The BLUES NEWS

The official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club



Issue No. 37

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Why Posh can't be free for all

COMMERCIAL BREAK
By Mark Austin

THE 1996/97 season is turning out to be the hardest commercially since I joined Wycombe Wanderers over five years ago.

When I started watching Wycombe Wanderers in November 1991, the day Dave Carroll scored one of the best goals I have ever seen in a 4-1 win over Merthyr Tydfil in the GM Vauxhall Conference, I had no idea of the commercial rollercoaster ride I was signing up for.

My first match was against Farnborough Town on a frosty evening in early 1992, when their goalkeeper broke his leg and the referee abandoned the match after 64 minutes.

It was not until January 11, 1997 against Peterborough United that Wycombe Wanderers were to have another match abandoned, this time after 63 minutes! Frankly in my opinion neither match should have started.

Abandoned matches are fortunately a very rare event at Adams Park. Our record of only two abandonments over a period of nearly seven seasons is pretty good. The current league rules of no refunds if half-time is reached, seems rather harsh on the paying customer, but proportionally is better than what cricket currently offers. My understanding is once 20 overs have been bowled, no refunds are given.

It is no secret that Wycombe Wanderers are short of money and barring unforseen income will make a trading loss this season. The referee's decision to abandon the Peterborough match when the Blues were leading 2-0 has not only cost us three points but also several thousands of pounds in extra costs.

Under the Football League rules WWFC will now have to pay all Peterborough United's travelling and hotel expenses (yes unfortunately they will use a hotel during the afternoon for a rest).

When the match is finally replayed the police, stewards, matchday staff and referee, will all have to be paid again.

The board of directors decided to give a loyalty bonus to season ticket holders and not charge them any entrance fee for this league match. Unfortunately the club cannot afford to stage this match for free, so anybody who paid, including all Peterborough United fans, will have to pay again.



Counting the cost: Blues' sales and marketing director Mark Austin has felt the financial effects of Wanderers' current slump

The club would have liked to offer a discount to those who attended the first match, but unfortunately the way in which the abandonment was handled made that impossible.

The Football League had given all referees written instructions at the beginning of the season about the procedure for abandoning matches.

The referee must inform the fourth official of his intentions so that the fourth official can inform the police, safety officer, club officials and PA announcer.

The fourth official was unfortunately not informed and consequently the brown gates had not been open, stewards were not in place and all procedures set in motion.

As the club were not able to tell people to retain their tickets the boards of directors decided it would be an administrative nightmare to try and do something retrospectively.

An official report form has been sent to the Football Association by WWFC concerning referee Mr Frazer Stretton's actions.

Returning to the disappointment of the 1991/92 season finishing second to Colchester United on goal difference having amassed 94 points, was at first sight a commercial setback. In hindsight it turned out to be a tremendous financial foundation as the very next season crowds rose by 1,000 as we did the double during the 1992/93 season. This gave us the means to go through Division Three in our first season in the Football League.

We then finished sixth and 12th during the last two seasons in Division Two, and in the process developed Adams Park into a First Division stadium with top class facilities.

The response of sponsors, advertisers and supporters over the last few years has been fantastic, for without their investment the club would not have been able to progress as fast as it has.

Because of our constitution the club can only raise monies through commercial activities, matchday receipts, transfer fees or donations. The rise in expenditure on the new stand and players wages has not yet been matched by the increase of the commerical activities.

Commerically we ideally need success on the field again to bring in extra revenue. There are many in football who think being at the top of a division below is better financially because of higher attendances, rather than being near the bottom of a division.

I personally do not subscribe to that view, as being at the top is no certainty and no guarantee of promotion unless you stay there. Also without being in Division Two you cannot reach Division One next season, which is where the real television financial rewards start.

Commercially WWFC would be much better off in Division Two, rather than Division Three in my view.

Finally, I would like to say what a delight it is working with John Gregory and his team. I wish him the very best for the rest of the season.

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

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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.

Roll up for York City

MAKE sure you are there for Wanderers' vital six pointer against York City at Adams Park tomorrow, (ko 3pm), and see former Arsenal striker Paul Read make his home debut, since signing for £130,000.

Seats in the Bucks Free Press Family Enclosure are £5 for children, OAPs and students. Adult seats are £8.

AXA Equity & Law Stand tickets are £7 adults and £4.50 concessions.

All tickets are available at the ground tomorrow from the ticket offices or in advance from Wanderers in Town in the Octagon Shopping Centre or the Commercial Offices at Adams Park.

Sue's Keen to do the business for Wanderers

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF
By Sue Keen
from the Commercial Office

CONTRARY to some peoples' ideas of a football club office our jobs are very much based on the normal office routine of invoicing, banking, correspondence and subsequently filing.

The only difference from other office work is the ticket selling side.

This is one of my main areas of responsibility along with sales ledger and banking.

My first job is to check that the ticket computer is up and running then it is a matter of waiting for the customers. I deal with the customers over the counter and on the credit card hot line.

In between ticket selling I do the day's banking and all invoicing for the banqueting side of the business.

No two days are the same. Some days I may have mascot details to send out or letters to go to the match officials confirming matchday information, letters to write to the visiting clubs confirming details. I also send programme details to the teams we are about to visit in advance of any away match.

The home matchday programme details for mascots, junior blues birthdays and officials all have to be done a week in advance of all home games.

