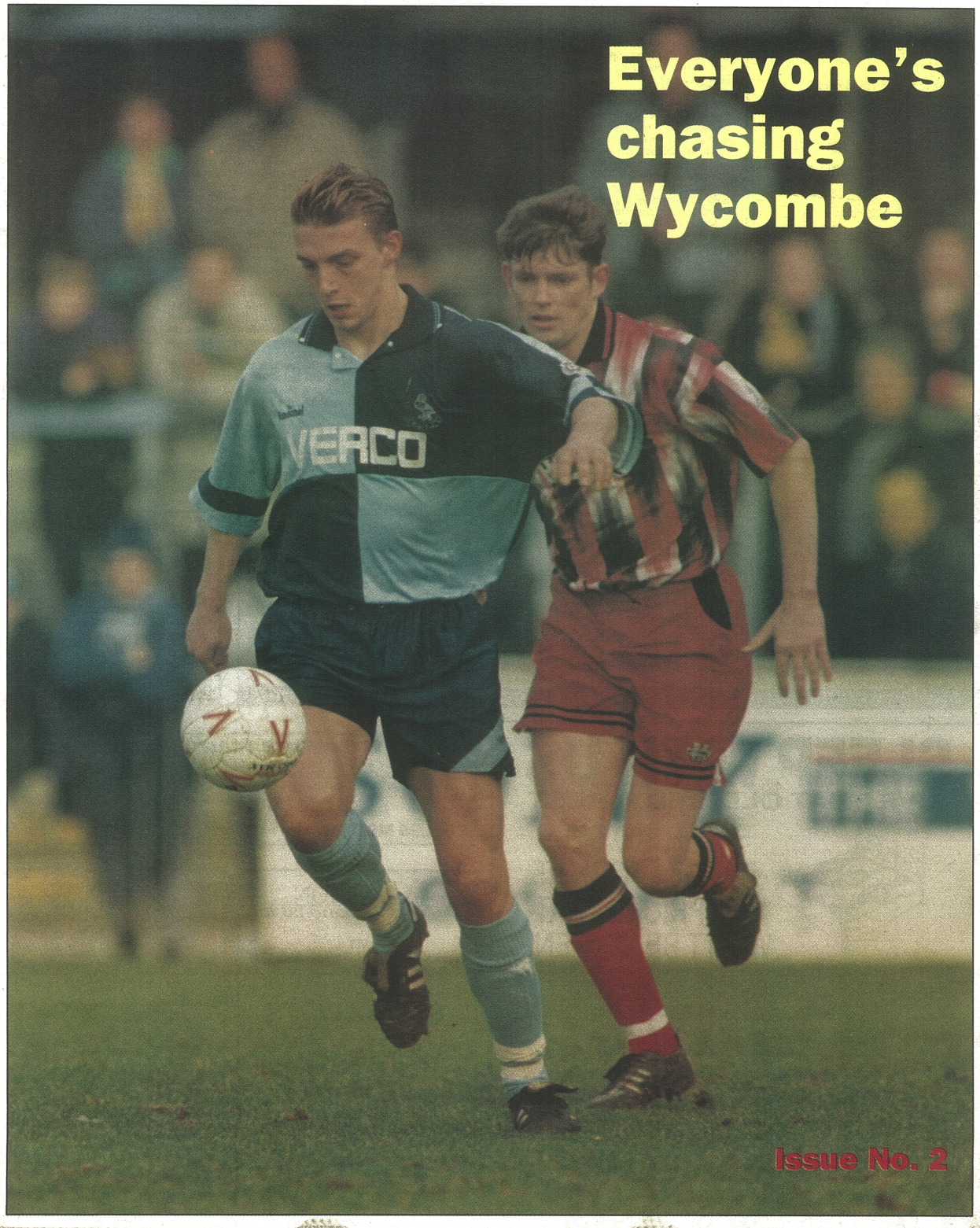
The BLUES NEWS
The official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club



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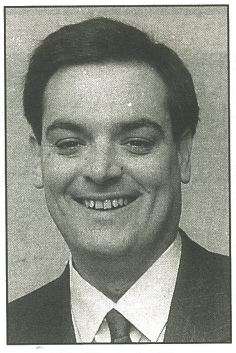
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Sponsors deserve credit



By Mark Austin
Sales & Marketing Manager

WYCOMBE Wanderers Football Club would not be where it is today without the revenue generated from its main activities. These are matchday gate receipts, clubshop sales, lotteries, room hire, advertising boards, bar receipts, catering, programme advertising, matchday hospitality and sponsorship.

I would like to concentrate on my main area of responsibility, that of Sales & Marketing. Without sponsors and supporters I am well aware I would not have a job.

At Wycombe Wanderers, we are blessed with a large number of committed sponsors and fans. However, I would like to particularly acknowledge the part played by our faithful sponsors.

Most of our current sponsors, supported Wycombe Wanderers during the highs and lows of the Loakes Park years, and are largely responsible for enabling the club to achieve league status.

It must be stressed that the club's excellent facilities, players, managers and successes have only been achieved by contributions from the club's broad base of activities.

It is this firm foundation that provides existing and potential sponsors with a wide choice of ways to receive benefits for financially supporting the club.

Our Club Sponsors, Verco Office Furniture Ltd, have been the cornerstone of our sponsorship over the last four seasons.

Their invaluable support will continue at least for the next two seasons, as well as the remainder of this. Wycombe Wanderers knows that sponsorship is a two–way street. Quite simply we aim to give sponsors four main things:–

- Value for money
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At Adams Park, 167 out of 168 Advertising Board Positions within the stadium are currently being rented. Only the fascia of the Main Stand remains unsold. The vast majority of board holders are local companies of all sizes, although there are several national advertisers.

Should you visit other clubs in Division 3 and below, you will see most have not sold even half their space, although there are exceptions like Yeovil Town. The reason we do so well is a combination of playing success and generous sponsors.

There are 67 local companies who advertise in every matchday programme. Due to demands for editorial space this number cannot currently be increased. In fact, the club has rejected many requests for further programme adverts this season.

