

The **BLUES NEWS**

The official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club

Mac's
having a
ball again



Issue No. 34

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THE BLUES NEWS

Super saves kick off new era at the Park

THE departure of Alan Smith and David Kemp was extremely quick. Chairman Ivor Becks saw them first thing in the morning, and by 9.40am they were both in my office shaking my hand to say goodbye and thanks for everything. It must take a lot of bottle to say goodbye to all the players and staff having been released from your responsibilities as a football manager.

One thing Alan Smith did, that possibly not all fans know, was that he always spoke to the sponsors before every match. He also answered quite openly all the questions he was asked, sometimes giving an answer the sponsors did not want to hear.

The sponsors really appreciated that Alan Smith did a pre-match talk in all the sponsors rooms before every match, regardless of the previous matches results. One can presume however that the main reason he departed was that we had only won on league match out of our last 16. If I had failed to get 15 matches sponsored out of 16, then I would be expecting a P45 in the post from the chairman.

The ServisPak Stand open day last Monday was the second time this season that the club has freely opened its doors to the general public. Wycombe Wanderers is very much a community club being owned exclusively by £1 shareholders who are season ticket holders. Being a company limited by guarantee, all profits made by Wycombe Wanderers Football Club Ltd go into improving the playing staff and facilities for both the loyal supporters and the local community.

The Board of Directors are very keen to encourage every member of the community to try out the excellent new

**COMMERCIAL
BREAK**
By
Mark Austin



facilities at Adams Park, and tomorrow will present families with a unique opportunity. For the first time ever at Adams Park the club is offering seats in the new ServisPak Stand for only a "Quid-A-Kid" a saving of £4 per ticket, with no restrictions on numbers attending (while the 7,306 seats are available).

Should your children prefer to stand, then they can do for only a "Pound in the Ground" in the AXA Equity & Law Stand a saving of £3.50 per ticket, no restrictions.

When we first ran the "Quid-A-Kid" scheme on the terraces in 1994/95 we had over 7,000 turn up. Unfortunately so many came they could not see properly. But with 1,738 seats in the Bucks Free Press Family Enclosure and 2,842 seats in the Upper Tier, which will only be sold at £1 once the lower tier sells out, of the new ServisPak Stand and 1,267 seats in the Mainstand, there is plenty of seating enabling children a fantastic view of the match.

The last two "Quid-A-Kid" matches were 0-0 affairs, lets hope tomorrow against Wrexham that the larger than normal crowd is treated to a thoroughly entertaining match.

Finally, I recently lost heavily at golf to Alec Tuckerman, chairman of ServisPak Ltd and my forfeit is to announce this in the Blues News. It is polite, nay my duty, to lose to highly valued sponsors, and as sponsors of the Centres of Excellence and the new ServisPak Stand, ServisPak are certainly very important to Wycombe Wanderers. My congratulations to Alec in beating a 27.2 handicapper!



Young fans enjoy their chance to check out the new stand at Adams Park at Monday's open day

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Pictures for this edition of The Blues News were supplied by Wycombe Wanderers and the Bucks Free Press.

The Blues News is the official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers. It is produced in association with the Bucks Free Press. Any correspondence should be sent to the Editor, The Blues News, Wycombe Wanderers Football Club, Hillbottom Road, Sands, High Wycombe. Telephone (0494) 472100. Fax (0494) 527633.

A wander into Blues' history

THE Official History of Wycombe Wanderers (1887-1996) goes on sale tomorrow at Wanderers in Town from 9am and at the Cornerflag Clubshop from 12 noon, costing £16.95

Steve Peart and Dave Finch's book will be officially launched before tomorrow's match with Wrexham. It has been dedicated to Roger Vere, former chairman of club Sponsors Verco Office Furniture Ltd who died recently.

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THE BLUES NEWS

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Gregory the great

A NEW era begins at Wycombe Wanderers tomorrow when John Gregory takes control of the team for the first time since his appointment as manager earlier this week.

Only time will tell, but I believe that we've hired a truly outstanding man who will take this club onwards and upwards.

The process of selecting a new manager was a long and difficult one. The board of directors agonised over some talented and experienced applicants before we agreed that John was the right choice.