All of these jobs are interspersed with phone calls from supporters (away and home) requiring details of ticket prices and how to get to Adams Park.

We have to be a walking encyclopedia of bus time tables, train times and carry a mental road map of how to arrive at Adams Park on time for a particular match from all the four points of the compass.

Contrary to the opinions of some supporters we do try to help everyone to the best of our ability.

The week speeds by and before I know it we arrive at Friday and one of my busiest days of the week especially if there is a home match the following day.

Bulk tickets for the Axa Equity & Law stand have to be printed, and also tickets for the away fans who still pay at the turnstiles. The Boardroom list has to be collated and the tickets allocated.

At about 11 o'clock the ticket requests from other clubs scouts start to come in on the fax and they have to be issued tickets and entered onto the car park list.

At the end of each day the reports from the day's sales on the ticket system have to be run and all the backups run, this is the final act of the working day and once all these have been completed I can then go home.

Boss apologises to Blues fans

GREG'S GRAPEVINE
By John Gregory

I have just had to endure one of the longest coach journeys of my life.

The trip back from Rotherham was probably only three hours in real time, but in my mind it appeared to last for weeks.

Last Saturday's game at Millmoor marked the lowest point of my time here at Wycombe Wanderers. After such an encouraging run in the League all the progress I feel the club had made, evaporated in those 90 minutes against the division's bottom club.

I must of course firstly question myself. I am responsible for this club's performances and I refuse to hide behind anyone.

So, I apologise to all the fans who made the long trip to Yorkshire. I sincerely hope you will never have to witness such a pathetic display from my team again.

Now that I have got that off my chest, let's be positive. Ten wins from 20 matches, Simple as that! Heads down, work hard, ten at home and ten away.

We have done quite well at home of late so I will take encouragement from that.

I cannot let this opportunity go without giving a mention to Frazer Stretton of West Bridgford, Nottingham (our referee versus Peterborough in that abandoned match).

You will of course have read my comments regarding his handling of the match.

I have filled in a match report, where Iam asked various questions about the referee such as: Did he keep up with play? Did he use his linesmen well? Did he play the advantage rule well? etc, etc.

There was also a question that asked was the game a difficult game for him to handle?

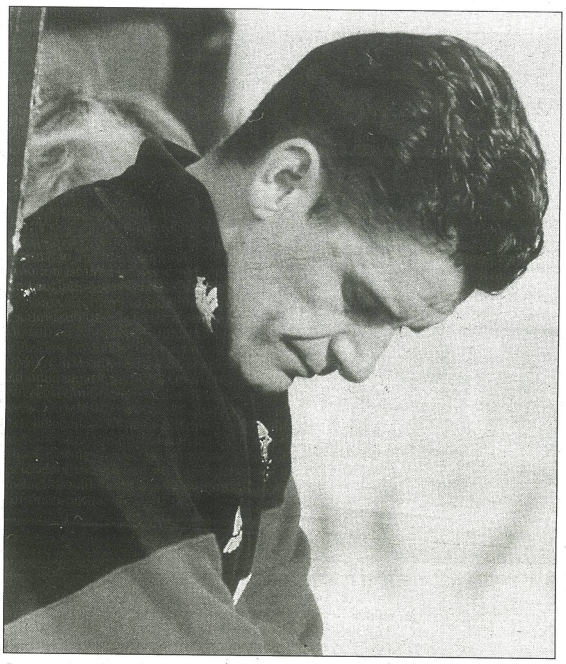
My answer was "No not at all", because it wasn't difficult to handle. The game should never have started but the match was played in an excellent spirit by both teams spending all their time trying to stand up.

Those three points at the time would have made an unbelievable difference to the club and our current plight.

I think sometimes that the forces are working against us here at Adams Park but no matter what we get thrown at us we will overcome it and stay up.

I would like to finish for this month's Blues News on a happy note by congratulating Mr C Foy from St Helens because after 41 league and cup matches he awarded Wycombe Wanderers a penalty during that defeat at Rotherham United last Saturday.

Well done Mr Foy. Regards, John.



So sorry: Manager John Gregory after the Rotherham defeat

New Year kicks off with forum

LOOKING back over the past 12 months, it certainly has not been dull, writes Keith Blagbrough of the Blues Supporters Club.

As a result of our meetings with the football club you will notice, better treatment of the Junior Blues (which is still not good enough compared to other clubs), better coverage of player sponsorship in the programme, hot drinks being provided after the match in the Vere and Woodlands Suites and the restoration of second priority booking which was being ignored.

We continue to press (amongst other things) your views regarding the first team shirt design, pricing of restricted view seats in the stands, and the provision of better facilities for away supporters.

But it does not stop here. Our next meeting is a top quality forum and we have invited John Gregory, Dermot Gallagher (a FIFA Referee who was England's nominee for Euro 96) and Inspector Roger Doe who has responsibility for policing at Adams Park to make up the panel.

This will be in the Keen Lounge at Adams Park on Thursday, January 30 so come along and enjoy the evening which starts at 7.45pm. Admission is free for Blues Supporters Club members and Junior Blues. Admission to non-members is £1.

Win a V.I.P day

WANDERERS are running a hospitality box corporate draw, where every entrant gets at least a V.I.P. day out at a home match this season and an autographed ball.

Every entry wins a day out for two including pre match talk by John Gregory, parking pass, stadium tour, programmes, A four course meal, premium seats, tea, coffee and biscuits at half time, access to the players bar post match and publicity in the programme.