Each season all forms of sponsorship are sold on a first-come-first-served basis, although preference is always given to existing sponsors as a common courtesy.

A tremendous tribute to Martin O'Neill and all the players was the fact that the match and ball sponsorships of all fixtures were sold, bar one, prior to the start of the season. Most commercial managers I talk to are amazed by this, but again I believe the reason for such amazing demand is a team and a club that still has outstanding potential.

Two growth areas are guest hospitality packages that started last season, and Sportsman's Dinners which are both open to sponsors and supporters alike. The Sportsman's Dinners are now so well attended I have been instructed to reduce the numbers for next season to avoid overcrowding.

All our car sponsors deserve a special mention, for without them we would not be able to get from A to B. In the Vauxhall Conference we had 3½ sponsored vehicles, whereas now we have three times as many.

Annual activities like the Golf Day at Beaconsfield Golf Club, are only successful if supported by sponsors. Frankly without sponsorship most of the clubs events would not be viable.

At Wycombe Wanderers we consider our sponsors to be part of the team, and are delighted to hear when their businesses do well, particularly when their success is due to their involvement at Adams Park.

I would just like to thank the hundreds of Wycombe Wanderers sponsors who have stuck with the club, through thick and thin. Please keep it up we need you now more than ever to help us become firmly established in the Football League.

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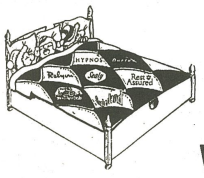
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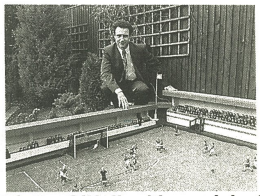
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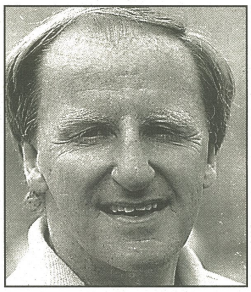
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Mystery man in the mist



By ALAN PARRY

THE bewildered looking Irishman in the dark overcoat must have been thinking that he'd made the biggest mistake of his life.

The wind howled and the rain hammered onto his face as he peered into the mist trying to catch sight of a bus with the distinctive name-board: "Wycombe Wanderers F.C."

This was Aust Services, the last stop in England, and it certainly didn't seem like the sort of place where a glittering new career was about to begin.

After all, wasn't this the very Irishman who had led his country into the quarter finals of the World Cup and lifted the European Cup and the League Championship trophy with Nottingham Forest?

Life had been reasonably kind to Martin O'Neill since a knee injury ended his playing career. He had used his intelligence and charm to land himself a good job with a leading finance company and he enjoyed his part-time involvement in football as manager of Grantham Town.

Wife Geraldine and young daughters Aisling and Alana were happily settled in their beautiful detached home on the outskirts of Nottingham. Martin had also carved out a successful role as a television and radio summariser and it was this job which led to the chance meeting which would change his life.

The BBC had asked Martin to report on the Third Round F.A.Cup tie between Norwich City and Liverpool. As a lifelong Liverpool fan, I was also at the game and I bumped into Martin afterwards in the gents toilets, of all places!

I had known Martin for many years and had always been impressed by his great enthusiasm for the game, sense of humour and ability to communicate with people. I felt that he was the ideal type to become a successful manager, but the various Football League clubs he'd contacted obviously didn't share my view.

Martin hadn't realised that the Wycombe job was vacant following the resignation of Jim Kelman, but on the very day we'd met, the Wycombe directors had been interviewing candidates for the job. It seemed that Martin's chance had gone, but he asked me to keep him informed if no appointment was made.

The rest, of course, is history and so it was that Martin O'Neill found himself in that bleak, windswept service station beside the River Severn on a cold October afternoon in 1990. He'd impressed the club's directors sufficiently to be offered the job and his first game in charge was away to Merthyr Tydfil in the G.M. Vauxhall Conference.

The new manager had arranged to meet the team coach at the final outpost before the roadsigns announce you're in Wales. As the Wycombe bus finally loomed into view, he must have been wondering if he'd made the right decision. Had he really give up such a cosy lifestyle to take over the reigns of a club about whom he knew so little?

But Martin's engaging personality soon won over the occupants of the coach and a couple of hours later, he was leaping to his feet on the Merthyr touchline as Mark West scored the first of the many goals Wycombe have netted in the manager's successful reign. Just for record, the game ended in a 1-1 draw.

Both Martin and Wycombe Wanderers have come such a long way in the four years which have elapsed since that day in South Wales. Despite the faith that I had in him, I have been amazed at the success which he's brought to the club. Even Martin himself could never have expected things to go so well.

He has transformed Wycombe from a non-league giant with fading memories into a Football League outfit which is respected and admired throughout the land. Attendances, which had struggled to reach the 1,000 mark before Martin arrived, are now regularly five times that figure. Wycombe fans now talk about the future instead of the past.

From a personal point of view, I have enjoyed every minute of Martin's managerial reign. Life is never dull when he's around. He can be fiery and vitriolic one minute and charm the proverbial birds out the trees moments later. The players will tell you that he has the ability to make them feel a million dollars when they play well and hammer them into the ground when they do badly. But he is always fair and honest.

The directors should be pleased because he's guarded the club's money rather better than he's looked after his own, according to Mrs.O'Neill! And it's difficult to believe that any other manager could have brought the club so much success.

As for the fans well, we all know how much you think of "Yer Man". The spontaneous show of public support when we paraded the F.A.Trophy at the Town Hall last year went a long way towards persuading Martin to stay. Nottingham Forest's loss was us undoubtedly our gain.

Now, just in case all this praise goes to Martin's head, I ought to point out that, yes he does have his faults. Anyone who's had the misfortune to wander into the manager's office at Adams Park will realise that a neat desk and efficient filing system play no part in his life! We forced him to clear out the pile of rubbish on his desk recently and found a Japanese prisoner of war at the bottom!