Neil Smillie figured prominently in our thoughts and it's important to state how close he came to getting the vote. Neil has done a superb job since he joined Wycombe 16 months ago and will continue to play a vital role in our future.

However, the board felt that John Gregory is the right man to spark this club into life again. John was a top class player for Aston Villa, Queens Park Rangers and Derby County. He played more than 600 games at the highest level and was capped six times by England when Bobby Robson was manager.

When he finished playing, John moved into coaching and then management with Portsmouth before the call came to join his former Villa team mate Brian

Wycombe Wanderers director Alan Parry tells Blues News why he thinks new boss John Gregory will become one of the game's top managers in the next few years.



Little. For the past six years, he has fulfilled the role of first team coach and assistant manager to Little at Leicester and Aston Villa.

He coached the Leicester team which reached the First Division play off final in three successive seasons before winning promotion to the Premier League. Last season he helped to steer Aston Villa to victory in the Coca-Cola Cup and fourth place in the Premier League.

John is widely regarded as one of the best young coaches in the country and I think we are very fortunate to have acquired a manager with such an outstanding pedigree. In addition, he is ambitious, intelligent, articulate, and has a charismatic personality. I will go on record as predicting that he will become one of this country's top managers.

It is a measure of how far Wycombe has come that John was prepared to walk away from a secure and well paid job with one of the biggest clubs in the game. He is ambitious and energetic and I think he saw those same qualities in Wycombe Wanderers. It is a very exciting combination.

I must stress that the calibre of applicants was extremely high. We attracted the interest of many big names who've played and managed at the highest level. But John's record and burning desire to join this club shine through.

As a player and as a coach he has always believed that football should be entertaining and good to watch. He believes in a passing game which gives players the freedom to express themselves. But – most important of all – John Gregory is a winner. The worst thing I've ever heard anyone say about

John is that he's a bad loser – and to me that's a quality, not a fault.

Let no-one be in any doubt that our new manager takes over at a very difficult time. With only ten points from 14 league games we have a great deal of work to do just to reach the safety zone in Division Two. It's a challenge he will relish.

With financial resources stretched to the limit by the building of the new stand, John will have very little money to strengthen the squad. However, if we can win back the support of our "missing" spectators, then the atmosphere at Adams Park will improve and the additional revenue will be put to good use.

Exciting times lie ahead. Neil Smillie has lived up to his name and created a happy spirit around the club. John Gregory will build upon that and use his coaching expertise and man management skills to bring the best out of the players. With your support we can get this club moving forward again.

Finally, I would like to place on record our appreciation of the way Aston Villa FC dealt with John Gregory's decision to leave. Villa chairman Mr Doug Ellis and manager Mr Brian Little could not have handled the matter any better and the whole affair proved why Villa is rightly regarded as one of the best clubs in football. We owe them a thank you for releasing John.

Special offers that will make you Smillie

WANDERERS In Town and the Cornerflag Club Shop at Adams Park have several Christmas present ideas in stock and there are plenty of sale bargains to be had at both outlets.

College scarves are down from £5.50 to just £2.99 and a pack of three Wycombe Wanderers coat hangers is now just £1.99, offering a £1 saving.

There are massive savings to be had on last year's goalie tops which have come down from £34.99 to £14.99 and if that is not enough there is £30 off Vandanel Bench Jackets and manager's jackets, both now going for £49.99.

On special offer for a limited time only, are all five differently designed Wycombe Wanderers Lledo model vans. These have been reduced from £7.99 to £4.99. The vans, which are all limited edition, come with an official collectors item certificate. There is also the additional offer of buy four and get another free. The offer ends on New Year's Eve or while stocks last.

The popular new mini kits for your car window are now in stock at £2.99.

The brand new range of Wycombe Wanderers Mizuno training kit is also available at both club shops. The range includes rugby shirts, t shirts and sweat shirts, all at competitive prices.

The newly-published Official History of Wycombe Wanderers goes on sale at both outlets from tomorrow.

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Please tear off and retain this upper portion for your information.

