

# Casting vote decides

# RESERVES AXE IS BLOW TO BOSS KEEN!

MIKE Keen suffered a major rebuff this week when Wycombe Wanderers announced that they were disbanding the reserve side at the end of the season.

Story by MICHAEL KNOX

Mr Keen was the man responsible for re-instituting the Reserves, shortly after he took over as first team manager nearly four years ago.

But at a meeting before Christmas the club's committee decided (I under-

stand on the casting vote of the chairman) to withdraw their second string from the Suburban League and all competitions next season.

The manager was certainly upset by the decision: "I'm very disappointed. I feel a club of this standard should have a Reserve team. But the

committee have made their decision and I'd rather not say any more about it," said Mr Keen.

The case for axing the reserve team came from chairman Mr Brian Lee, who took similar action after becoming manager in the late 1960s. He is a great believer in the squad system.

He considered there was too much of a gap between Suburban League and Isthmian League football, and cited the example of reserve defender Dave Crook going back to Flackwell Heath to play in the Athenian League. He hoped Wycombe could draft in players from local Athenian clubs.

Mr Lee pointed out that very few reserves had actually secured a first team place in the last four seasons. The recent rise of Richard Mikurenda was the exception rather than the rule.

In addition, about half the reserve team had no chance of playing in the senior side. Financially, explained Mr Lee, the club would be better off with a squad system.

Those advocates of having a reserve side, point to its usefulness when players are coming back after injury and that their matches attract at least 100 spectators to Loakes Park.

In time of a severe injury crisis, they are also useful for filling in for game in the first team. Witness the Hitachi Cup tie at Hayes this season, which might have had to be called off without the aid of reserves.

## Financial

Among players to have spent a period of time in reserves before playing in the first team are Anton Vircavs, Chris Way, Paul West, Andy Harman, Steve Toll and Mikurenda.

Those reserve team supporters need look no further than tomorrow's FA Trophy opponents Dorchester for the often financial benefit of having reserve and indeed youth teams.

In the past three years, two players to have made their way up from these sides have been sold to Football League clubs at huge profits.

One of them is Trevor Senior, the Reading hot-shot, who went from Dorchester to Portsmouth for £20,000. This was the same fee that Liverpool paid for David West last season.

## SERVOWARM ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

|             | P  | W  | D  | L  | F  | A  | Pts |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Sutton      | 25 | 14 | 6  | 5  | 43 | 22 | 48  |
| Worthing    | 25 | 14 | 5  | 6  | 60 | 39 | 47  |
| Harrow      | 23 | 14 | 5  | 4  | 38 | 24 | 47  |
| Slough      | 27 | 13 | 5  | 9  | 51 | 39 | 44  |
| Hendon      | 27 | 12 | 6  | 9  | 38 | 28 | 42  |
| Dulwich     | 28 | 11 | 8  | 9  | 39 | 37 | 41  |
| Hitchin     | 23 | 10 | 9  | 4  | 34 | 30 | 39  |
| Bognor      | 24 | 10 | 7  | 7  | 36 | 35 | 37  |
| Croydon     | 28 | 10 | 7  | 11 | 36 | 40 | 37  |
| *Wokingham  | 28 | 11 | 6  | 9  | 47 | 36 | 36  |
| Hayes       | 24 | 9  | 8  | 7  | 32 | 27 | 35  |
| Stortford   | 28 | 8  | 11 | 9  | 39 | 42 | 35  |
| Leytonstone | 26 | 9  | 6  | 11 | 34 | 37 | 33  |
| Staines     | 26 | 9  | 6  | 12 | 43 | 48 | 32  |
| Carshalton  | 31 | 7  | 10 | 14 | 39 | 51 | 31  |
| Wycombe     | 22 | 5  | 5  | 9  | 21 | 32 | 29  |
| Harlow      | 25 | 7  | 7  | 11 | 38 | 42 | 28  |
| Bromley     | 26 | 7  | 6  | 13 | 24 | 37 | 27  |
| Billerica   | 24 | 7  | 6  | 11 | 32 | 48 | 27  |
| Barking     | 24 | 6  | 5  | 13 | 34 | 46 | 23  |
| Tooting     | 25 | 5  | 6  | 14 | 33 | 50 | 21  |
| Walthamstow | 19 | 5  | 5  | 9  | 26 | 36 | 20  |

\*3 points deducted

See Sports Mail on page 22.