Punctuality? Forget it. I sometimes wonder how the team coach manages to arrive at matches in time for kick-off. Martin is always the last man on board whether it's Woking or Wembley. He says it's a superstition of his, but I'm not so sure.

Yes, it's been an eventful and highly entertaining four years in the company of the man from Kilrea and I've no doubt there's an eventful earbashing coming my way when he reads this article! I just hope that he's around to give me stick for another four years because I truly believe that he can take Wycombe Wanderers to the very top.

The gents' toilet at Carrow Road was a strange place to launch an exciting new era for our club, but fate and a weak bladder proved to be a very convenient (!) combination. Here's to the next four years.

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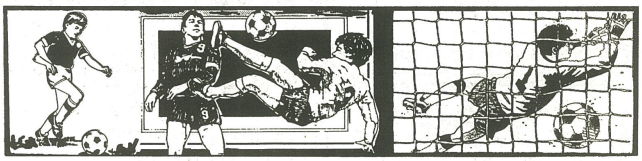
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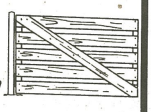
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Injured Terry ignores his own problems to celebrate the Fulham victory with the rest of the players

Crocked captain calls for greater support

CAPTAIN'S LOG
by Terry Evans

SINCE the last time I wrote for The Blues News a great deal has happened to me and the team. We were on a real high after reaching our highest ever position of second in the league.

I was looking forward to the game at Fulham. I have had a pretty good record against them and felt we had a good chance of getting a result.

We fell behind to an early goal and fought back well, that is until the keeper fell on my leg. I knew straight away that the injury was serious and had no choice other than to come off.

As we walked off at halftime 1-0 down, I knew it was going to be very tough for the team to turn the game around. There was nothing I could do other than sit in the changing room with ice packed on my injured knee.

I was directly underneath the Wycombe supporters and did not need to be told that we had scored the equaliser. As time went on, stewards were coming in to tell me what was happening and that the game had gone into extra time.

When we scored again it was a great feeling but after they drew level and extra time was over it was very difficult for me to sit through the penalties without seeing what was happening. If only the supporters above knew how much the cheers lifted my spirits as each penalty was taken.

We also lost Duncan during the game. He later underwent a hernia operation which was a great loss to the team. He was playing very well and his experience has been very important. Hopefully, it will only be another few weeks before he is playing for the Blues again.

On the Thursday, I went to see the surgeon to determine the problem. I feared that the main ligament had snapped but he could not be sure until I went under the knife on the Friday.

Mr Channon operated on me at very short notice. The operation went well but I had ruptured the medial ligament in my knee. He managed to repair it, so it is just a matter of time and a lot of hard work before I am back playing again.

My leg is in plaster, but hopefully this will only stay on for a further two weeks when a brace can be fitted. It will enable me to start working on the leg after a month of no movement at all.

For the time being, life is very boring indeed. I must ensure that no further damage is made to the ligament while it is mending and so rest, rest and more rest is the order of the day.

The club has been fantastic to me and nothing is too much trouble so I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them and all the other people who have wished me well especially Mr Channon and the staff at The Chiltern Hospital.

I doubt that I will play any further active part of this season and feel totally gutted, but I hope to come to as many games as possible and encourage the lads on to Wembley and promotion.

Football does tend to throw up some big highs and lows during a season. Mansfield and Wigan were both very disappointing results, but I would ask that you bear with the team and carry on giving them as much encouragement as you can.

THE BLUES NEWS 5

There's a feast of fun on the road

WANDERERS ON TOUR
by Adrian Wood

IF you travel by road to all away league fixtures, then before the Mansfield game you will already have clocked up not far short of 5,000 miles.

Take into account also the away trips in the CocaCola Cup, F.A. Cup, Autoglass Trophy and the Championship Shield game at Northwich then you will have easily exceeded the 6,000-mile mark and there's still nearly three months of the season to go!

Our travels have already take us from Torquay in the South West to Darlington in the North East, and from Carlisle in the North West to Leyton Orient in the East.

The huge away support has of course already been well rewarded with the team returning home with some tremendous results just three defeats in the first 14 away league games.

Our success rate in cup ties away from Adams Park is even better – six wins from seven clashes and four of these were against Second Division opponents – a truly remarkable statistic.

Nearly all this season's trips have been to pastures new for Wanderers fans. Gone are outings to the likes of Altrincham, Kettering and Welling and these have been replaced by venues such as Wigan, Walsall and Northampton. Every stadium is of course different and I thought I would use the rest of today's column to reflect on a few of the locations visited so far this season.



Fans-tastic: The Blue Army eats up the miles in their support

Firstly, in late August we made the trip to Lancashire to take on Wigan Athletic.

Those who had not checked Springfield Park's location in advance probably ended up at Central Park, as the Rugby League club have the most prominent floodlights in the town!

The football ground is further from the town centre and has smaller lights.

Arriving at the ground, one's first sensation was of breezy openness as the coach parked on the club's vast exposed car park.

With this side of the ground standing high above the town, the main stand seemed especially tall.

At either end, the terraces are shaped around the compressed oval-shape of the turf, it once having been surrounded by a track.

Occupying a 14-acre site, the ground would make a perfect site for a modern multisports stadium.

As long as the town's Rugby League side continues, however, to attract the main sporting focus of the area, there remains little chance of any real work being effected at Springfield Park.

One ground certainly unique is the County Ground at Northampton. This is generally unpopular with the players due to a) the state of the playing surface, and b) the lack of atmosphere.

These are because the ground is shared with Northamptonshire County Cricket Club and is thus the only three-sided football ground in the league. The football area is used as a car park during cricket matches and bored children play in the goalmouths!

It is a nightmare for the groundsman trying to prepare for the football season, and the Cobblers' home fixtures have to be arranged to accommodate the Cricket County Championship schedule.

The cricket theme continued at Feethams, the home of Darlington. Here, entering from Victoria Road you come first to the cricket pitch around whose boundaries you must pass to reach the football ground.

The cricket club apparently own all the land, charging the football club a nominal rent.

