lucky to stay on after showing his studs.

Then it happens. Patterson comes across the park diagonally and lets go with a flighted delivery. Big Jim's ten yards off the pace and I hate to say it but it looks even better on TV. Wycombe have their purple patch, yet the Gills are resolute. What a difference a new chairman and manager have made as last season I would have laid odds on us going 3-0 down in no time.

Despite everything we're not getting in the box and time is slipping by. Then comes the masterstroke by Pulis. With a double substitution suddenly on comes Puttnam, a free from Lincoln, who is apparently not fit. I thought you would be killing us off by now but us Gills are giving as good as we are getting. Second division? We must have a chance in your league on this showing. Call it luck or whatever, but the injured Puttnam gets by two

defenders and puts in a cross that leaves Hyde in no mans land and Dennis the menace (our one ball player) gets on the end of it.

Not only are we now level but with some better luck the inexperienced Freeman might have snatched it for us.

Full time and we had managed a draw against a side who I felt only had to go on the park to win this match. A shock to your system Wycombe, and our secret weapon was ready and loaded for the replay.

Gillingham 1 Wycombe 0

I told my Wycombe colleague before the game that he would hear the name of cult figure LEO, and he tonight he frightened the living shite out of your lads.

The Medway town was buzzing and I have to say that this was partly due to the publicity on Sky TV. It was sure to be a good gate.

Firstly I apologise for the terracing compared with the luxury of Adams Park. Priestfield is a real S**thole, but we do have a good crowd who get behind the lads. We are all tightly packed in. 8,000 plus. It looked like 12,000 to me. (*see diary - ed*).

Whether it was the change of the strip for your lads I don't know, but you didn't settle in and were under the cosh from the off. Yes I know we are direct and physical but it has to be said that your lads couldn't cope with our aerial bombardment. A corner at the Wycombe end, an inswinger, and with your defence all at sea looking for someone to take the blame, Howard under pressure puts the ball into his own net. I felt this was too early to say what would happen but Wycombe just didn't seem to have the fight in them and we just took the game to them. Smith has a goal disallowed and Leo is everywhere. It looks like Evans is sorely missing in your defence!

The second half starts and Wycombe show glimpses of being a 2nd division outfit, but the penetration from all your costly players was never evident. A lot more pressure comes but our defence is superbly marshalled by Green, and Jim, however fat and old was not to be beaten. Alan Smith makes a last ditch effort bringing on Garner, but he looks as ineffective as he was at Adams Park.

Final whistle and we've done it. We deserved it because we showed heaps more determination on the night. Others might also say that the "studs" won the game. Whatever. But to see our chairman on the pitch congratulating the fans and supporters was for me heart warming. When I think how close we were to extinction last season, with new personnel we are starting to make progress. Wycombe fans must be gutted, but your club did make £50,000 for the games.

Success breeds success and I felt that over the two games Wycombe were somewhat arrogant and paid the price, and as the saying goes your only as good as your last match. Anyway enough of these old adages, I thought they were two great cup ties, and who knows we might see you again next season.

SUPERMARKET SWEEP

As a way of promoting team spirit and goodwill to all footballers at Crimbo, manager Alan Smith has arranged for an afternoon of training to be replaced by a Christmas shopping expedition to that veritable Mecca of shops, High Wycombe. TAF sneaks along as the players, "Go wild in the aisles."

Alan Smith: Right everyone, while you're shopping remember that you're representing the good name of Wycombe Wanderers so I don't want any misbehaving. Now as well as getting presents for your loved ones, don't forget to buy a little something for yourselves as well. And if the shop won't wrap it for you don't worry because I'll do it for you, I'm an expert on packaging you know.

Mark Austin: Hold on a second, I should just like to say that as a special bonus you can all have 1.2% off selected goods in Wanderers in town !

Alan Smith: What do you mean by "selected" Mark ?

Mark Austin: Er, well there's a great choice such as..... er "Local Hero" the Mark West story, Bluey baseball caps and replica figures of U, C and I.

Paul Hyde: My word, how generous.

Dave Carroll: Excuse me Martin but do I have to go on this trip, I've got to go to Brent Cross tomorrow with the missus and I can't really be bothered with this. In fact if you insist on me going I shall refuse to play for you again.

Alan Smith: Dave, why did you call me Martin ?

Dave Carroll: S***, I forgot he'd gone, I suppose you'll refuse to bow down to my demands.

The bus pulls away from Adams Park and after two hours reaches the Hillbottom road roundabout.

Terry Howard: Bloody hell, traffic's bad today, surely this lot aren't all going to Fitzgerald's Furniture Warehouse ?