The winner gets exclusive use of an executive box for 10, worth more than £800, for a match this season. The entry fee is £50+VAT. The draw takes place at half-time on Saturday, February 22 against Watford at Adams Park. For entry forms and details contact the club on 01494 472100

Blues salute ref!

WANDERERS sends congratulations to Andrew Stacey on gaining his FIFA Refereeing Certificate.

Born in Wycombe he emigrated to Australia five years ago. He was referee and linesman for Berks & Bucks, a class one referee on the Wycombe League, Sunday League and Isthmian league. He is now a referee and linesman for Australian Soccer and Victoria Premier League. The 37 year-old officiated in Terry Venables first game as Australia's manager last Saturday as the Aussies beat New Zealand 1-0.

Dad, Eric runs Chapel Glass in Bridge Street, High Wycombe, who are keen Wanderers fans who have been sponsoring the club for years.

Wanderers sorrow

THE club was saddened to hear of the death of John Addison, one of its faithful Vice Presidents. John was a regular at Adams Park during the last five years, attending Sportsman's Dinners and matches.

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Alan gets steamed up about the weather

By Alan Parry
Wanderers Director and Sky Television commentator



They think it's all over: And it was after referee Frazer Stretton's controversial decision after 63 minutes

WHENEVER English football is caught in the grip of icy weather it produces so much chaos and confusion that you'd think we'd think we'd never seen frosty pitches before.

In the past couple of weeks we've had matches postponed less than an hour before the kick-off and other games allowed to start when it was obvious they would never finish.

It is surely time for an urgent review of how we deal with wintry weather.

Forget the idea of a mid-season break – our climate is too unpredictable and we play too many games for that to be practical.

We must face the fact that this can be a very cold country and design an efficient plan to deal with the problems can cause. At the moment the system seems to be completely hit and miss.

I have great sympathy for the fans of Manchester City and Bolton who travelled hundreds of miles for FA Cup ties in the south only to learn far too late that the games had been called off.

The Derby supporters who went to Gillingham had an even worse experience when their game was abandoned after 66 minutes.

Where there is the slightest doubt about the weather, pitch inspections should take place long before supporters need to set off.

We now have a sophisticated meteorological service which can provide accurate predictions for many days ahead. There is no excuse for not using it.

At present, the only question a referee must ask himself when deciding if a pitch is playable is: "Will it be safe for the players?"

This is not enough. We have a duty to the paying public to add another question. "Will the state of the pitch seriously affect the way the game is played?"

We have all seen those farcical affairs where players are slipping and sliding, unable to twist and turn, change direction, tackle or even pass the ball properly. That is not football and it is certainly not entertainment.

Referees must listen to the view of managers and players. They are the professionals and if they believe that a pitch is unplayable then referees must go along with that.

The official should only intervene when there is a disagreement between the two teams.

Because we have enjoyed several milder-than-usual winters in recent years, English football seems to have become complacent.

The procedure for inspecting pitches is too lax and tighter guidelines need to be drawn up.

When the game is richer than it has ever been, we can surely do better than the shambles we've seen over the past couple of weeks.

Our own attempts to beat the weather at Wycombe Wanderers rebounded in our face. We spent a great deal of time and money to ensure that the homes fixtures against Walsall and Bradford City went ahead only to lose both games.

Worse still was the disgrace of the Peterborough farce. When both managers and both sets of players are in agreement that the pitch was unplayable, can someone explain the logic of the referee going against their wishes and deciding that the game should go ahead?

As far as I know, referee Frazer Stretton has never played the game at professional level. Indeed according to his biography in the match programme, Mr Stretton started refereeing at the age of 16. What right does that give him to overrule the opinion of people whose livelihood depends on the outcome of matches? And doesn't he have a duty to ensure that the public doesn't waste money paying to see a match on such a treacherous surface?

Of course, declaring the pitch playable was only Mr Stretton's first mistake. He then compounded the error by allowing play to go on for 63 minutes before blowing his whistle and abandoning the match. He said that conditions had deteriorated. I walked around the pitch that day at 2.30pm and again at 4.30pm and I honestly thought that the surface had improved as afternoon moved towards evening.

The Wycombe players said the same thing. I remember saying at the time Steve McGavin scored our second goal that it was probably the worst thing we could have done.

At 1-0 down, Peterborough would have felt they were still in with a chance of drawing or winning the game. At 2-0 down on a dodgy pitch, they might have felt that the game was literally slipping away from them. You will have noticed how many times the Peterborough players went down injured and stayed down at the start of the second half.

Who knows how critical Mr Stretton's actions will prove to be to this club's future?

When the game is staged again it could end in victory and three vital points for Peterborough. How important could that be to the relegation issue?

There is too much at stake to allow referees – who are, when all is said and done, amateurs in a professional sport – to get away with the sort of mistake Mr Stretton made that day.

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It's cheaper than ever to see the Wanderers

WYCOMBE Wanderers' new club shop at Adams Park opens on Tuesday February 4, the day of the re-arranged Nationwide Second Division match at home to Burnley. Situated in the concourse area of the new ServisPak Stand the new clubshop will be open prior to all home fixtures and again at half time and after the final whistle.

Among the many items for sale are the Home and Away replica kits, leisure wear, Jacquard scarfs and hats, Football Accessories and other souvenirs.