I enjoyed returning to Feethams as it was here, back in 1983, I completed my tour of the then '92 Football League grounds.

Riverside locations have recently been the fashion with trips to Shrewsbury Gay Meadow (complete with its cast iron Victorian turnstiles) and to Fulham's Craven Cottage where the famous Cottage is one of football's landmarks.

There are plenty of interesting venues coming up over the next few months. Enjoy your travels!

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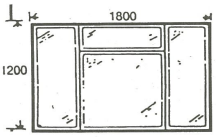
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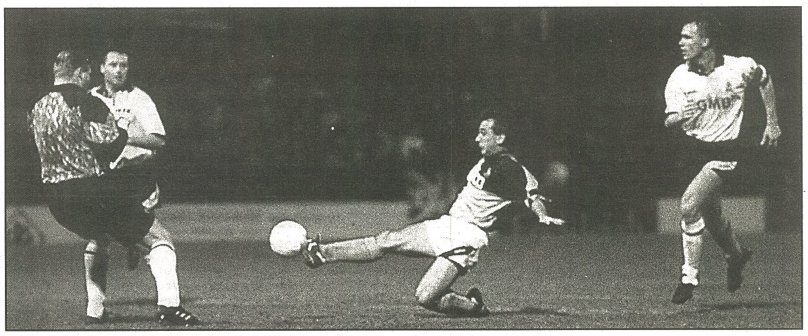
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Wembley fever



Goal: Striker Tim Langford hits the net in the thrilling cup tie at Fulham's Craven Cottage

QUE sera sera, whatever will be will be, we went to Swansea this week. Que Sera Sera. The Autoglass Trophy has taken the place of the FA Trophy, to hopefully provide our annual pilgrimage to Wembley. It's all so boring though, the possibility of three visits in four seasons. Give us back the glory days of cup finals at Wolverton, or Slough! I'll come back to Fulham later.

The months of January and February are a time to battle for points, so we can challenge when the end comes in sight. The most encouraging thing is, despite some indifferent football of late, we have stayed second in the league. That is all that matters.

I was astonished to read that some fans booed after we had beaten Mansfield at home to stay in second place. Remember it was just six months ago that we became a league club, and six years ago we were struggling in the Conference. Having said that it was disappointing to lose 0–3 at their place.

It's apparent the reputation of the Blue Army is spreading. An all-ticket match at Shrewsbury? More than a thousand fans made the trip and celebrated in style when the youngster, Chris Hatt, earned us a 1–1 draw.

Unfortunately, this was only the half–time entertainment! On the pitch we were beaten 1-0, after missing a penalty. Danny drove four of us up.

By Stephen Lee
Blues Supporter

Early on in the trip we passed the Slough coach. Patrick summed it up nicely, as ever, Slough in the slow lane, Wycombe in the fast lane! They lost too.

So to the Fulham match. Surely the best game since Hereford away in August. The excitement was unbelievable throughout. End-to-end stuff and all that. Beforehand, in a local pub, I spoke to a few Fulham fans. They were pretty content with life. Victories over the top two clubs in the Second Division, most recently an impressive 4–2 win at Stockport, brought them clear of the relegation area.

To say that they were confident of victory is to put it mildly. Of the three that I asked, Ashley said: "I can't see Fulham losing." 1–0 or 2–1 to Fulham were his guesses. Intriguingly, he had a sneaking suspicion that a penalty would be involved! Spooky.

Ian also felt a 1–0 victory was on the cards. Bryan was the most optimistic, expecting a comfortable 3–1 win. I asked them if they knew anything about us, and was surprised to discover the response was nothing. Jimmy Hill would probably say the same thing!

Next, I approached a subject close to my heart, away support. It's considered Port Vale have the largest away support in the Second Division. Naturally, I nominated the Blue Army for our division. Football is all about opinions after all!

Ashley, the Fulham man, expressed surprise that the club had printed a programme for this match, and didn't expect the crowd to exceed 2–3000. "Assuming, of course, that you don't bring hordes down!"

Their mouths dropped when I said I would be disappointed if we brought less than a thousand. As it turned out we had more than three times that there in an impressive crowd of 8,733.

Unfortunately, the only side without covering was the away end. Pretty typical of the facilities we've found on our travels.

So, apart from getting wet, we couldn't generate the sort of noise usually associated with such numbers.

Mind you, I didn't notice the rain until we faced the long walk back to the station! It's a beautiful ground, I'd never seen the Cottage before. Great view of the Thames from the side wall, later used as an improvised toilet by just a few desperate fans. Without doubt, a great place to go for a local derby next season!

I hesitate to describe the match, as that has been done.

Suffice to say in the first half we didn't, in the second half we did, and

Dreaded offside rule is there whether

HOW often has a swift, exciting, attacking movement been halted, much to the annoyance of the attacking team's supporters (but perhaps to the applause of the defending team's faithful) by the raising of a linesman's flag for "offside" Such halts are often seen as an intrusion into the flow of positive play. There is still much misunderstanding of the Offside Law.

The distinction between what is merely an offside position and what is, in fact, an offside offence must be known by all referees and linesmen, but many long–time players of association football struggle to appreciate the essential difference, and that difference is so crucial to the correct interpretation and application of this aspect of the Laws of the Game.

Law 11 (Offside) defines the offside position very simply:–

"A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponents' goal–line than the ball, unless:
a) he is in his own half of the field of play, or
b) he is not nearer to his opponents' goal–line than at least two of his opponents."

This confirms emphatically that a player who is level with the second last opponent (or with the last two opponents) is not in an offside position.

The Law re–affirms not only that a player shall not be declared offside just for being in an offside position, but then later goes on to relate that even if he is in an offside position, he still should not be penalised if he receives the ball direct from a goal-kick, a corner–kick, or a throw–in!

You would be forgiven for, therefore, thinking that it is quite difficult to be found guilty of the offside offence, and that thought would be in accord with the desire to not have exciting play, culminating in the ball entering the goal, being stopped unnecessarily.