Mark Austin: No, I expect they're going to the world famous Wycombe Wanderers Sunday market, it really is the finest!

Steve McGavin: Boss, can we stop at the chippy ? I'm really hungry.

Alan Smith: But Steve you've just had Beef soup, followed by steak and chips, followed by doughnuts and ice cream.

Steve McGavin: But I only want a drink to wash it down.

Alan Smith: Ok then. Driver, stop the bus please.

Alan Hutchinson: Oh yes, it's a great honour for me to be driving the bus into town today, and if you want to keep up with it's progress you can. Just call 0891 446855 and "Ringing the Blues" will keep you right up to date with exact positions of the coach as it travels into town. Don't despair if you can't get to

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the phone as listeners to 1170am will be kept up to date with our travels in between the usual dismal array of Joan Armatrading and Joe Longthorne album tracks.

Steve McGavin: Look you wittering bore, just stop the bus.

Alan Hutchinson: Aha, ok, great sense of humour Steve McGavin. A real character.

Hutchinson stops the bus and McGavin enters the chippy. He returns a minute later with 28 litres of Coca-Cola, and a bag of chips. Finally the coach pulls into town and everyone disembarks.

First stop is Allsports, the amazing sports shop that had a closing down sale for 2 years and then stayed open ! John Williams is looking at a pair of Adidas Predators.



John Williams: Excuse me, but how much are these ?

Sales Assistant: Why, what do you want with them ?

John Williams: Well I'm hoping they'll improve my shooting.

Sales Assistant: In all honesty Sir you have to get near the box with the ball to shoot, and to do that you generally come across members of the opposition that you have to beat.

John Williams: Damn, no-one told me that.

In the changing room.



Matt Crossley: Ur, ay, big Tel I've cricked me back putting on this pair of trainers.

Terry Evans: Oh yes, that hilarious stunt you pulled to hoodwink the local press.

Matt Crossley: No seriously, I've done me back in.

Terry Evans: Look Matt it wasn't that funny last time, I don't see what's funny about it now, I'm off.

Evans stalks off leaving Crossley doubled up in the dressing room, he's probably still there now !



Meanwhile Simon Garner has spirited off his young protege Anthony Clark to Bottoms Up off-licence in Frogmoor, where Paul Hyde is buying copious quantities of peanuts, thus enabling him to get a look at the "Saucy Bird" underneath.

Anthony Clark: Look Mr Garner, isn't that Mr Goldsworthy asleep over there in the wine section.

Simon Garner: Er, leave it kid. If you want to be like me you've gotta start getting some ale and nicotine into your bloodstream, excuse me love can I have 400 B&H, two litres of Bells and twenty bottles of Kronenbourg. Now get that lot down your throat by tonight and you'll be a man !

Anthony Clark: Cor thanks Mr Garner, I'll soon be as good as you. Not that it matters really as you don't get in the team much these days.

Simon Garner: Oi you cheeky sod, I've a good mind to tell Hydrie you called him a poof.

Paul Hyde: Who called me a poof Garn's

Simon Garner: He did.

Paul Hyde leaps on top of Clark and starts pummelling his head with a four pack of Tennants Extra, the Police are called.
Meanwhile back in Allsports.....

Keith Ryan: 'Scuse me mate, I don't suppose you've got any shell suits in stock ? Mine have got holes in 'em, I wear 'em everywhere.

Meanwhile Alan Hutchinson and Alan Smith are enjoying a cappuccino in suave eaterie "Carpenters Court". Hutchinson's phone rings.

Alan Hutchinson: Hello and welcome, you're through to Alan Hutchinson.

Voice: Alright ? This is Glenn at 1170am are you ready to do your first Wycombe update ?

Alan Hutchinson: Of course not, I'm sat in "Carpenters Court" enjoying a drink and a cream bun in association with "Octagon Shopping Centres" the number one shopping centre with the crappiest selection of shops in Britain.

Voice: Well you ought to get yourself up to Adams Park a bit sharpish, apparently the team and manager have taken a leaf out of the Wycombe public's book and not turned up for a home game.

Alan Hutchinson: Oh my good godfathers, Alan do you realise what all that traffic was back in Sands.

Alan Smith: No I don't Alan, but I must say I do admire the packaging on this shortbread biscuit!

Alan Hutchinson: It's match day, apparently we're at home to Bristol City!

Alan Smith: Beejeezus! Find the players, get everyone on the coach. Oh my,my, I'll be sacked for sure. Do something Alan.

Alan Hutchinson: (On his mobile phone) Hello Ivor, is that you ? We'll be there soon, just send Parry onto the pitch and let him rant.....