Wanderers in Town, situated in the Octagon Shopping Centre is holding a massive video clearance sale.

Among the many video bargains to be had are; Wanderers v West Bromwich Albion, Wanderers v Yeovil Town, Level Best (91/92 season) and The Only Way is Up, all at £4.99.

Other reduced price Wanderers matches and Wanderers compilation videos going back to the early nineties are also on sale including this season's Wanderers v Millwall match featuring Mickey Bell's fantastic winning goal.

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Executive Box Day Lets

Executive Box day lets for ten persons cost either £500 plus VAT including a buffet or £550 plus VAT including a waitress served three course meal followed by coffee. These prices include car passes, ten programmes, a tour of the stadium and tea/coffee and biscuits at half-time. Every box can accommodate two additional persons at either £50 plus VAT or £55 plus VAT per head including a buffet and matchday programme etc. A premium may be charged for centreline executive box positions and/or for key matches.

Executive Box Leases

Annual leases of Executive Boxes cost £10,000 plus VAT. This includes private use during office hours, ten tickets to every league, cup and friendly match per season at Adams Park, ten programmes, car parking passes, tours of the stadium, as well as ten tickets in the Main stand to every Reserve and Youth Team league match. Executive boxes are also available for lease over longer periods (prices quoted on application). To book, or for further details, please contact the Sales & Marketing Department on (01494) 472100.



Dinner for eight: You could enjoy this kind of service with your own box



A room with a view: The boxes are a perfect place to enjoy the action on the pitch at Adams Park



On the outside looking in: The boxes look impressive in the centre of the main stand at Adams Park and you could share in their benefits

Put your shirt on your Wycombe hero

WANDERERS are offering £50 off their Mark Your Man scheme. The reduced £150 package includes your name in every programme, PA announcements at home games, presentation of your player's shirt at the end of the season, a framed photo of the presentation and two tickets for the final match. Michael Forsyth, Brian McGorry, Mo Harkin, Anthony Clarke and Michael Simpson are left.

Tied up are: John Gregory by James, Harry and Victoria, Richard Hill by Franics Glenister Solomon Brothers 0171 721 3891, John Cheesewright by Bill and Sheila at the Disraeli Arms, Brain Parkin by Chairboys on the Net, Jason Cousins by Liz Baines, Terry Skiverton by City Index Spread Betting 0171 528 9887, Terry Evans by Carvells Newsagents, Marlow, Paul McCarthy by Denzil, Margaret and Andrew Ashcroft, Mickey Bell by Graphic Arts Supplies Ltd, Dave Carroll by Mike Clark, Steve Brown by John Palmer, Gary Patterson by the Adams Family Fanzine, Keith Ryan by Link Precision Services 01884 347062, Matt Crossley by Ann Cohen and Co solicitors 01494 677421, Dave Farrell by Denzil, Margaret and Andrew Ashcroft, Damien Markman by WWISC, Graham Hall by Sharon and Gary Trimby, Miquel Desouza by George and Matthew Mackenzie, John Williams by Frances Carvell, Matt Lawrence by Gerald Edelman chartered accountants, Steve McGavin by Sharon Healey, Jason Kavanagh by Andrea Webster-Browne, John Cornforth by Coach No 1 Blues Supporters Club, Dave Jones by the Smurfetts, Neil Smillie by the Blues Supporters Club 01494 563 and Paul Read by Graphic Art Supplies Ltd.

To enrol call Tim Arnold on 01494 472100.

Profile – Paul McCarthy



FULL NAME: Paul Jason McCarthy
DATE OF BIRTH: August 4, 1971
HEIGHT: 5ft 11in
WEIGHT: 13st 4lb
HOME: Brighton
CAR: Cavalier
MARRIED: Yes to Catherine
CHILDREN: six month old daughter, Erin
DAD'S JOB: Unemployed
BROTHERS & SISTERS: Two brothers, one sister
FAMILY PETS: Dog called Paddy
NICKNAME AT CLUB: Macca

WHO DO YOU ROOM WITH ON AWAY TRIPS?
Varies.
WHAT WAS YOUR AMBITION AS A CHILD?
To play football for my country.
WHAT IS YOUR AMBITION NOW?
To keep Wycombe up.
WHO WAS YOUR BOYHOOD HERO?
Paul McGrath.
WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST THRILL IN LIFE?
Seeing my daughter Erin born.
WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT IN LIFE?
Death of grandparents.
WHAT IS YOUR SADDEST MOMENT IN FOOTBALL?
Being relegated with Brighton.
WHICH PRESENT-DAY FOOTBALLER DO YOU ADMIRE MOST?
Alan Shearer.
WHO IS THE GREATEST PLAYER THERE HAS EVER BEEN?
Maradona.
WHO HAS BEEN THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?
My family.
WHO IS THE TOUGHEST OPPONENT YOU HAVE FACED?
Mark Hughes.
WHICH MANAGER HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?
Joe McGrath (Eire under 16).
WHAT JOB WOULD YOU BE DOING IF YOU HADN'T MADE IT AS A FOOTBALLER?
Goodness knows!!
AWAY FROM FOOTBALL, WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR GREATEST SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT?
Playing for county at Gaelic football and hurdling.
WHAT IS THE FUNNIEST MOMENT YOU HAVE SEEN ON A FOOTBALL PITCH?
John Crumplin (at Brighton) jumped on what he thought was a balloon, but was actually a ball and fell flat on his face.
WHAT WAS YOUR MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT IN FOOTBALL?
Too many to mention.
WHICH TEAM DID YOU SUPPORT AS A BOY?
Liverpool.
WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE GROUND?
Anfield.
WHAT OTHER SPORTS AND HOBBIES DO YOU ENJOY?
Golf and socialising!
DO YOU HAVE ANY UNUSUAL FOOD THAT IMPROVES YOUR GAME?
No.
AWAY FROM FOOTBALL, WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE SPORTSMAN?
Steve Collins.
MOST PRIZED POSSESSION?
My family.
DO YOU PLAY ANY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS?
No.
IS THERE A SPORTING DREAM YOU WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE ACHIEVED IN ANOTHER SPORT?
To win an all-Ireland final for Cork at Gaelic football.
WHAT REALLY ANNOYS YOU IN FOOTBALL?
Inconsistent referees.
WHAT ARE YOUR PET HATES OUTSIDE FOOTBALL?Rudeness.