So when should play be halted for a valid offside offence? The Law spells it out again very clearly. It indicates that if, at the moment the ball is played by (or touches), one of his team, a player, IN THE OPINION OF THE REFEREE, interferes with play or with an opponent, or seeks to gain an advantage from being in the offside position, he shall be penalised and ONLY if one of these conditions is truly the case.

This is where the experience of referees and linesmen is so important, because 'interference' and 'seeking advantage' must be judged upon very carefully.

Offside must not be judged at the moment the player in question receives the ball, but rather at the moment when it is passed to him by one of his own team. A player who is not in an offside position when one of his colleagues passes the ball to him (or takes a free kick) does not, therefore, become offside if he moves forward during the flight of the ball.

To contribute fully to the enjoyment of all games by spectators and players alike, referees and linesmen are expected to co–operate fully to consistently apply this Law, so that unnecessary halts and unfair punishments are avoided.

Recently, referees have been reminded to insist that their Linesman should indicate with the flag only for offside offences and linesmen themselves have been reminded not to raise the flag merely because a player is located in an offside position.

Their roles are not easy ones. They have the onerous responsibility of deciding quickly and fairly whether a player is interfering with play or with an opponent or is seeking to gain an advantage, specifically at the precise moment the ball is passed to a colleague of the attacker.

They, therefore, have to read the pattern of play, follow players movements and remember the Law's requirements, all at the same time. It is not an easy task! However, perhaps your reading of these few paragraphs will allow you to be more understanding of the pressures on them in the midst of play and also that these notes will help you to better understand the Offside Law itself.

Enjoy supporting your team!

Ken Ridden
The Football Association

is magic stuff



Goal: Jason Cousins scores the winning penalty in the last-gasp shoot-out at Fulham

in extra–time we should have!

Then came our first penalty competition since a bizarre match against Barnet in the Capital League Cup at Loakes Park in 1988, who remembers that?

Tim Langford deserves great respect for taking the first kick, moments after missing a chance to win it in extra–time. But basically, everyone was superb. The Oxford English Dictionary should alter it's meaning of resilience to, a football club called Wycombe Wanderers.

The price was high though. It was Terry Evans' last match this season. Clearly he will be desperately missed. It's another test of our resilience. With our help, not hinderance, we will prevail.

After the match I had a word with one of their stewards, he was convinced it was the best match he'd seen at the Cottage in years. It was hard to disagree with him, but he was fair in admitting we deserved to win in normal time.

Thankfully, the three Fulham pundits I spoke to in the pub beforehand were as accurate about the outcome as another famous pundit connected with Fulham is.

I believe it was Jimmy Hill who helped block our efforts to replace Aldershot two season ago. He deserves our heartfelt thanks, otherwise we might not have all those fantastic memories of last season.

A little later, Putney Bridge Underground Station was taken over by the Blue Army. The locals looked a bit bemused when most people in our carriage were singing that familiar tune about Wembley.

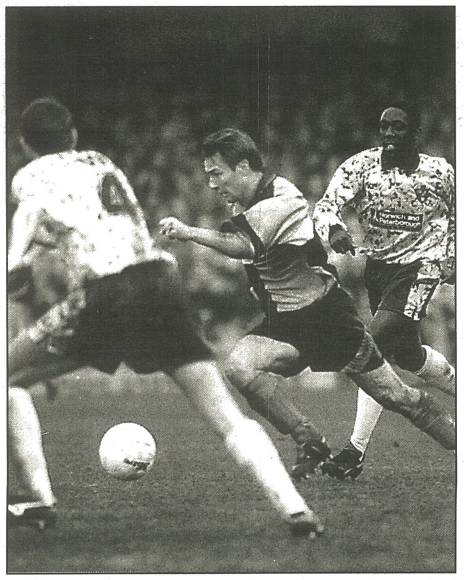
Definitely a night to remember. It's on that list of highlights along with Carlisle, Leyton Orient, Hereford, Coventry, Bristol, Preston, Cambridge, Norwich and Colchester away. Take your pick from that lot.

I wrote this article following the Wigan match, it has to be said the unnecessary abuse levelled at Management and Players was absolutely disgusting.

The best way we can help our club is to provide huge and local support when times are bad. It is a measure of our success that three league defeats in a row is considered to be the end of the world.

If you want it to become four, five or six in a row continue the vocal barracking. We'll lose our momentum, players and management. Then what will we be? Nothing!

you like it or not



Is he or isn't he? The Offside Law can be very confusing

Hospice says thanks for the support

THE Iain Rennie Hospice at Home is most grateful to Wycombe Wanderers Football Club for allowing a collection in aid of their local charity to be held at the match with Bury on Saturday 5th March.

Based in Hazlemere, the IRHH provides nursing care and support for terminally ill patients in the comfort and security of their own homes.

Patients of all ages and suffering from any life-threatening disease are cared for, and relatives are also supported after bereavement.

Four teams of nurses based in High Wycombe, Beaconsfield, Chesham and Tring cover the Chiltern area of South Bucks, Berks and Hertfordshire.

More than 1700 patients have been nursed since the hospice at home was founded in 1985, and the demand for this special style of care is steadily increasing, as are the costs.

Keeping the organisation cost-effective is very important. At present, from every £1 donated, 88p goes directly into nursing care.

Our collectors, with their distinctive yellow sashes, will be collecting both inside and outside the ground.

Please give generously, so that more patients may be afforded the right to be nursed and die with dignity at home.

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8 THE BLUES NEWS



Girls, girls, girls: Kathy Rosier, Diane Medcraft and Sue Keen

'Seen one, and you have seen them all'

By Diane Medcraft

MOST visitors to Adams Park will at some stage have contact with either Sue, Kathy or myself in the Commercial Office. We all have official titles, but are referred to collectively by everyone here from the Chairman downwards as "The Girls".

Most of you who have met us would be justified in thinking that we are a bit long in the tooth to accurately deserve this description, but as Football Clubs will probably be the last bastion of male chauvinism, we are contracted to be girls until the day we retire.