The Alan Smith Interview



Don't mention Doom and Gloom to Alan Smith at the moment. Football's Mr Nice can not understand why Wycombe followers are upset at the recent weeks events. Let's be fair, Alan's been here a mere twenty weeks and although we're out of the cups we're sitting healthily in the league. Yet still Alan's desk is full of letters with people welcome to give him friendly advice or an unfriendly earbashing. TAF give immense gratitude to Alan for allowing us to interview him on a blustery Winter evening when most families are cosily sitting down to watch Emmerdale or Eastenders. To be honest not many managers would devote part of their evenings to us humble beings, so cheers Al. We have condensed the best parts of the interview into the article below as we try to get an insight into the life and times of Wycombe's top dog. Roll the recorder....

LITTLE IS KNOWN OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN FOOTBALL AS A PLAYER, ALTHOUGH I UNDERSTAND YOU PLAYED FOR BRENTFORD. WHAT KIND OF PLAYER WERE YOU AND WHERE DID YOUR CAREER END?

Well I played for West London schools and I was above average at that level. I went to Brentford as an apprentice. I was fairly good but above all I was certainly enthusiastic and pretty keen. Then I had a car crash and that sort of put paid to me wanting to go on as far as I wanted to.

YOU SAY YOU WERE A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN BEFORE GOING INTO FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT. WHAT WAS IT THAT LURED YOU BACK?

Nothing really lured me into it. I combined my job as being a business man and a coach, and my main priority was to be a good football coach, that's all I really wanted to be. And in this time I did manage to produce a lot of really good players. I spent 60% of my time in football and 40% in business which is not difficult. I used to get up at five in the morning and go to bed at 12 at night. At most football clubs there are a few afternoons a week you get off, most people go and play golf, but I did business. It was quite therapeutic in a way, I enjoyed both aspects and I never really thought of becoming a football manager. I was offered the job as assistant manager six years ago and I took that after being the youth coach for about five years, and when Steve Coppell left I took the managers job and we won a championship. It wasn't something that I chased after.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR TIME THERE WHAT WAS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY?

I had loads, too many to mention. To go to a cup final was great. I went to an FA Cup final and a Zenith final, and of course winning the championship as a manager was a big thing. But I think the biggest thing was setting up the youth system and producing loads of great players. People who came from non-league like Ian Wright, Stan Collymore, Gareth Southgate, Simon Rodger, Simon Osborn. Even when we played Gillingham the other day Mark Harris and Dennis Bailey had been with us at some point. I think the players that I helped make better players was a great satisfaction.

A LOT OF PALACE PLAYERS DURING YOUR TIME HAVE GONE OR POSSIBLY WILL GO ONTO GREATER THINGS. WRIGHT, BRIGHT, SALAKO, COLEMAN, COLLYMORE, SOUTHGATE, OSBORN, GORDON, SHAW. DO YOU TAKE PRIDE IN THIS?

I don't think there's many league teams in England that haven't got a player that I've coached at some point. To be fair to you there are a lot more than that list. Geoff Thomas, Mark Pembridge, and players like Bobby Bowry and Ricky Newman who I was told would never play at a higher level.

HOW HAPPY WERE YOU TO COME TO WYCOMBE? AND HOW HAPPY ARE YOU NOW?

I was happy to come to Wycombe. I'm not somebody who couldn't do a job. I couldn't sit around and play golf or tennis everyday. I like a beer and a good night out and knowing my personality if I didn't have a job I'd be a pretty ill-disciplined person I suspect! I'm quite happy now. Earlier I had a meeting with a supporter who said we weren't doing this right and we weren't doing that right. And I said how would you feel if you were a Fulham supporter, fifth from bottom in the third division. How would you feel if you were a Hull supporter or a Brentford supporter? I think that people are not very broad in their visions sometimes. In general terms I'm very happy here, I think it's a good club, a steady and progressive club, and looking at the youth team now, they're third in their league and last year they hardly won a game they were bottom of the league - a bit of a joke really. The reserve team are still top of the league. I think that the new stand will give the club a whole different perception.

DO YOU THINK WE'LL FILL IT?

Well we've got to if we want to progress through the leagues. This isn't a traditional professional football club. Lets be honest it isn't a Burnley, a Huddersfield or a Preston, and I think in some ways we've got to alter peoples perceptions. If the club wants to grow then it does need that stand and I think the answer is we've got to fill it. A lot of people do like seating

facilities, not everyone likes standing. I know the guys who stand behind the goal love it, but I think there are people who would love to be in a big stand. It will give the place a bit more aura, because when opposition come here it doesn't frighten them. I think the opposition think that Wycombe is a nice place to come to and as a club we could be a bit harder and the players could definitely be harder without becoming cynical or detached.