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PLAYER PROFILE

Lawrence is a Liver lad

FULL NAME: Matthew James Lawrence
DATE OF BIRTH: 19.6.74
HEIGHT: 6ft
WEIGHT: 12.7st
HOME: Rushden, Northamptonshire
CAR: No
MARRIED: No
CHILDREN: No
DAD'S JOB: Research Scientist
BROTHERS & SISTERS: One, sister called Rebecca (20)
FAMILY PETS: None
NICKNAME AT CLUB: Matty and/or mute for obvious reasons

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHO DO YOU SHARE A ROOM WITH ON AWAY TRIPS? Terry Skiverton.
DOES HE HAVE ANY ANNOYING HABITS? Talks too much.

WHAT WAS YOUR AMBITION AS A CHILD? To play for Liverpool.
WHAT IS YOUR AMBITION NOW? Very similar.

WHO WAS YOUR BOYHOOD HERO? Kenny Dalglish.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST THRILL IN LIFE? Representing my country as an England Schoolboy Under-18 and turning pro last January.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT IN LIFE? Hasn't happened yet.

WHAT IS YOUR SADDEST MOMENT IN FOOTBALL? Being one step away for Wembley as an 11-year-old.

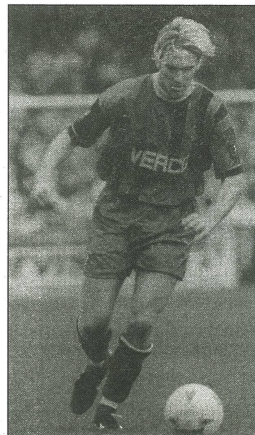
WHICH PRESENT-DAY FOOTBALLER DO YOU ADMIRE MOST? Jamie Redknapp (on and off the field).

WHO IS THE GREATEST PLAYER THERE HAS EVER BEEN? George Best.

WHO HAS BEEN THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER? Father and Alan Cox (junior school teacher).

WHO IS THE TOUGHEST OPPONENT YOU HAVE FACED? I'll tell you later in the season.

WHICH MANAGER HAS BEEN THE



BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER? Jack Murray (Rothwell Town FC)

WHAT JOB WOULD YOU BE DOING IF YOU HADN'T MADE IT AS A FOOTBALLER? Anything to do with journalism

AWAY FROM FOOTBALL, WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR GREATEST SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT? Playing cricket to county level

WHAT IS THE FUNNIEST MOMENT YOU HAVE SEEN ON A FOOTBALL PITCH? Dave Farrell's red boots

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT IN FOOTBALL?

Getting beat 4-0 in a televised quarter-final while playing in the USA.

WHICH TEAM DID YOU SUPPORT AS A BOY? Liverpool

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE GROUND? Anfield

WHAT OTHER SPORTS AND HOBBIES DO YOU ENJOY? Cricket and Golf

DO YOU HAVE ANY UNUSUAL FOOD THAT IMPROVES YOUR GAME? Any junk food

AWAY FROM FOOTBALL, WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE SPORTSMAN? Deion Sanders

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION? Hi-fi and record collection

DO YOU PLAY ANY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS? No

IS THERE A SPORTING DREAM YOU WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE ACHIEVED IN ANOTHER SPORT? Playing major league football

WHAT REALLY ANNOYS YOU IN FOOTBALL? Sky analysts

WHAT ARE YOUR PET HATES OUTSIDE FOOTBALL? People who knock achievement

FAVOURITES

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Dave Farrell - Denzil, Margaret and Andrew Ashcroft

Dave Carroll - Mike Clark

Gary Patterson - The Adams Family Fanzine

Matt Crossley - Ann Cohen & Co Solicitors (01494) 677421

Damien Markman - Wycombe Wanderers Independent Supporters Club

Brian Parkin - Chairboys On The Net 100746.232@compuserve.com

Terry Evans - Carvells Newsagents, Marlow

Matt Lawrence - Gerald Edelman - Chartered Accountants

Keith Ryan - Link Precision Services (01844) 347062

Terry Skiverton - City Index Spread Betting (0171) 528 9887

Jim Melvin (Assistant Manager) - Francis Glenister, Salmon Brothers Int. Ltd

Jason Cousins - Liz Baines

Steve McGavin - Sharon Healey

Dave Jones (Physio) - The Smurfettes

Remaining players available for sponsorship are:

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John Cheesewright



Dave Carroll has been sponsored by Mike Clark

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● A full colour headshot of your player will appear in every matchday programme along with the shirt sponsors name.