FAVOURITES
TV PROGRAMME: Only Fools & Horses
POP STAR/GROUP: Various
FOOD: Not fussy – I'll eat anything
DRINK: Guinness
FILM: Once Upon a Time in America
FILM STARS: Robert De Niro
HOLIDAY RESORT: Dominican Republic
TV STARS: David Jason
COMEDIAN: Harry Enfield
CITY: Cork
SOAP: Coronation Street
SOAP CHARACTERS: Jack Duckworth

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THE BLUES NEWS 9

Gunner Read shoots on sight

BY Alan Parry
Blues Director

THE signing of a new striker, eagerly awaited by Wycombe fans since John Gregory became manager almost three months ago, was finally announced when Paul Read joined us from Premiership Arsenal.

Paul, 23, was a prolific scorer for the Gunners' Youth team and continued his goalscoring exploits at reserve team level. Two seasons ago he scored 23 goals in a star-studded Arsenal reserve team and added 10 more last season. Born in Harlow, Essex, Paul joined Arsenal as a trainee in the summer of 1990. With so many international strikers in the Highbury squad he found it difficult to break into the first team and gained his first experience of senior football whilst on loan.

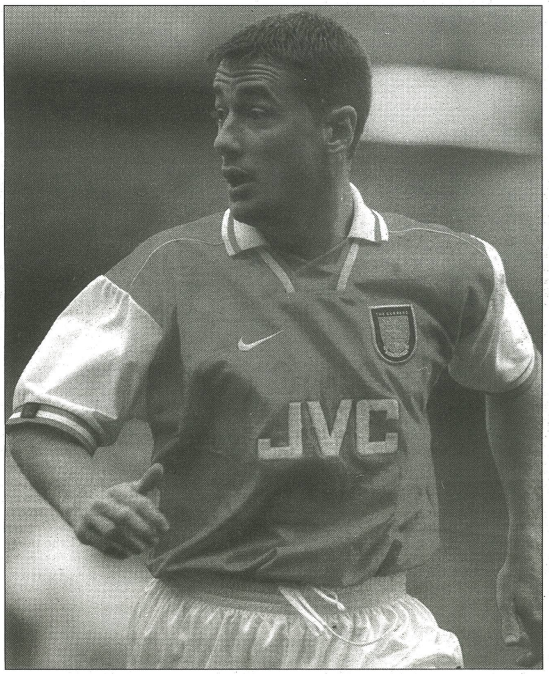
In 1994-95 he played 11 games for Leyton Orient in Division Two, his loan spell ending ironically just one week before Wycombe played at Brisbane Road in the final game of that season. It was a game Wycombe won 1-0 thanks to a brilliant goal by Cyrille Regis, the last he scored for the club before being released by Alan Smith.

The following season, Paul was loaned to Southend and made four appearances in the First Division. He scored his first ever Football League goal in a 2-2 draw at Watford and Southend's other scorer that day was Dave Regis, Cyrille's brother. I was commentating when Paul made his debut for Southend against Birmingham City at St.Andrews in a match televised live by ITV. If I remember correctly, Paul was injured early on in that game and had to miss Southend's next couple of matches. But I know that he made a big impression as a fast, mobile forward able to link up play intelligently. It was rumoured that the only reason Southend didn't make Paul's move permanent was Arsenal's asking price, reported to be £500,000. If that figure is true then Wycombe have secured a real bargain. We have signed a young man with a proven scoring record and a genuine hunger to succeed and for a lot less than half a million pounds.

By a strange coincidence, just four days before John Gregory clinched Paul's signature our new striker had been featured in The Sunday People. With their kind permission we reproduce that article below to give you an insight into Paul's appetite for success.

IT'S ONE of the most thankless and frustrating jobs in football. Who'd fancy playing understudy to Ian Wright, Dennis Bergkamp, Paul Merson and John Hartson? Young Arsenal striker Paul Read has been doing it for years, and it's breaking his heart.

Read, who's been with the Gunners since he was ten reckons he's played around 400 reserve games, but has never had a first team chance or even sat on the bench. He'll be plunged even further into frustration and despair if he misses out on the best chance he's ever had of breaking into the big time. That's when both Wright and Hartson are suspended for the FA Cup replay trip to Sunderland on Wednesday.



Goal machine: Read hopes to transfer his Gunners form to Wanderers

Read, 23, from Hertfordshire, has been a Highbury pro for six years. And he can certainly do the business in front of goal. But he's been overlooked by a succession of Arsenal bosses.