DO YOU THINK THAT WYCOMBE'S "COSINESS" COMES FROM THE NON-LEAGUE BACKGROUND?

I think so. I think someone like Terry Evans has got that hardness about being a professional footballer whereas you get some players who haven't that hardness. I mean this is a very nice club. The ground is great, the weight room is nice which is very good, but I believe if we were that bit harder we would have won more games than we have.

DO YOU THINK THAT THE FOUR PLAYERS YOU HAVE BROUGHT IN: WILLIAMS, FARRELL, MCGORRY AND ROWBOTHAM HAVE PERFORMED TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

I think the majority of them have and I think its very dangerous to be talking about individual players. I think its an obvious statement that some of them could have done better, however Farrell's done well and Rowbotham's played well so I have to say the answer is yes. But again from the supporters point of view you have to see that when I came to this club there were five players injured and soon after Brown and Cousins were suspended for three games each, and whatsmore we've got a long term injury in Matt Crossley. So sometimes you have to bring players in to make sure you have a substantially strong squad.

I GET THE FEELING AT THE MOMENT THAT THERE'S A BIT OF DOOM AND GLOOM AROUND THE PLACE. HOWEVER WE'RE SIXTH IN THE LEAGUE, AND PERSONALLY I HAVE ENJOYED SEEING THE LIKES OF A REVITALISED BELL AND PATTERSON.

I really don't see why there is. Relating back to earlier questions I've been here twenty weeks and in that twenty weeks this club have only lost three games in the league, miles better than the record we had last year. Our youth team is third in the division and the reserves are top. Yet there does seem to be a bit of doom and gloom. I mean I try to set high standards of myself, and I'm quite hard on the players, they are currently coming in on a Sunday. We have been without Ryan and Evans all season and I can't see why there should be any doom and gloom. I can imagine there being doom and gloom at a club like Hull, but on the other hand look at Millwall who are top of division one they've only got four more points than us and they've played two games more. So why isn't there doom and gloom at Milwall. At Crystal

Palace there are 14,000 hardened supporters, wouldn't you imagine that there's doom and gloom there when they sit fifth from bottom.

YES AND I BELIEVE THAT A LOT OF WYCOMBE FANS HAVE BEEN SPOILT IN THE LAST FEW SEASONS WHERE THE FAN BASE HAS INCREASED TENFOLD.

Yes but its relative to the level that we're playing isn't it. It might be easy to beat Scarborough 4-0 and it might be easy to beat someone in the Conference. And looking at last season we weren't this high in the division. This time last year we'd lost more games, we hadn't scored as many goals. If you go away and check your records we'd scored less goals and let in more at this point last season.

SO ARE YOU SAYING THAT EXPECTATIONS ARE TOO HIGH?

No I don't think they are high. My expectations are high. I don't know many managers that would be sat here in their office at this time of the evening having started at 8 in the morning. My assistant is still here and my youth manager is here. My expectations are very high. When the team haven't played well I don't come in and say "jolly well played chaps, bad luck I'll see you in two days time." But my logic tells me when I sit down and study league tables "are we in such a bad position as Luton?" I mean Luton is as big a club as Wycombe isn't it.

I ACTUALLY WORK IN LUTON AND I GET LUTON FANS SAYING "GOD YOU'RE DOING WELL AREN'T YOU"

Funny thing you should say that, because you've hit the nail on the head. I mean people are always going to speak certain amounts of rubbish to me at times, but some say blimey you're doing well aren't you, you're youth teams doing well and I hear you've got planning permission for that stand. But I come in here and people depress me with their attitudes. I have to say and being as honest as I can that I was bitterly disappointed when we lost to Gillingham in the FA Cup. I mean I've lost two cup semi finals as a manager and that takes some stomaching, but I didn't feel as bad as when we lost to Gillingham. And the players knew I was disappointed, and I can believe that the supporters too must have been, but I think we've got to look at the global view at what we're going to achieve at this football club. If this football club is going to progress and succeed then its got to have that stand and its got to have a well organised youth system. I put £100,000 of my budget into the youth system. I could have stopped that and bought four players tomorrow, but in the long term would that be right for Wycombe football club. I suspect not. I'm trying to create what is good today, but also what will be better tomorrow.....that makes me sound like bloody John Major But you know what I mean!

IN A TIME WHERE WE'RE LED TO BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE A LACK OF

CHARACTERS IN THE GAME HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE LIKES OF GARNER AND EVANS, PLAYERS WHO LIFT A CROWD?

Vital, absolutely vital. We haven't enough of them and I think that you've hit on the very two. I think that all successful clubs are made up of a strong changing room. I mean when Evans was at Brentford they had Blissett and Holdsworth up front and Millen and Evans at the back. Now they were characters. At Palace we had Wright, Bright, Thorne and Young all personalities, and every successful club needs them. Football needs characters and personalities and Wycombe needs them too.