● Various PA announcements pre-match and recognition within the Blues News on a regular basis throughout the season.

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● Sponsors names appearing in the Laurent Perrier man of the match section in the matchday programme if your player won the man of the match award for the previous home match.

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month presentation if your player is chosen by the supporters. All presentations take place on the pitch prior to a home fixture.

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The whole package costs only £200 plus VAT. For more information please contact Tim Arnold on (01494) 472100.

THE BLUES NEWS

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Moaners: What is your excuse now?

OK FOLKS, where were you for the home game against Rotherham? I have read the "I'm not coming to watch Wanderers while Alan Smith is manager" letters with some suspicion for some time.

Smith departs and the following day we entertain Rotherham in front of 3,500. Fair enough, Rotherham are not the biggest draw, but the game unfolded with such drama that it has to be nominated as one of the top ten Wycombe games over the past ten seasons. The following Saturday we beat Notts County but registered the second lowest gate in Division Two at 4,500.

My suspicion is that the "I'm not coming" brigade were not going to come anyway even if Alan Shearer was player manager.

The club is not going to progress if the level of support does not increase. The accounts for last season show this.

Somehow the Bucks Free Press obtained a copy of the accounts produced for the benefit of shareholders (which could be you if you are a season ticket holder) before the ink was dry. Their report was very detailed and sympathetic. The

Financial director Graham Peart asks what's happened to the stay-away fans. Alan Smith has gone but the fans have not come back.

sub heading was "Losses equal £6,000 a week as side struggles to find glory". A stark truth.

Like most things you get what you pay for. Frequently the club with the lowest wage bill is relegated. Thankfully, it is not always the club with the highest wage bill that gets promotion, but it helps.

The club lost £309,000 last season. Turnover was down by 1.5 per cent while costs rose by 9.3 per cent. Revenue from the lottery was down by £47,000 due to the impact of the National Lottery.

Returning to the increased costs, player wages rose by nearly £100,000 as we consolidated our Division Two position. The youth team turned full time at a cost of nearly £100,000 and money was spent improving facilities.

Revenue from sponsors, advertisers, banquets, sportsman's dinners, etc, showed a modest increase. However, revenue from season ticket sales and gate

receipts dropped by £75,000, or nearly 10 per cent.

Obviously I am disappointed by these figures. It is disheartening for the off-the-field team to put in so much effort and not to see the fruits of their labour. I am confident that better figures will come as a result of recent changes.

Dear supporter, do not get too depressed by the set backs of the past season. Your club is in excellent shape. In the recently published Annual Review of Football Finance, Wanderers are held up as a shining example. The analysis covers all professional clubs in the 94/95 season and a few facts are interesting. Clubs particularly from the lower three divisions are generally in a perilous state. So much so that the book measured retained reserves or net worth of the clubs and Wycombe was rated as the fifth wealthiest club in England.

I quote "At the end of 1994/95 financial years the five clubs with positive reserves over £3 million were Arsenal (£11.1million), Aston Villa (£7.2 million), Manchester United (£24.1million), Spurs (£19.2 million) and Wycombe Wanderers (£3.6 million)".

Blackburn had the largest deficit

at £27.3 million followed by Newcastle at £22.9 million.

While others seem to have completely lost their heads we are not about to do so. Many supporters care little about the financial welfare of their club, only about the number of goals scored. That is reasonable until financial paralysis sets in, as it has done at Brighton, Hull and others where it becomes impossible to improve the squad by purchases. They run out of money.

In the case of Wycombe the wealth is mainly in the magnificent stadium. The club is short of available cash but it is not about to take the short term view and borrow large sums of money to buy players. That is not the way forward.

Henry Ford once said "Dedication counts for more than money". In the glorious O'Neill era it worked. But we were in the Conference when the bandwagon gained momentum. It will happen again. The current team is dedicated to make it happen but it is going to be much more difficult in Division Two.