The first thing any employee of Wycombe Wanderers must come to accept is that they are personally responsible for taking the job away from any number of supporters who consider themselves more suitable applicants.

For starters, no one could call working at a football club a real job could they? Who of the female sex wouldn't give their right arm to be spending the hours between 9 and 5.30 lurking behind the shower curtains in the home dressing room just in case a player dropped his bar of soap.

Add to this the arduous task of patrolling the gym area complete with a pair of binoculars just in case one of the lads forgets his athletic support – well there wouldn't be much time for work anyway! Seriously, I think I can speak for us all by using the old adage "once you've seen one, you've seen them all". Need I say any more?

Let me now give you a run down of some of our main areas of responsibility in The Club. Not a lot of this would be described in a situations vacant column but is covered in our contracts of employment under the dubious heading of "any other duties deemed reasonable by the Managers."

1. Switchboard. Simple enough you may think. A bright sparkling "Wycombe Wanderers, good morning" and plug in the right extension. Well what about all those calls that fall under the category of miscellaneous inquiries, the calls that no one wants to deal with? Yes, the telephonist pulls the short straw and manfully does her best.

To help us in our efforts to provide a good level of customer services we have developed a few exercises to practise in our quieter moments.

A) Putting a pin at random in a map of England and memorising the route to Adams Park. (Many callers are unable to deal with finding their own way onto the M40.)

B) Sobbing inaudibly. It is not the customer's fault that the telephonist has lockjaw from repeating "tonight's game is not all ticket" 100 times per hour.

C) Reading old programmes. I can guarantee that by 9.30 on a Monday morning someone (usually claiming to be an old Wanderers player) will phone to ask for the team line up from our 1987 Berks and Bucks 1st round fixture or Bodger Horsemans' final goal tally. They will then put us on hold while they shuffle off to find a pen.

2. Credit Card Hotline. It brings us bang up to date with a service comparable with our Premier League big brothers. Well, nearly! True, we have a brand new dedicated phone line.

A great idea, unless you are doubling up on switchboard and faced with the dilemma of cutting off a potential match sponsor to practise your sprint hurdles technique over to the other phone.

Then there's the matter of choosing your seats. In an ideal world this is a fairly simple procedure. The customer states his preference and we check our computer screen for availability.

Substitute a shoe box for the computer and you get the jist of our problem! Those of you who use the hotline may have wondered why there is often a significant pause when you ask which seats are free.

This is because we are now in collective panic mode. Our office is full of shoe boxes, which are just the right size to store the books of match tickets.

Funny isn't it how the one you want is never anywhere near the phone? Even a V.D.U. couldn't help with the lady who thought she could book seats in the dug out, or the gentleman who didn't mind where he went providing it wasn't near the woman in the headscarf!

3. Reception. During the week we deal with a variety of inquiries in the Commercial Office. Most of them are fairly straightforward, but, as you would expect, there are exceptions to every rule.

Isn't it amazing that the moment the Banqueting Manager drives out of the car park, a prospective bridal party bowl through the door insisting they have an appointment with someone we've never heard of.

Sales reps are an occupational hazard of any business, ours just add a football flavour to their sales pitch. "Ooh aah Cantona" is a favourite, but we show them the door just the same. We also have our fair share of visitors who don't actually want anything.

Usually cyclists, and obviously determined not to sit around the house all day, these people linger in reception staring intently at a very old photograph of Steve Coppell taken at the LeagueLine launch.

After much nodding of heads and writing notes, they furtively transfer all the promotional leaflets from the counter into their duffle bags and cycle off at top speed.

Add to this our regular calls from shifty looking men in raincoats bringing hot tips for the manager and nubile adolescent girls who just want to touch Steve Guppy how could life ever be dull!

Matchdays are different, this is now serious stuff. Tension runs high and the pressure mounts. Whatever our own area of responsibility during normal office hours, everyone is anxious that when the game is over, all has gone to plan – from the performance on the pitch, organisation and safe handling of the crowd, through to service in the bars and hospitality suites and efficient administration in the office.

Above all, we hope that everyone who came to watch Wycombe Wanderers enjoyed themselves. Sue, Kathy and I more so than most. After all, who do you all come and complain to?!

Blues are in the driving seat



Lending support on wheels: Cars have been provided by Davenport Vernon

THE history behind the company that is proud to supply the vehicles to The Blues.

Davenport Vernon, High Wycombe, Limited, the original company of the group moved from the High Street to London Road in 1967. The dealership is situated on a two-acre site.

In 1974 the Vauxhall franchise was installed, in the anticipation that General Motors would expand its presence in the United Kingdom, the concept which has been realised in recent years. A complete rebuild of the premises was completed in 1993.

From this major Vauxhall dealership we supply approximately 2,500 units per year. We employ 100 staff and provide a broad selection of services for all types of customers.

The Vehicle range consists of the new Corsa model, launched in 1993. The Astra mark 3, which came into production in 1991.

The Cavalier mark 4, was introduced in 1988. The exciting offroad Frontera, offered for sale in 1992, and the new and exciting Omega due to be in the showroom for April this year.

The location also exhibits our extensive used car display of 50 high quality vehicles, all prepared to our exceptional standards and offered with Davenport Vernon Warranties.

Staff in the Car Sales Department are available to offer advice Monday to Saturday 8.30am to 6.30pm and Sunday 10am to 4pm. Credit broking facilities provide buyers with competitive payments whether they are private or corporate for higher purchase, leasing or contract hire.

We are happy to offer advice in what is a complicated and technical subject. Whether you are a buyer for a company or a private individual our figures will be competitive. Demonstration vehicles are readily available for test drives.

The Workshop consists of ten, state of the art, servicing points where we are able to undertake any maintenance work that is required on our range of vehicles. We open Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm and Saturday morning.

Our Parts Department, which is fully computerised is by far the most comprehensive in the area.