YOU COME ACROSS AS A COOL CHARACTER, ALWAYS IN CONTROL. DOES ANYTHING IN FOOTBALL MAKE YOU ANGRY?

Yeah. Losing to Gillingham in the FA Cup. I mean it was the first time I've thrown a kettle for a long time. It was a totally pointless exercise but I think it showed my frustration at the time. I was annoyed at Walsall. I didn't take the attitude that it's only *that* cup. It was a shame because I was due to take the players out on a Thursday, we were going on a bit of a razz, and I wanted to look after them and have a good time. So that really disappointed me.

COMING BACK TO THE GILLINGHAM GAME I THOUGHT WE WERE TOTALLY OUTFOUGHT FROM THE FIRST MINUTE TO THE LAST

That's what I thought as well and that is what was what was so disappointing. Harris, Green, Martin, Bailey and Fortune-West and right down to Stannard were so strong and what was upsetting was that we didn't physically compete with them, and that annoyed me because I'd warned the players that Gillingham are a physical outfit. Having said that I thought we should have won the first game reasonably comfortably.

WE PLAYED REALLY WELL IN THAT FIRST LEG WHICH MADE THE SECOND ONE SO DISAPPOINTING.

Yes and I had it in my head that had Evans been playing in those games that some of that wouldn't have happened. It was similar at home to Bristol Rovers where at half time we could have been two or three up, yet in the end we were sloppy. However we could talk about tactics or whatever but one of our main problems at home has been putting the ball in the net. We haven't scored enough goals at home. To be blunt our front players haven't played very well at home either. This is probably why there is this bit of doom and gloom. I mean I read a lot of programmes, magazines and fanzines, and I hate to say that they get it more or less spot on. I think they say what no-one else wants to say and at times it can be very hurtful. I mean I've read things about myself that I've thought I don't like that very much. But I read our

programme notes and they're not very positive. Then I'll go to Craven Cottage to read Fulham's and I'll be thinking God this is Fulham who are fifth from bottom in the third division. I think we've got to stop thinking so narrowly.

I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON WHY THIS IS. I GUESS WE JUST EXPECT TOO MUCH FROM WYCOMBE.

Well people have a right to, and I know I do. I will say to you now I want to get out of this division. I wanted to get to the third round of the cup but I can forget that now. So if supporters disappointments are high they can take it from me that mine are too. I mean I don't ever sit here twiddling my thumbs thinking what a lovely way to earn a living, I think I'll have a round of golf this afternoon. I mean just before you came in everyone has been looking at Saturday's game on video (friendly vs Cambridge) so we can put it right in training tomorrow.

OK. ONTO A FEW MORE GENERAL THEMES. DO YOU THINK THAT THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN IMPORTS ARE GOOD FOR THE ENGLISH GAME?

I do. I think if you can get better players to play here, and if we can't produce the players then why not? I mean if you want to go and buy a Brazilian for 4.5 million and people want to come and watch him, then by all means go and do it. In general terms look at Bergkamp, and the lads up at Newcastle. They've come in and they've put bums on seats, and that is what the game is all about. The crowd want to be entertained. I see no problem in that if you can't get an English person to do it. I mean in any other business you'd do it. If you want to go and buy a computer you don't say is it British do you? You might want the British version, but not if its not up to scratch. The same for cars. If you can't get a Ford or a Jag, you go and get a Toyota. So I don't have any problem with that.

SO LOOKING AT WIGAN, AND THEIR "THREE AMIGO'S". WOULD YOU CONSIDER ANYTHING LIKE THAT FOR WYCOMBE?

I would consider it, but my common sense tells me that it would be quite hard to work. I mean I have had foreign players on trial since I've been here, but they haven't been much better than the level we're at to be honest.

OBVIOUSLY WITH THE PLAYERS TRAINING UP AT BISHAM ABBEY YOU MUST BE UP THERE WITH THE ENGLAND SQUAD AT TIMES. DO YOU EVER GET TO WATCH THEM TRAIN AND DO YOU MIX WITH THEM?

Yes, I do see them. I don't mix with them although I could. John Salako and Gareth Southgate have been up there, but I don't like the thought that I'm hanging around just to be seen, and I don't think I would really benefit from this.

WHAT ABOUT THE PLAYERS. DO THEY GET EXCITED ABOUT IT?

No, I don't think they do actually. I think if anything they probably get rather embarrassed. I think we've got enough on our plate here at Wycombe without getting involved with the Gazza's and the Platt's of this world. I mean there's a generalisation that Professional footballers tend to be a little bit selfish and keep to themselves a little bit, and I don't think it would work really.