He said "Only Arsenal can tell you the reasons why I've never played for the first team, it's baffling. I've never had a squad trip or been brought in when players have been injured. I have been the reserves leading scorer for three seasons and two years ago I was leading scorer in the Football Combination. But it still got me nowhere. Everytime a new manager comes in I think, hello, this could be my big opportunity. He may like me and make me a superstar in a year's time. But to have different managers come in and you stay exactly where you are, doing your stuff and being told they're watching you and still not getting anywhere, is so frustrating.

"I feel like I'm banging my head against a brick wall now. There was a stage when I thought that maybe I was doing something wrong. But then if you look at the Premiership, everybody is talking about goals. And without being big headed, I can play with the team. I'm not sitting in the six yard box and knocking them in for fun. I live for scoring goals. I've scored nine in seven games this season and I think that's pretty good. You can only score goals at the level you're playing at. If you are only playing for the reserves, you can only score for the reserves. The big London clubs like Spurs and West Ham have a lot of first team defenders playing in their reserves, so scoring against them like I do boosts my self-confidence.

"It means you could score against them in the first team. It's frustrating to see players who don't score as many as you, or don't play as well as you, making it into the first team, although I'm always pleased for them. But when you go home it gets a bit soul destroying to see so many players getting their opportunity when I'm not.

"I want to make a name for myself. I'd literally kill to get in the first team. I have lived for it and worked six hard years to get to this level and to play for the first team would be a dream come true. It's got to a stage where it can't go on much longer. Now all I can really hope for is that I keep on scoring goals, someone sees me and I can move on to greener pastures.

"But I've got to admit that if it doesn't happen for me in the Cup against Sunderland it probably never will".

WELL Paul's opportunity to play for Arsenal at Sunderland never came. On that very day he discovered his "greener pastures" by joining Wycombe Wanderers and making a lo. of Blues fans very happy indeed. I'd like to wish Paul a long and happy career at Adams Park and I hope that he proves to be the consistent goal-scorer that we've been looking for.

Wanderers catch them while they're young

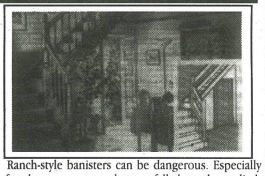
WYCOMBE Wanderers' Saturday matchday creche, Toddlin' Wanderers, is starting to prove a great hit with the young children of Blues adult fans.

The creche which is now in it's second season of operation has been attracting record numbers of users over the last month. It has now operated over 25 sessions which are run on Saturday afternoons when Wycombe Wanderers are at home.

The creche, in the Community Room at Adams Park, caters for children between the ages of two-and-a-half to five-year-olds. Each session starts at 2.40pm and finishes at 4.50pm allowing the adults to watch the match. It costs £3.50 per session per child. For more information or to book please ring the football club on (01494) 472100.

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What do visitors think of the Park?

By Graham Peart
Club Director

Dear Supporter,
I know that you have a clear opinion of the football clubs which are not too far away from Adams Park.

You have probably sampled the delights of the Cuckoo Lane stand at the Manor Ground, Oxford. The Football Fans Guide said that the police operated a 'destroy on sight' policy for illegally parked cars.

The same, highly recommended to me, said that Elm Park, Reading, is a reasonable lower division ground untouched by the Taylor report!

The toilets there are described as "the stuff of legends, i.e. truly diabolical. Improvements were made. Now they're truly diabolical with a roof, though one fan pointed out the walls don't quite reach it".

At Vicarage Road, Watford, the tea "comes in a large cup (unfortunately) and was best retained for home decorating purposes such as timber preservation".

Loftus Road, the home of QPR was not spared either. "QPR are remarkably honest about some of the seating available.... it's possible to buy at a big discount seats with a "diabolical view" and those with a "restricted view". Home fans say the "diabolical" views sometimes turn out to be quite good!

These comments about our four nearest professional footballing neighbours were made by independent fans about visits last season. You have had similar experiences on your travels.

Some of the problems experienced at those grounds probably deter the family groups from going to their local stadium.

It is great news that our new family enclosure, sponsored by the Bucks Free Press with a capacity of 1,738 seats, regularly holds over 500 of our young supporters and parents.

Last season the old family stand sponsored by W.D.C had a capacity of only 180 so it is heartening to see the benefits of building the new Servispak Stand. We hope that those new young supporters will follow the Blues for many years.

However, on Boxing Day the adults kept away. Our gate of 5,173 was the third lowest in Division II.

I have pondered long and hard on this point as we cannot compete successfully unless our attendance improves. So I turned to the Guide to see if there were problems at Adams Park which might deter our home supporters from attending.

Parking was suggested off the Hillbottom Estate but 'arrive early to avoid a long hike to the ground'. Not too bad.

Toilets – "These were well travelled supporters and they were very impressed by the Wycombe loos, especially the slightly distorting mirrors!".

Regarding food and drink fans were "much impressed by the litter bin." A York fan provided a good barometer as to the state of the burgers by eating one outside the ground immediately followed by another bought inside. The one outside was marginally better but both were good!".

The only negative in the whole description was the statement that for visitors it is the largest alcohol-free zone in the country.

But that is not going to worry you dear supporter. It seems that they think we have a super home to watch from and to play in.

If the stadium is not the problem why do you not come to the matches liked you used to?

