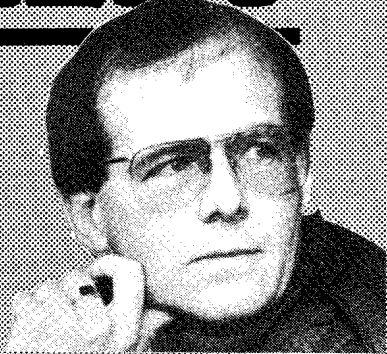


KENNEDY'S COMMENT

**Former Slough
Town manager
Howard Kennedy
takes a personal
look at the
sporting scene**



I HAVE always had a soft spot for Dave Bassett, manager of Wimbledon, ever since our first encounter.

My debut for Wycombe after emigrating South was against Wimbledon at Loakes Park. This was around the time Wimbledon were headline news and had drawn with Leeds United the previous season in the F.A. Cup.

As a raw newcomer I was eagerly awaiting the game and keen to give a good account of myself. We kicked off and the ball was rolled back to me for the customary boot forward which I managed to carry out successfully. A split second later, unseen by the referee, Dave Bassett delivered a right uppercut leaving me prone in the centre circle — 30 seconds gone and "...here endeth the first lesson!"

He was always an effervescent, abrasive East Ender endowed with razor sharp wit and the instant riposte for any occasion. He really was the likeable rogue, always keen to talk about the game and would 'rabbit' incessantly to anyone who would listen. Always good value for money, he worked hard at using his ability to it's greatest affect, and will be long remembered in non-league football for his unquenching appetite for a game he obviously loves.

Typical

It came as no surprise to me that he has achieved the success he has and with his lack of a professional pedigree it was no surprise either that he has not received similar plaudits to those of Graham Taylor, who achieved the same

Flattened by Bassett — after 30 seconds

● THERE was a rowdy, delirious group of six young men at Slough Town on Sunday evening as Egham won the six-a-side invitation tournament and £750 to boot! Success was even sweeter for these six as they were all ex-Slough players and had the delight of knocking their previous club out in the quarter-finals.

miracles with Watford.

It was typical to see him arrive as promised at Slough Town on Sunday morning after his night out celebrating promotion to the First Division. There he was encouraging his Youth Team in the six-a-side competition while many lesser teams and people didn't even bother with the courtesy of informing Slough that they wouldn't be sending a team, showing scant respect for the people who paid expecting to see them play.

I have a feeling Wimbledon will escape relegation next year, which on their meagre gates and income will be a remarkable achievement. I sincerely hope they do because I am equally certain Dave Bassett will be an instant success as a

television personality

Any success will provide a further incentive to all those teams in non-league football who aspire to greater things.

And as we stood gossiping on Sunday and were informed of Dagenham's draw at Runcorn which ensured Wycombe's relegation from the Gola League I was instantly reminded of Wycombe and Wimbledon's comparable status in my early days in the Isthmian League.

Progress

One club chaired by a man, Ron Noades, prepared to pursue a dream and one club, Wycombe, rooted in the firm tradition of amateurism. That one should now be in the First Division and the other uncertain of which league they will be playing in next season must have prompted many a thought in local football circles.

Back in '74 Wycombe chose to remain in the Isthmian League, while Wimbledon grasped the nettle of progress and in so doing created their own fairy tale. I hope Dave Bassett's bene has a happy ending.