It would be easier if more money was taken at the turnstiles and that is down to you, the supporter, starting on Saturday.

Tickety-boo at the Blues ticket office

WANDERERS have changed their ticket office operation following complaints from fans who experienced teething problems with the new system.

After a successful trial over the last two matches, the following ticket arrangements will now apply.

Ticket Office (by the club shop): Window One is for pre-booked collections; Window Two for the Main Stand; Windows Three and Four for the Family Stand.

Ticket Office Two is for the ServisPak upper tier.

Tickets for the AXA Equity & Law Terrace are available at the turnstiles.

Ticket Office One will open at noon for Saturday matches selling tickets for any part of the ground until Ticket Office Two opens at 1pm. For evening matches both offices will open at 6pm.

The commercial office will be open until kick-off for fans wanting tickets for future matches. It will not normally open after games, unless there is a forthcoming cup match.

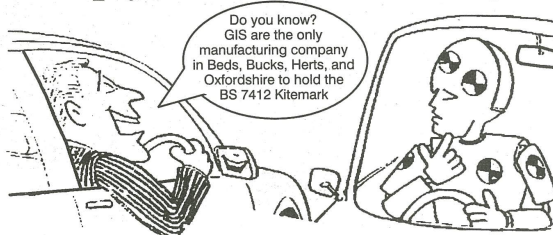
Credit cards and cheques may be used at any ticket office window but not at the turnstiles.

The club has apologised for the teething problems experienced during the first three months and thanked those supporters who suggested the improvements which have now been made.

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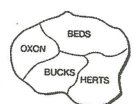
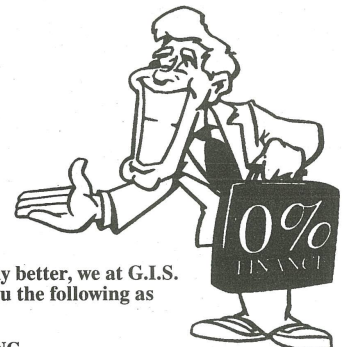
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THE BLUES NEWS

Give me pride and passion

A GREAT deal has already been written about the departure of Alan Smith and Dave Kemp. I have no wish to add weight to any arguments other than to say that both men did honestly try to produce the results to get Wycombe Wanderers up the league.

It is always regrettable when somebody leaves a job for whatever reason, yet the people mentioned, together with the board, reached a mutual decision in an adult and sensible manner with the best interests of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club put first.

The home game against Rotherham was always going to be difficult coming straight after Alan's departure but it looked even worse after giving them a two-goal lead. In fairness to the lads we knuckled down to pull one back before the break. We did not really need half time to come as we were flying.

The mood in the dressing room was very positive, clearly our goal made all the difference and we went on to be comfortable winners.

Notts County was a good team performance. We changed a few of our set plays which fortunately produced a goal. It was surprising and disappointing that we did not go on to score more and it could so easily have been a game where the opposition went away with something.

Two unprofessional goals were conceded at Bournemouth, but if

CAPTAIN'S LOG

by Terry Evans

the second half had been a boxing match the ref would have stepped in to rescue them. We cannot continue to give teams a two goal start and then expect to turn it around later on.

Bristol City were stronger and wanted the win far more than we did, our performance there was totally unacceptable especially in the league position we are in, desperately needing points.

People have recently mentioned to me that we were in limbo not knowing who was in charge but this was not the case, each player knows what is expected of him and should want to play for Wycombe Wanderers first and foremost no matter if the manager is Martin O'Neill, Alan Smith or even Alex Ferguson. Each player needs to play with more pride, passion and commitment to get us away from the bottom.

I would like to thank all the supporters who have stuck by us, especially those who clapped us off the pitch at Bristol. We had not played well that night and let both ourselves and the supporters down, yet people stayed behind which was quite unbelievable.

Your continued support is really appreciated by all the lads.