I'M TRYING TO PICTURE ALAN SMITH ON A SUNDAY MORNING THE DAY AFTER A GAME. WOULD YOU FOR INSTANCE BE READING THE INDEPENDENT LOOKING AT THE TEAMSHEETS AND GOALSCORERS?

Well I don't read the Independent! I think if we've lost then I do tend to get pretty foul and that buggers up my weekend. But if I'm being ultra honest with you I'll get up, take the dogs for a walk. If we've won I'll buy every paper going. I mean when I was with Palace we'd have big write-ups, but even now I'll look for Wycombe reports. I read what's going on and I'll probably take the papers down the pub, have three pints of Young's beer and you know life doesn't seem so bad.

BEING A MANAGER DO YOU LOOK AT STATISTICS?

Yes I do, but I think that it can also blind you a little bit if you look too hard. I mean I was talking to a supporter earlier who meant well but seemed to pick on everything that wasn't right with the club. He told me things that weren't even correct facts. The facts were that we had gone 14 games unbeaten. I mean you could argue that a lot of them were draws, but that was a good record for Wycombe because the most we had ever done before then was 7. So yes I do look at facts but I don't let it blind me either.

IF YOU WEREN'T A FOOTBALL MANAGER WOULD YOU BE A SUPPORTER?

Probably. I think every manager should be a supporter. I think you've got to love football and like doing it, and I think that most probably I would be a supporter, yes.

FINALLY IF YOU COULD SIGN ONE PLAYER FOR WYCOMBE WHO WOULD IT BE?

Well I think its a dangerous thing for me to say because if any of the players read it they might get the wrong idea. I think a goalkeeper is vital and I know that when Clough was at his best he thought the same. I think it is important to have a first class keeper. I also think you need a very good striker. When we won the championship at Palace we had Armstrong, who

scored 27 goals, and we won games we shouldn't have won. You see we should have beaten Bristol Rovers, we should have beaten other teams, but we didn't because we haven't got many goals out of nothing have we? The only one I can think of is Patterson's, a wonder goal.

I GUESS AT BRADFORD WE HAD A COUPLE WHEN DE SOUZA HIT A COUPLE OUT OF NOWHERE BUT I AGREE THAT WE NEED MORE OF THESE TO KEEP US GOING?

I agree, but getting back to your question I have to say that I'm very mindful about not hurting any of the players, because I give them a bit of a hard time in the changing room and I do keep on at them a bit, but that's between me and them. I wouldn't want to say "yes I love him and he'd make our team".

OK. SO ON THE FLIP SIDE OF THAT WOULD YOU SAY THAT THERE WAS A PLAYER THAT YOU'VE REALLY ENJOYED WORKING WITH?

Ian Wright. Brilliant. He loved the game, he loved football and still had a non-league mentality. He'd score goals out of nothing. You name it: right foot, left foot, headers, volleys, half-volleys.

WHAT ABOUT HIS INFAMOUS TEMPERAMENT. DID THAT WORRY YOU?

Not so much. I mean it was difficult at times. But having said Ian Wright I really enjoyed working with Gareth Southgate, now at Villa. Mainly because he was a player who wasn't naturally talented but he did really well. He had an amazing determination to go all the way. I had him since he was 14 and he kept working and working and working at it. I mean there have been loads of players I've enjoyed working with but Ian Wright is the pick because he was so naturally talented.

So there you have it the words and wisdom of Alan Smith. I personally thought he'd be a Mr. nice guy like Ray Wilkins or Glenn Roeder (actually Glenn Roeder's extremely boring but you know what I mean). He was very truthful and honest about what he hopes to achieve at Wycombe and I think this has to be respected. I'm certain now that he is not a soft touch on the players, and I think that just because he's not quite as "Showbiz" as Martin O'Neill we shouldn't let this blinker us from the fact that his heart is with Wycombe. I hope he achieves his dream and Wycombe get out of the division in style come May, but if not we have to understand that he'll only have been here a mere season. I hope I'm not wrong in saying that in Alan Smith we've got one of the best managers around in football today, and I hope that Wycombe fans will one day soon become proud of this fact.