We offer more than 7,000 parts from stock, and aim to supply nonstocked parts within one working day. Opening from 8.30am until 7pm Monday to Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Earlier this year we changed our oil company to Gulf and we have the facility of supplying unleaded and four star petrol. Diesel fuel is also offered from two pumps from our large forecourt.

The opening times for the forecourt are Monday to Saturday 6am to 10pm and Sunday 7am to 10pm.

Here's a chance to earn cash

DO you have a few hours a week to spare? Extra cash would come in handy?

Wycombe Wanderers Chiltern Gold Lottery is a door-to-door operation and this is where you could help.

We are looking for fit, flexible and sociable people to form a team of canvassers to develop our existing rounds and to create new ones as the need arises.

Experience has taught us that the best canvassers and agents are those who have the football club's interest at heart, as well as their own!

For every ticket that you sell you will earn 50 pence. It's as simple as that. on average thirty tickets are sold in a two hour period. work for two hours per evening, four nights a week and you would earn £60 per week.

If you want any more details about this, contact Mike Phillips on (0494) 472100

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Boot is on the other foot

Board of the Month

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10 THE BLUES NEWS

Wycombe Wanderers go to town



Opening up: Martin O'Neill at the Wanderers in Town shop in the Octagon, High Wycombe

BACK in November, Martin and his team officially opened Wanderers in Town. It was unbelievable to think that almost 500 people would turn up, the players were mobbed and had to go outside to sign autographs.

The shop is only a stone's throw away from Loakes Park, where the Club Shop was originally run from a window in the Burger Bar.

It was a big step for Wycombe to open a shop in Town as we hoped that we would be able to attract mums, grans and aunties or others who are unable to reach Adams Park on match days, or during the week. Many people have commented on how nice and professional the shop looks.

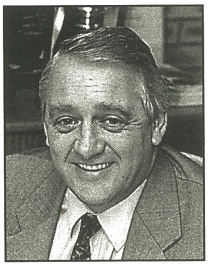
The colour TV and video are a big attraction and there are two men who wait for me to put the shutter up and the video on every morning. They must be sick of Scotty scoring another one against Slough!

It is interesting how many people just passing the shop pop in to have a look around, many comment on what a unique range of leisurewear we sell. Many people are unable to go to matches but buy a replica top or sweatshirt just to support the team.

It is amazing to think that 'Wanderers in Town' took as much money on the Saturday before Christmas as the Club Shop took the entire 1986 season. We hope that the shop continues to thrive. If you are shopping in the Octagon Centre then please come in and have a look around, and I would be interested to hear your comments and views about the shop and what range of products you would like to see in it.

Kerry Loveday

Our lads need you to get behind them



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE by Ivor Beeks

FUNNY old game football. For almost four years we have had so much success at Wycombe it seems to have become the "norm" for the future.

Saturday's result with Wigan has prompted me to pen a few notes about our success and support, unparalleled in the history of the club, and yet there are many mutterings and complaints about the players and management.

It is in these difficult and perhaps lacking in confidence times, that they need a good deal more of your support than when the results are running our way.

You pay your entrance fee and have the right as anyone else to criticise, but surely one has to look at the situation overall, or do we have such short memories that we have forgotten our trips to Wembley (twice), Charity Shield, Conference Champions, and many more.

Currently, as you know, we are near the top of the Third Division of the Football League and in the area final of the Autoglass Trophy, both of which we could only dream about six months ago.

I am sure many of you have attended work/business on a weekday and have felt more inclined to work harder some days than others.

Football I believe is no different, we cannot programme players for a particular result, we have to earn the right to play and compete. Unfortunately entertainment may and will be better some days than others.

I do trust the foregoing will, therefore, encourage you to get behind the team and support them even more in troubled or less popular times. It is at these times when your vocal support is urgently needed.

Talking of support I was sorry not to see John Goldsworthy's usual programme notes recently, and from the many letters received it does appear you are as well.

John has made a very valuable contribution to our matchday programme and I for one trust he can be persuaded to start again.

Criticism is a natural characteristic part of our life, but at times it does need to be tempered with thought.

Over the last few months I have received many letters from you, to which, I have now replied. If you write again, please be patient, I will respond to every letter in time.

Groundsman gets back to grass roots

By Jim Gardner

CORRECT irrigation is vital in the maintenance of sports pitches. It is of far more importance where sand has been used in the construction of the pitch.

Adams Park has 8in of a Garside sharp sand topped off with a 1in mix of the Garside sand 88 per cent and 12 per cent of a Fen Peat Loam.

A pop-up irrigation system was installed which consists of 40 sprinkler heads in five rows of eight. One row along each touchline, one row along each 18-yard box and one row along the middle. The four corner heads have a radius of 90 degrees, the 18 heads around the edge are 180 degrees and 18 which are 360 degrees.

To ensure even watering, I normally set the 360-degree heads for 20 minutes. The 180 degrees for 10 minutes and the corner ones for 5 minutes.

We have to use metered water and as this is very costly, I set the controller for a 1am start time. During the summer months, I also syringe for 23 minutes at a time throughout the day, this cools down the sand, if this was not done it would heat up and cause the young grass shoots to suffer.

The heads lift in pairs by means of water pressure, when the first pair have completed their time cycle they drop down, and the second pair then lift, and so on.

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Wycombe Wanderers Chiltern Gold Lottery is a door to door operation and this is where you could help.

We are looking for fit, flexible and sociable people to form a team of canvassers to develop our existing rounds and to create new ones as the need arises.

Experience has taught us that the best canvassers and agents are those who have the football club's interest at heart, as well as their own!

For every ticket that you sell you will earn 50 pence. It's as simple as that. On average thirty tickets are sold in a two hour period. Work for two hours per evening, four nights a week and you would earn £60 per week.

COULD YOU USE AN EXTRA £60 PER WEEK?

Join the Wanderers canvassing team today!

