

KENNEDY IN BITTER ROW!

HOWARD Kennedy has become involved in a bitter dispute with **Wycombe Wanderers**, after announcing that he wanted to go to **Slough Town** as player coach, writes **MICHAEL KNOX**.

The 31-year-old mid-field player, who announced his retirement from football after Wycombe had won the Servovarm Isthmian League championship last season, has since had a change of mind.

But he says that he does not want to play for Wycombe again and in the contractual dispute that has followed, Kennedy has been suspended by Wycombe Wanderers.

The player has appealed to the Football Association about this suspension and also appealed to the Isthmian League against his transfer fee valuation figure of £3,000.

Wycombe for their part appealed to the league when Kennedy announced his intention to terminate his contract. This matter will be heard next week.

Twins

The affair started on June 8, when Kennedy had two pieces of news — that he had been appointed to the headship of a middle school in Langley, near Slough, and that his wife Fiona was expecting twins.

"I genuinely had decided to retire from football, but my circumstances changed, and so I changed my mind."

For reasons he has not disclosed Kennedy, who captained Wycombe during his nine year spell there, announced that he did not want to play for them again, but to go elsewhere.

"I was told verbally that Wycombe would let me go, but the chairman vetoed all that," explained Kennedy.

This matter rumbled on

throughout the summer until mid-August when Kennedy received a letter telling him that he had been suspended from Wycombe Wanderers for non-attendance of training and failure to be available for selection.

At this stage the transfer fee figure had not been disclosed. Then Kennedy appealed both to the F.A. about the suspension and to the league about the valuation figure, which he did not know.

The league this week ascertained from Wycombe that their asking price for Kennedy was £3,000. League secretary Nick Robinson revealed that the player's appeal against that fee would be heard next week.

Justifying the valuation, Wycombe chairman Brian Lee said: "Howard Kennedy is one of the best mid-field players in the Isthmian League and a very difficult man to replace, for his influence both on and off the field.

"It will cost us a lot of money to get a suitable replacement. We want him to play for Wycombe. We can't afford to lose players of his calibre.

"What he does owe the club and the supporters, is an explanation of why he doesn't want to play for Wycombe any more.

"If it's because he doesn't like the chairman, let him say so and then I can answer the charges."

But Kennedy steadfastly refuses to disclose his reasons for wanting to go elsewhere. "However, I can refute the charge that I'll be getting more money if I take up the Slough appointment. Indeed I'll be getting less than I was at Wycombe," he said.

Toll goes

So the mystery thickens but he gave a clue, when he revealed that he was offered, and accepted, the post of player coach at Loakes Park before the start of last season.

Kennedy claimed that an intervention by Mr Lee prevented his getting the job. Mr Lee strongly refutes the charge. "This is just not true," he said forcefully.

Now the player wants to take up a similar position with Slough — Wycombe's greatest rivals, but unless things move quickly, this matter could drag on some time.

One matter was resolved this week. Wycombe and Flackwell Heath have agreed terms for young defender Steve Toll to return to Wilks Park.

Wanderers turned down Flackwell's first offer but have accepted an improved bid for Toll, who says that he was leaving Blues largely due to the hours he worked as an inspector with the Thames Water board.

He said he never really fitted in socially at Wycombe. Now he is returning to his home village club.

George Borg is expected to make his seasonal debut for Wycombe in the home match against Carshalton in the Isthmian League tomorrow (Saturday).

Borg will be added to the side that beat Letchworth 6-0 in the Hitachi Isthmian League Cup on Monday, when Ken Wilson, Paul West and Terry Glynn each scored twice.