Stan-Super Sports Fan

Hello readers, I'm Stan Super Sports fan. Most people I know like football and a bit of Cricket. I find it amazing that they can like one sport but not another. Take those chaps who write this fanzine for example. On the whole they are a decent bunch of chaps (although their hair is a bit long and I don't like that loud Indie music they make me listen to), however I just can't for the life of me see why they hate Rugby so much. They keep saying things like "it's bent" or "That Carling bloke's a smug-faced jumped up twat". Rugby is a National sport. It has wily super athletes pitting their wits against each other in a tactical struggle. It's almost like Wellington versus Napoleon at Waterloo. Probing each other's defences looking for a weakness and attacking down the flanks. Some of the tactical moves would have made Rommel proud..(ok we get the message Ed). Rugby Union is the better game as it doesn't suffer from the professional trappings of Rugby League. I also like Rugby fans. Nice well turned out upper class fellows. They all enjoy a few pints and high jinks. Oh their funny songs do make me laugh. I know they're a little rude, but it's all quite harmless fun. I don't know if you've ever been in a Rugby Club but it's a great night out. All good stout fellows together. Men only and male bonding at its best. All pulling each others trousers down and thrusting their naked buttocks in each other's faces, what a hoot.

Another great thing about Rugby is that it is not played at 100mph like some sports. You can watch Rugby for 30 minutes and absolutely nothing will happen.. You can just sit back and enjoy watching the players line up for set piece after set piece. Then, someone will pick up the ball and run for two yards and get knocked over. Then you have a 5 minute wait while they line up for yet another set piece.

Another interesting thing about Rugby is the scoring system. Football is just goals and they all count for one point. In Rugby you get tries, penalty kicks, drop goals and they all score different and you get thrilling scorelines like 27-13, much better than a boring 3-1 or 2-0.

As for Will Carling, he is an ambassador for the country. Good looking well spoken chap who doesn't get paid or receive any financial reward whatsoever. Shame about that Princess Di thing but it was probably all her fault anyway.

As you can see Rugby is an exiting world and I think you'll agree, a fine sport to watch. I just can't see what the Adams Family have got against it (have you got all day mate...Ed). Next issue I hope to open your eyes to more fascinating sports such as Snooker and Fishing, till then TTFN.

GETTING YOUR FAIR SHARE

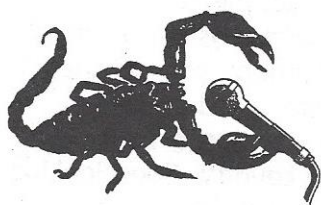
Hey, listen up - now that the Football Club's proposal for reducing the number of shareholders in Wycombe Wanderers from 500 to 250 has been rejected, it is time for all eligible season ticket holders to consider becoming Shareholders, if they so wish. The advantages of this are that:

- * You are part of the decision-making process
- * You can vote on the election of Club Officials
- * You receive an end-of-year financial statement
- * You can attend the Annual General Meeting
- * You can have your say about your Football Club

Conditions for becoming a shareholder are simple - you must have been a season-ticket holder for **three continuous** seasons. Send off for an application form from Gordon Richards, Company Secretary, WWFC, Adams Park etc. etc. You will then be sent a form which you return with the princely sum of £1, the application is viewed at a board meeting and a share issued in your name (no-one has ever been refused a share yet).

Remember, if you meet the entry criteria, you have already shown your commitment to the Club, so go one step further and become a full shareholder to ensure Wycombe Wanderers continues to be a democratically run Football Club in the best traditions of sport.

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DEAR IVOR



Dear Ivor,

I know as a regular member of the woodland terrace how much Wycombe Wanderers respect the kids and see them as the fans of the future, with sweets being handed out pre match and special value games. It does however seem to me totally ridiculous and down right stupid that the club is too blind to see the other side of the coin and look at the health risks. Sweets, Mr. Beeks are a danger to children and an ever increasing problem for the worried parents. Sugar rots teeth and can mean premature problems in the dental region. I suggest you change your view point very quickly and start to hand out dental floss and toothpaste in the near future to protect our adorable little things from the hardship they may soon encounter. How great do you think our club will look some years ahead with a crowd of Nobby Styles looking characters gnashing off to the camera on Match of the Day? We would be the laughing stock of the football league. Do something now or you may find despairing parents asking you to deliver the money to cover the tooth fairy's bill.

Up the Blue's, Phil McCavity

Dear Ivor,

I get fed up with members of the crowd constantly referring to old players from the club and how we should never have let them go." Westie would have got that", "Crease would have stopped him". The only way I can see a solution to this problem is to get all the old players back and to give our present squad a game. It will please many of the old moaners and at the same time prove what a load of old rot some of the old players were when we whip them. On second thoughts it might be wise to wait till our squad is capable of a result.

Thank's again Mrs Beeks

Dear Ivor,

It has come to my attention that with the increasing amount of balls hit way into the car park the risk to your and many other people's motors is soaring. The insurance must be sky high for luxury vehicles like yours. I have spent many hours thinking how to

help you and your colleagues out of this situation and would like to announce my plan. If five minutes before each home game you and your acquaintances hand over your luxury car keys, I and a number of friends will gladly take your cars out of harm's way for the duration of the match, dropping them back bang on full time. This will give you peace of mind to watch Wycombe and know your spanking motor is in good hands.