I visited Stevenage for the Hayes game. It is now a very tidy stadium and better than some that we visit. At least the referee had the common sense to abandon the game at half time. Not too good for the Stevenage player, Stewart Beavor who had scored a hat trick. Our old friend Hakin Hayrettin played for Hayes. It brought back memories of his one and only goal for us at Preston a few years ago, scored in injury time from 35 yards. We won 3-2. It just proves that nothing stays the same. We progress steadily as the season develops.

Special buses running for the Blues matches

FIVE special football services run from the areas set out in the following text.

These specials pick up passengers at all the bus stops along the routes listed and take them to Adams Park.

Also detailed are the special buses arranged by Wycombe Bus Company.

These special bus services operate for all home league games.

Please note: Persons in possession of a concessionary fares permit, under 16s and senior citizens travel at half-fare. (All fares given are for a return ticket.)

Route A (operated by Classic Coaches) from:
The Common, Holmer Green, Saturday 1.30pm,Weekday 6.15pm, fare £2; Park Parade, Saturday 1.35pm, Weekday 6.20pm, fare £2; Hazlemere Crossroads, Saturday, 1.40pm, Weekday 6.25pm, fare £2; Tyzack Road/Totteridge Lane, Saturday 1.47pm, Weekday 6.32pm fare £1.50; Hollis Road, Saturday 1.49pm, Weekday 6.34pm, fare £1.50; Hicks Farm Rise, Saturday 1.51pm, Weekday 6.36pm, fare £1.50; Micklefield Road, Saturday 1.53pm, Weekday 6.38pm, fare £1.50; Wycombe Marsh, Saturday 1.58pm, Weekday 6.43pm, Fare £1.50; Homebase, Hatters Lane, Saturday 2pm, Weekday 6.45pm, fare £1.50; WWFC arrive, Saturday 2.15pm, Weekday 7pm.

Route B (operated by Classic Coaches) from:
Blind Lane, Green Dragon, Saturday 1.25pm, Weekday 6.10pm, fare £2; Bourne End, The Parade, Saturday 1.30pm, Weekday 6.15pm, fare £2; Cores End Road, Saturday 1.34pm, Weekday 6.19pm, fare £2; The Green, Saturday 1.39pm, Weekday 6.24pm, fare £2; Boundary Road, Saturday 1.42pm, Weekday 6.27pm, fare £2; Station Road, Saturday 1.44pm, Weekday 6.29pm, fare £2; Rayners Avenue, Saturday 1.49pm, Weekday 6.34pm, fare £2; Hatters Lane, Saturday 1.54pm, Weekday 6.39pm, fare £2; Hillary Road, Saturday 1.56pm, Weekday 6.41pm, fare £1.50; Totteridge Road/Healey Avenue, Saturday 1.58pm, Weekday 6.43pm, fare 1.50; Bowerdean/London Road, Saturday 2pm; Weekday 6.45pm, fare £1.50; WWFC arrive, Saturday 2.15pm, Weekday 7pm.

Route C (operated by Classic Coaches) from:
Mill Lane, Monks Risborough, Saturday 1.40pm, Weekday 6.15pm fare £2; Place Farm Way, Saturday 1.42pm, Weekday 6.17pm, fare £2; Princes Risborough Market Place, Saturday 1.45pm, Weekday 6.20pm, fare £2; Lacey Green, The Whip, Saturday 1.51pm, Weekday 6.26pm, Fare £2; Walters Ash, Prestwood, Saturday 1.55pm, Weekday 6.30pm, fare £2; Naphill Post Office, Saturday 1.59pm, Weekday 6.34pm, fare £2; Coombe Lane Bottom, Saturday 2.03pm, Weekday 6.38pm, Fare £2; Hughenden Avenue, Saturday 2.06pm, Weekday 6.41pm, fare £1.50; The Pastures, Saturday 2.09pm, Weekday 6.44pm, fare £1.50; WWFC arrive, Saturday 2.25pm Weekday 7pm.

Route D (operated by Classic Coaches) from:
Penn Post Office, Saturday 1.30pm, Weekday 6.20pm, fare £2; Church Road, Saturday 1.32pm, Weekday 6.22pm, fare £2; New Road, Saturday 1.34pm, Weekday 6.24pm, fare £2; Curzon Avenue, Saturday 1.36pm, Weekday 6.25pm, fare £2; Rose Avenue, Saturday 1.40pm, Weekday 6.30pm fare £2; Hazlemere Crossroads, Saturday 1.45pm, Weekday 6.35pm, fare £2; Terriers, Saturday 1.50pm, Weekday 6.40pm, fare £1.50; Hamilton Road,Saturday 1.58pm, Weekday 6.48pm, fare £1.50; Hughenden Road, Saturday 2.02pm, Weekday 6.52pm, fare £1.50; The Pastures, Saturday 2.05pm, Weekday 6.55pm, fare £1.50; WWFC arrive, Saturday 2.20pm, Weekday 7.10pm.

Route E (operated by Classic Coaches) from:
Micklefield Road/Woodside Road, Saturday 1.40pm, Weekday 6.25pm, fare £1.50; Hicks Farm Rise, Saturday 1.45pm, Weekday 6.30pm, fare £1.50; Totteridge Drive, Saturday 1.50pm, Weekday 6.35pm fare £1.50; Arnison Avenue/Walton Drive, Saturday 1.53pm, Weekday 6.38pm, fare £1.50; Totteridge Road/Morning Star, Saturday 1.55pm, Weekday 6.40pm, fare £1.50; Wycombe train station, Saturday 2pm, Weekday 6.45pm, fare £1.50; WWFC arrive, Saturday 2.15pm, Weekday 7pm.