Terry Evans: Proud to wear the Wanderers shirt

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- You pay reasonable interest rates - just 18.9% APR (variable) for purchases
- You can chop the interest you pay on transfers from your existing credit cards down to just 13.9% APR, fixed for six months
- Plus there's a comprehensive collection of financial benefits - at no extra charge

Are you scoring an own goal by paying an annual fee for an ordinary credit card? You could be showing your support for Wycombe Wanderers F.C. on and off the pitch with the Wycombe Wanderers Visa Card - a credit card with NO ANNUAL FEE and no booking fee on the Creditcard Hotline.

Not only will you be showing your support, you really will be giving it, too. For every accepted cardholder, MBNA International, the bank that issues the card on our behalf, will pay us a royalty. Then every time you make purchases with your card, a small percentage of the total transaction value goes to our funds. You'll be an official Wycombe Wanderers F.C. sponsor - at no extra cost to you!

Which would you prefer to carry, a card that supports only the bank that issues it... or one that gives valuable financial assistance to your favourite football club?

Hundreds of loyal Wycombe Wanderers supporters have already switched to the Wycombe Wanderers Visa Card. If you want to benefit yourself and the club, call today without delay.

Get a FREE Information pack now:

Please quote reference GT 79

0800 776262

Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

☒ Please rush me information about the fee-free Wycombe Wanderers Visa Card.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone: () _____ Day _____

() _____ Evening _____

Please return to: MBNA, International Bank Ltd,
PO Box 1048, FREEPOST, Chester CH4 922

If you don't want to cut your paper, simply call on the freephone number quoting reference GT79, or write to MBNA at the address above quoting reference GCT9.

The Wycombe Wanderers Visa card is issued by MBNA International Bank Ltd, Stanfield House, Chester Business Park, CH4 9QZ. The Wycombe Wanderers Visa card monthly interest rate on purchases is 1.45% (variable), equivalent to an APR of 18.9%. The monthly interest rate on credit card cheques, ATM cash advances and over the counter cash advances is 1.25% (variable), fixed for six months from the date your account is opened, equivalent to an APR of 13.9% for credit card cheques and an APR of 16.7% for ATM cash advances and over the counter cash advances. After six months the monthly interest rate for purchases applies to all transactions. APRs are calculated on a fee exclusive basis and £1,000 credit limit. The minimum monthly payment is just 3% of the outstanding balance (minimum £5). There will be a handling charge for ATM cash advances and over the counter cash advances of 1.25% (variable) (min £1, max £25). There is no handling charge for credit card cheques. 200% is available at all cash machines only at national speed 10 or over. Written quotations available on request.

Wycombe Wanderers Football Club Limited

'QUID-A-KID'

Wycombe Wanderers Football Club are running two "Quid-A-Kid" Days on:

Saturday 26th October 1996 - Wycombe Wanderers v Wrexham

3pm Kick-Off

Saturday 29th March 1997 - Wycombe Wanderers v Shrewsbury Town

3pm Kick-Off



Wherever concessions are offered to under 16 year olds, the club will only be charging "A Pound in the Ground" or "A Quid-A-Kid" on the above two dates in the Bucks Free Press Family Enclosure, the Amersham & Wycombe College Stand (for away fans only) and in the AXA Equity & Law Stand.

Tickets for only £1 can be purchased now for both matches from the Commercial Offices at Adams Park (open Monday - Friday 9.15am - 5.15pm and matchdays). Wanderers in Town in the Octagon Shopping centre, opposite Littlewoods (open Monday - Saturday 9am - 5.30pm) and on the circuit card hotline (01494) 441118 (open Monday - Friday 9.15am - 5.15pm and matchdays). All children under 8 years old must be accompanied by an adult, O.A.P. or student please. There are no other restrictions, you can purchase as many children's tickets for £1 as you like. All Seats and Standing tickets will be sold on a "White Stocks Last" basis. Over 16s pay £8 to sit or £7 to stand, unless a student, O.A.P. or disabled, who pay £5 to sit and £4.50 to stand in the concessionary areas. Don't miss out - buy your tickets now for these crucial league matches.

Wycombe Star & Bucks Free Press SPONSORS OF Wycombe Wanderers Family Stand

CHILTERN WEDDING SHOW

AT BUCKS COLLEGE
NEWLAND PARK
GREENLANDS LANE
CHALFONT ST GILES

Sunday 27th
October

See page 19, 20, 21
Freetime, for details