

Lee fills the breach left by Williams

BRIAN Lee, the man who led Wycombe Wanderers through some of the best years in their long history, is to become caretaker manager following the resignation of Andy Williams on Saturday.

Mr Lee, the manager who took Wanderers to four Isthmian League championship titles in five years in the early seventies thus starts the new decade in charge, four years after he resign-

ed through pressure of work.

One of his first tasks will be to repair the damage caused by Mr Williams' departure and that of assistant manager Howard Wells — in time for the F.A. Trophy tie with Bedford tomorrow (Saturday).

Mr Williams' resignation came as a surprise to many club members. He decided to quit after the club had taken scout Nicky Beach off the payroll, for economic reasons.

Story by MICHAEL KNOX

Mr Beach, who was paid £15-20 per week, was appointed by the manager at the start of the season and had since helped bring Gary Lester, Steve Smith and Ian Powles to the club in the past three months.

Wells goes

When Wanderers confirmed their decision to stop paying Beach, Mr Williams decided to go. He said on Saturday, "I'm resigning reluctantly after much thought. When I came to

Wycombe I felt the team needed rebuilding and I am sorry to go before completing the task."

It was thought in some circles that assistant manager Howard Wells would take over — at least in the interim before a new man was appointed. But he was overlooked as far as that job was concerned, and so resigned.

Mr Wells, who is Brian Lee's deputy at Bisham Abbey, explained his decision to leave the club. "I was given the opportunity to become assistant to the temporary manager (Mr Lee), but I've decided not to take it.

"I would like to point out that my resignation has no bearing on Andy's position. I'm going for personal reasons," added Mr Wells, who was clearly disappointed that he had not been asked to fill the breach on a temporary basis.

The club are going to take their time before appointing a new manager, so Mr Lee's spell at the helm could be for as long as a month. As he said, "the club are not going to be rushed. We want to make sure of getting the right man."

Mr Williams is the third manager to leave Loakes Park in the last three years. Ted Powell left after a row concerning his appointment as national coach of Malawi before the 1976/77 season was out.

Long time assistant manager John Reardon was in charge for a season and a bit before being dismissed, while Mr Williams lasted one and a half seasons.

Successor

Wycombe are clearly hoping that the new man stays longer than any of those and revives the club's position from their mid-table placing in the Premier Division of the Berger Isthmian League.

Several names spring to mind as a possible successors. Mike Keen, the former Watford and Northampton manager lives in Flackwell Heath and is without a football appointment at present. Other candidates include former Wycombe players Geoff Anthony and John Delaney, who now manage Maidenhead and Tring respectively.

But for the moment Mr Lee is in charge. As he is to become the Wycombe chairman when the club soon forms itself into a company, he will have solved — temporarily at least — the dilemma of a special understanding between manager and chairman. He will be doing both jobs!

Of the three management staff to have left one of them Mr Beach, has already found a new role. He is to become assistant to Richard Jerome, the ebullient manager of Amersham Town.