

EDITOR'S NOTES

GOOD Evening everyone and welcome to tonight's Middlesex Senior Cup 1st Round Tie against our close neighbours Kingsbury Town. A warm welcome to everyone from Kingsbury especially their manager Terry Dyson who graced our pitch as a Wealdstone player in the early seventies.

I spent the majority of Sunday doing three things:- Reading the newspaper reports of our F.A. Cup Tie at Reading; speaking to journalists from the National Daily Press; and attempting to compose my notes for this evening's programme.

To sum up the current priorities of the press it seems that in the eight Sunday newspapers purchased at a cost of £2.99, a thirty second incident during our match was more important than any other aspect of football last Saturday including giantkillings by three Gola League Clubs and good results for other non-League sides. The headlines were of course sensationalised out of all proportion and in many cases the accompanying reports totally inaccurate. One paper stated that the incident resulted directly from the award of the Reading penalty! According to my watch nine minutes had lapsed since the penalty. Others stated that it took referee Gunn at least 3 minutes to control the situation. I will not comment on the incident or the way in which it was handled, but to accept the views of eight newspapers I find impossible. How many of the newspapers were represented at the game? How many of them gave our manager Brian Hall the chance to answer the scathing criticism levelled by his Reading counterpart. Admittedly Brian was interviewed by some journalists on certain aspects of the game but he was NOT informed of the comments made by the Reading manager and was therefore not given the right to reply.

Two to three weeks ago I wrote to every newspaper and gave them full details of our game against Coventry City, explained the reason for the game taking place and politely requested that mention of the game was given in their sports pages. What was the response? You tell me because I didn't see any. Was I asking too much of them?

Sunday morning's press sickened me and probably many others. As Press Officer I endeavour to promote the name of Wealdstone Football Club. It entails hours on the phone, at any time of the day, many letters being written and a certain amount of personal P.R. WHAT FOR? The press seem hell bent on sensationalism and don't give a damn for the good bits. Did I ask the impossible - a mention of our game against Coventry? Will any of those 'Sundays' freely admit that their headline story was hearsay? How many mentioned that Wealdstone's performance was very creditable against the 3rd Division leaders and that individually Bob Iles and Dennis Byatt were probably the best two players on the field?

How will I now tackle my job as press officer? Do I want to bother?

I would like, however, to place on record my personal thanks to Peter Ernest of the Daily Telegraph and to Barry Flatman of the Daily Express for the coverage given by them in their respective papers last week and to state quite clearly that my criticism is NOT in any way directed at them.

We must get over this hurdle and continue our progress in the world of football. Read about the Gola League Proposals, we must be part of them.

DAVE FREE

ON THE BALL WITH BRIAN HALL

I WAS absolutely devastated after the result at Reading on Saturday, but not until Sunday morning when I read the 'National Press'. I feel that description of the media somewhat flatters them, as I feel that their description of the game which lasted 90 minutes contained only reports of an incident which lasted for approximately one minute. The facts of that incident are that a foul was committed ON Vince Jones by a Reading player. Another Reading player then kicked him and other players joined in with the result that Paul Bowgett and Derek Doyle were dismissed. Yet Wealdstone were awarded the free kick!! The rest of the 89 minutes were not reported on at all and finally extremely adverse and distasteful comments were apparently made by the Reading manager afterwards. I feel that some of those flames were fanned by comments from a Gola League acquaintance recently who used such words as animals, thuggery and the like.