

WYCOMBE Wanderers' failure to strengthen the team in readiness for the coming season's Vauxhall Conference challenge has been the close season concern of the club's loyal supporters. FREE PRESS sports editor has revealed that the board has been reluctant to meet some modest claims that would have secured the signing of more than one player. Here the supporters give their views.

There is still time

AS a regular supporter of the Wanderers (25 years) I am also disappointed that Alan Gane has been unsuccessful in strengthening the team, although last season he did not sign Ashford and Barrett until mid-August.

Your investigations, whilst interesting, do not go far enough. It may be of interest to readers that Doherty is only some 5ft 8in tall, and that he did appeal to the league against his transfer fee but it was referred back because he had not followed the rules. Additionally, he did not have to go to Maidstone unless he wanted to.

I would not call him a prolific scorer. In 107 league matches he scored 53 goals. By comparison Mark West played in 82 league matches and scored 46 goals. Is Doherty £10,000 better than Mark West?

Weymouth were asking £25,000 for Agana and it is hard to believe that Wycombe were in a position to pay this kind of money. My enquiries reveal that two days after Wycombe's inquiry, Bassett offered £30,000, so it can hardly be said that they just missed him.

Buying players is similar to buying a secondhand car. There is always a degree of bartering and the purchaser will only go as far as he can afford and will want to make sure he gets value for money.

Someone in a club must give the final approval to any transfer and in most cases it is the chairman, who has full knowledge of the club's finances. It would be financial suicide to give a manager an open cheque book. I am sure that all chairmen are prepared to accept criticism when accepting

the position, but if they are, as they should be, responsible people they must make unpopular decisions in the interests of the finances of the club.

There is still time for Alan Gane to strengthen his team. There are very many good players who could still be obtained, and I wish him well in his efforts. — **C. Avery, Ford Way, Downley.**

Between the lines

IS Brian Lee holding back the club? I would say he is and the sooner he steps down as chairman of Wycombe Wanderers, the better it will be for all concerned.

Surely, we are painfully reminded of the club being in the same situation two years ago. I remember the secretary stating: "We have learned a lot from our short stay in the then Gola League." Obviously nothing was learned, otherwise the situation would not be rearing its ugly head again.

Is Brian Lee manipulating the other directors, or is it the directors don't understand the

Haven't the Blues learned the lesson

SPORTS POSTBOX

football scene? Reading between the lines, it appears he is still meddling in the team affairs. Is this why previous managers have departed? I feel sorry for the manager having to work under such pressure.

Whilst I don't agree with high transfer fees, which have a knock-on effect right through the footballing system, we must compete. We have lost good players this close season because the directors have been so dogmatic.

I don't want to see, nor do the supporters, us struggle in the Conference next season. Every team we came up against in the last campaign had one or two "old heads" — and it showed.

Let the manager get on with his work and back him up not hinder him. The supporters want to see Wycombe a real power in semi-professional football, and eventually, secure a place in the Football League. We won't achieve that unless the management all pull together. — **John Simpson, London End, Beaconsfield.**

Jolted into action

WYCOMBE'S failure to capture several leading non-league players would seem to indicate that the club has still not learned its lesson.

After a dozen years of relative decline in both the standard of football and public's interest, the club, or more specifically, all the directors were jolted into action by our relegation last year.

At long last the club invested in good quality players, and the money proved to be very well spent. Promotion and two cups were won and a marked increase in attendances provided the finances to pay for these players. Everyone was looking forward to the challenge of the GMVC.

But the board's penny-pinching attitude has lost us new much-needed signings and now we hear that Noel Ashford is restless and Alan Gane is also unhappy.

What a start to a potentially exciting season! It looks like we shall be reduced to fighting off relegation instead of having a team at least capable of holding its own.

If the Blues have a good side next season I feel crowds averaging 1,500 are quite possible, bringing in enough extra gate money to pay for the players we need.

Make up your minds directors. Do you want Wycombe to be a force or not! — **P. B. Oxbrow, Totteridge.**

AS the Free Press says "Disgraceful". That is putting it mildly. All the talk is of a new stadium and ground, but what we need is a new chairman and committee.

I feel sorry for Alan Gane, for all his hard work last season to get the Wanderers back into the Gola League, only, it seems, we might just go straight back again.

The club knew two seasons ago it had to buy three or four new players to have any hope of staying up.

As a keen supporter for many years it was good to see so many supporters back at Loakes Park last season, but I'm afraid it won't be the same this season.

To let so many good players go because the chairman won't spend the money just doesn't make sense. — **Mrs E. Turner, Honeysuckle Road, Widmer End.**