

MIKE KEEN IS BLUES' NEW BOSS

MIKE Keen, the former Queens Park Rangers captain, is the new manager of Wycombe Wanderers. He succeeds Andy Williams who resigned three weeks ago.

Judging by the cheers which greeted the announcement at half-time in Saturday's friendly against Coventry at Loakes Park, this is a highly popular decision with the fans.

Keen, 39, had been widely tipped as the new manager because of his experience of Football League management with Watford and Northampton and the fact that he lives in Flackwell Heath.

Since Wycombe's dismissal from the F.A. Cup by Craydon, there have been constant calls from the fans for Keen to take over as manager and now they have got their wish.

As well as looking after the team, Keen will have additional responsibilities to promote the club in the town, in the hope of getting some local sponsorship.

With a sports shop in the town, he is in the ideal position to recover some of the club's prestige, which has faded in recent months.

Approach

Keen, who has been out of football management since leaving Northampton Town at the end of last season, is looking forward to his new job.

"I'm very pleased at being appointed manager. I cannot think of a better place to come, my home town's club. It will take a few weeks for me to have a look at the playing staff and study the different approach by the part time players.

"I've always dealt with full time players until now. It will take a little while to adjust but I hope to find my feet before long."

To help him through these early stages, Brian Lee, who has held the caretaker role since Mr Williams' resignation, will act as his assistant.

Keen welcomed this help and said that he and Mr Lee would work together for the first few weeks. "I will obviously consult with him before the Burton Albion game as he knows the players much better than I do," said Mr Keen.

He is no hurry to appoint a new assistant manager. This will probably be decided in the close season, as will the question of whether Wanderers will reinstate a reserve team next year. This is a distinct possibility.

Of the new appointment Mr Lee, the club's chairman elect, said "We welcome Mike Keen to the club. He had a fine playing record, has had managerial experience and as a popular figure in the Wycombe area, we hope he will restore some credibility to the club."

During his distinguished football career, Keen will be chiefly remembered for leading Q.P.R. to victory over W.B.A. in the Football League Cup final of 1967. As captain that day he had the rare and cherished experience of lifting the club to the acclaim of the fans.

He left Loftus Road in 1969 after an eleven year stay and played for Luton for four years before moving to Watford, as player manager in 1973/4.

In all he spent four years at Vicarage Road, the last two as just manager. Under him Watford went down to the Fourth Division, but at the time of his departure in 1977, they only just missed out on promotion.

But he considers he helped pave the way for the club's later successes under Graham Taylor, by signing young players such as Luther Blissett.

Keen went back to Q.P.R. for six months looking after the reserves before becoming Northampton Town manager in the 1978/79 season, something he describes as "an unhappy ordeal."