Yours, Miss Joy Rider.



An article that recently appeared in The Daily Telegraph featured the ex Wanderer and registered midget Bonnie Langford. The article was centring on Tim's new club Telford Utd and their FA Cup match against Stockport County. As we all know there was no surprise result and no golden moment for Tim. This would have been just one of those things according to the piece which was incidentally written by ex Bucks Free Press hack Pete Lansley. Pete is also a close and dear friend of Blue's chairman Ivor Beeks. Tim stunned football fans the world over when he disagreed with the statement made by the late great Bill Shankley "Football's not a matter of life and death, it's more important than that" is just not how Tim sees it. "That simply does not apply" he says. Tim has obvious reasons for this that have been well documented by press and club. 15 months ago Tim's son Adam was diagnosed as having leukaemia. Agonising news for any parent to cope with. It does however appear Adam has made good progress. The article does not go into too much detail but nipper Langford is back watching his dad play. Tim was a good bloke and enjoyed a chat as two TAF members will remember. Especially after too much champers on the hallowed Wembley turf the day of the play-offs. He did go on a bit and lets say Mr O'Neill was not his favourite person. Us friendly chaps at TAF would like once more to extend best wishes to Tim and family and hope that the future is bright with Adam and new son Scott (possibly named after Tim's guru Keith). Good luck to all four of you, TAF.

GARY PATTERSON The Sponsorship Deal

With multi national and corporate companies playing such a major part in today's football we at TAF decided to seek a bit of the action. Finances were discussed and after a heavy night around a table we drank, joked and laughed ourselves into the small hours. We emerged with the news that the eager press and nervous club had been waiting for. Yes, Gary Patterson for an undisclosed fee was now property of TAF. What follows is a small insight into why we chose Gaz in the first place and what he has achieved for us, himself and the club since the deal. A small plan of the future for Gary has also been mapped out so you the paying public who, we realise financed this whole venture can see we will be spending your money wisely.

TAF had a pocket of loose change and decided to put a little something back into our wonderful club. The idea was to buy a striker for the Blues but with the quality of competition it became clear this could be a financial disaster. Why not buy a player already there? a small voice cried, and the dream was born. It now became a test of quality and responsibility to whom we should splash the cash on. Stape's looked a possibility, Thommo a must, even the number 13 shirt would have been really funny (not) but as time crept nearer the decision was made. The players themselves had all approached us with bribes and each one had been assessed during a tough and to the bone interview session. Announcement day arrived and the club was told of our decision. "Terry Howard" they said, "you can't have him, he's already gone". Sod it, time to think again. Suddenly as the mist of disappointment cleared a figure shone through the haze. There can be only one alternative, and he likes Oasis. Gary Patterson come on down. We were delighted, our very own footballer to use and abuse. The possibilities were endless and we knew it. Since that historic day 'The G Thing' as he's called at home has really come up trumps. With washing being his speciality we have never looked so fresh and white. The cooking side is less than healthy with his Northern tendencies. You can only eat congealed blood pudding so often, and the gravy and chips for brekkie can be a poor start to any southerner's day. Other housework is improving and ladies if Gary turns you on in his shorts you want to see him in his pinny. Alan Smith can take some credit for what has happened to G on the pitch, but not it all. Sunday morning consists of a hard and vigorous session where G cleans the car, weeds the flower beds, changes sheets and empties the bins. Then and only then he will join us in the garden for a knock around. We dissect the previous match and discuss crap performances in detail. Tears are common but this sort of ridicule can only make him stronger. If Gary has played particularly poorly we loan him out to old ladies to use. If he plays well we let him sit with us for lunch and there can be no doubt that this sort of hard hitting regime has worked. It brought a tear to my eye when he scored that blistering goal live on Sky. "That was for TAF" he said later as he put out the cat. It's moments like that that make our job worth it. The future for Gazza looks good. He appears on the Help album with Weller, Macartney and Gallagher which is doing well and hopes to write a book with the wonderfully clever title 'There's Only One Gary Patterson'. His sponsorship deal with TAF comes up for renewal in the summer and who knows what the winds of change will have to offer then, but for now we're settled. If anybody out there does think of anything Gary could do for them please don't hesitate to ask. We do rent him out for a fee and he's an ideal host at a party. In fact he is just about to host a special Christmas dinner for TAF, in his own home. Thanks for that G and drop us a line at the P.O. Box to confirm.

101 USES FOR ERIC HALL