For full details, call Mike Phillips on (0494) 472100

Wanderers in Town

SPECIAL SPRING SALE AT "Wanderers in Town"

	NORMALLY	SALE PRICE
Adult Blue or Yellow Replica Shirt	£29.00	**£24.99***
Children's Blue or Yellow Replica Shirt	£24.99	**£19.99***
*** Price Includes a Free Pair of Shorts or Socks** "(While stocks last)		
Adult Blue, Yellow or White Shorts	£13.49	**£9.99**
Children's Blue, Yellow or White Shorts	£10.99	**£7.99**
Adult Blue or Yellow Shorts	£6.49	**£4.99**
Children's Blue or Yellow Socks	£5.99	**£3.99**
Navy Polo Leisure Shirts	£15.99	**£4.99**
Navy Baseball Caps	£5.99	**£2.99**
Out of the Blue Book	£9.99	**£2.00**
1992/93 Commemorative Brochure	£3.00	**50p**
The Blues Go Marching On Cassette	£2.99	**£1.50**
The Wanderer Cassette	£1.99	**50p**

THERE WILL BE MANY MORE ITEMS IN THE SALE, INCLUDING A LARGE SELECTION OF VIDEOS FROM ONLY £1

FREE FA TROPHY CAP

Anybody visiting our "Wanderers in Town" clubshop in the Octagon (opposite Littlewoods) during the sale will be given a FREE FA Trophy Cap. No purchase is necessary. (Caps will be limited to one person and offer is only while stocks last)

Sale Starts 9am Friday 4th March exclusively at "WANDERERS IN TOWN"

During the Sale EVERY PURCHASE OF £10 and over qualifies you for a FREE FA TROPHY SCARF. (While Stocks Last).

TELEPHONE (0494) 450957
for further details

We are here to help you

By Frank Knowles



Safety first: The ground staff want to ensure the safety of all the fans at Adams Park

SORRY Sir, but you are not allowed to bring those into the ground any more! This may have happened to you recently at the ground and you may have felt "What's going on, I've always brought these to the ground in the past with no problems and anyway, I thought we were here to watch a friendly game of football!".

Well don't lose heart, you may have come along to do just that. As you enter the Stadium, perhaps still cursing the person who must have labelled you a yobbo – spare a thought for the stewards who have to carry out the policy. A policy which has been carefully framed taking into account the tragedies of recent times like Hillsborough or Bradford.

If you have "suffered" at our hands, then you may have cursed the blasted safety officer, which you understand the club has recently appointed, and who you have been told has ordered these safety measures. Well this article has been written by him (or rather me, Frank Knowles) in order to dispel many of the myths or stories which you may have heard, including my dubious parentage.

Well I can assure you that both my parents were happily married by the time I was born!

But seriously, there have been many changes which the club has had to adapt to since our promotion to the Football League. Some of these have imposed restrictions on our usual fairly light-hearted attitudes to the staging of a game, and in doing so will have ruffled a few feathers. This article is intended to try to explain where we are going and what we are trying to achieve.

Firstly, the ground. As we are now in the Football League we are required to be licensed by the County Safety Committee (consisting of members of the Bucks County Council, Fire and Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police, Two Shires Ambulance Service Trust (the new name for Bucks Ambulance), and a Government inspector from the Football Licensing Authority.

You will have noticed that we have changed the layout of the barriers in the Hillbottom and Valley Stands. This has enabled us to offer more room to our fans.

In addition, we have provided a separation fence in Hillbottom Terrace to allow us the flexibility of offering our away supporters sufficient room to see the matches when they visit us.

One of the most often asked questions we get is, why have you closed off the turnstiles when we can all see there is plenty of room. It is true that there appears to be sufficient room for many more people. However, we are not allowed to let more than 1733 persons into the Woodland Stand at the moment. This restriction has been imposed by the Licensing Authority because we have no barriers erected in this Stand and this currently limits us to the 1733 persons.

You may be interested to know that we have applied for the installation of barriers in this Stand and once permission is granted, in the next few weeks we will start to put in hand the installation of new barriers which will allow us to provide standing spaces for just over 3000 persons.

We are all aware of the popularity of the Woodlands Stand and this increase should allow many of our supporters to always find their favourite spot.

Incidentally, the new small building extension at the side of the Woodlands Stand is the Match Control Room, and is the place where yours truly spends the most of each match day, ensuring your overall safety. This room has connected to it the turnstile counters which tell me the numbers of persons who have entered the ground via the various turnstiles. This mechanism is still in its infancy at the club, and I would ask you to excuse any problems you may have suffered being redirected to another entrance. We are all learning and are getting better at judging crowd densities on each successive match.

What about the confiscation or taking into safe keeping of items such as flags on poles, or flasks, or bottles, or air horns.

I know that the vast majority of our fans would not use such items as weapons or bring alcohol into the ground (which is strictly forbidden in any league football ground) but unfortunately some people do (and have done this season), and they spoil the enjoyment of the rest of you. This is why our stewards and police are more involved in searching some fans before you enter the ground. If you are one of those being searched, please be patient, we are doing it for the benefit of all our fans.

Still, its not all gloom and despondency, and believe me I want you all to enjoy your visit to Adams Park and to be free to spur on our team to even greater victories. It has, therefore, been agreed that in future, musical instruments and such like will not be confiscated before the match but may be freely used to make music or noise by the persons bringing them into the ground. However, such freedom must be exercised with care for the safety of all our fans, and so those fans who wish to use such instruments in the stadium will need to write to me so that I can be aware of the persons and instruments you wish to use. This way you still get to use the instruments at a match to rally support for our team.

Cameras seem to be more prevalent these days at football grounds, but it is a ground rule that only authorised cameras are allowed to be used in the ground, and so my stewards will be asking those of you who bring a camera to the ground, not to use it.

You know we really are very lucky at the Wanderers to have such a loyal and family–based following to support our players. It is my intention to ensure their safety at all times so that we can continue to attract the families to our ground.

One way I hope you have found helpful is that I have allowed small children to stand in the emergency perimeter gates because otherwise they cannot see the match unless they are held in their parents' arms.

From my point of view, it makes good sense not only in encouraging our younger fans, but also on the safety side should an emergency occur, the smallest children would be the first to be onto the pitch, and away from any danger.

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