●Return service departs from Adams Park 15 minutes after the final whistle. Single flat fare from the ground to any point en route is £1.50 with some concessions.

Football Specials
High Wycombe train station: Evenings 6.35pm (arr 6.50pm), 7.05pm (arr 7.20pm), Saturdays 1.55pm (arr 2.10pm), 2.25pm (arr 2.40pm).

High Wycombe bus station: Evenings 6.40pm (arr 6.50pm), 7.10pm (arr 7.20pm), Saturdays 2pm (arr 2.10pm), 2.30pm (arr 2.40pm).

●Buses return to the station ten minutes after the final whistle.

Further information from Classic Coaches, on (01494) 717818, or Wycombe Bus Company, on (01494) 520941.

Lions star fills Robertson's boots

ADAMS Park Events Ltd are holding a Sportsmans Dinner in the Vere Banqueting Suite at Adams Park on Monday, March 17 sponsored by Seymour Taylor.

The guest speaker was due to be Ian Robertson but he has had to cancel, having been called to go to the Hong Kong Sevens. The directors of Adams Park Events are delighted to be able to announce they have booked Phil Bennett (Wales and British Lions) to fill Ian's shoes on the night. The comedian Denny Waters remains unchanged.

Bars open at 6pm until midnight and dress is lounge suits. A few tables of ten are left at £350. To book contact Mark Austin on 01494 472100.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS SPRING CLEARANCE SALE

Only One Clearance Sale To Be Held This Season

Venue: Vere Suite, Adams Park, Wycombe Wanderers F.C.

Date: Sunday 23rd February 1997

Time: 10am - 2pm

There will be huge discounts on a whole range of Wycombe Wanderers sportswear, leisurewear, football accessories and souvenirs. Some of the items which will be greatly reduced will include:

Wycombe Wanderers Official	WAS	NOW	%ge OFF
Tracksuit Top	£49.99	£24.99	50%
Tracksuit Bottoms	£34.99	£24.99	39%
WWFC Hooded Top Leisure Top	£39.99	£19.99	50%
WWFC Stripe Rugby Top	£25.99	£14.99	42%
WWFC Cotton Drill Training Top	£29.99	£19.99	33%
WWFC Stonewash T-Shirt	£21.99	£10.99	50%
WWFC Stonewash Rugby Top	£27.99	£14.99	47%
WWFC Pin Stripe Grandad Top	£19.99	£12.99	35%
WWFC Embossed Sweat Shirt (White)	£24.99	£14.99	40%
WWFC Harlequin Rugby Top	£25.99	£14.99	42%
WWFC Fleece Jacket	£45.50	£29.99	35%
WWFC Managers Jacket	£79.99	£39.99	50%
WWFC Bench Jacket	£79.99	£39.99	50%
WWFC Model Vans	£7.99	£4.99 (or buy 3 different models and get 4th free)	
Rosettes	£2.50	£1.00	60%
WWFC Coat Hangers (Packet of 3)	£2.99	£1.50	50%

Plus autograph books down to £2.99, Mizuno boot bags £4.99, Bluey soft toy £5.99, Baby Bluey soft toy £2.99 and nylon key wallet 50p.
There will be other discounted clothing and football accessories on the day.
This clearance sale in the only one which will be held this season.
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Wycombe find cold comfort



CAPTAIN'S LOG
By Terry Evans

WALSALL at home on Boxing Day was a very frustrating game, the playing surface was definitely not ideal.

The conditions were of course the same for both sides so it was disappointing that once again chances were created but we were unable to convert any of them.

We always fancy ourselves against any team, but a hard pitch in places does however make it more of a leveller.

A great deal of effort was made by Jim Gardner and his staff to ensure that the Bradford game in the FA Cup went ahead.

Every match report stated that we controlled the game with the opposition only creating two chances, both of which they converted, yet that is clearly no consolation whatsoever especially when Bradford received a plum tie away to Everton in the next round.

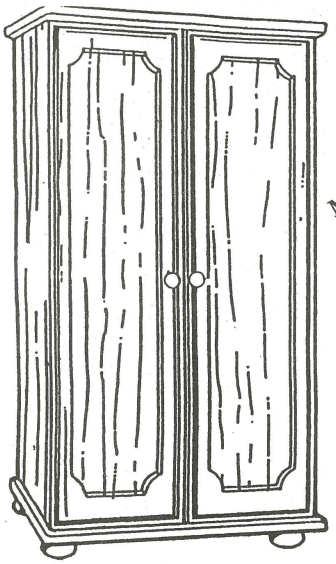
We know that we should have had the game sewn up in the first half with the amount of pressure we put them under.

And as if that was not enough, the Peterborough game just about took the biscuit, we did score two goals only for the referee to call the game off. Had he been in charge for all three of the previous matches, I would suggest that they all would have been called off as the surface was not as bad as it was against Bradford.

It has proved difficult finding any grass to train on during the cold snap. Astroturf is good but it can never be a true substitute.

We now have four games to arrange dates for later in the season. I know there is pressure from different quarters to get games on but in the many previous seasons that I have played in, I cannot remember games going ahead on such icy pitches.

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