

The board has its say

Sir,

"With the season now under way and a new manager appointed. I feel the time is right for Wycombe Wanderers to reply to some of the criticisms recently levelled at the club in your sports pages.

It has been very difficult for the board of directors to remain silent in the face of some highly personal accusations, but their immediate priority was to deal with the problems created by the resignation of the previous manager.

The members of the Wycombe board area all businessmen with heavy demands on their time, but they devote many hours of their lives to running Wycombe Wanderers. Remember, they are not paid for doing this job – they do it because they are devoted to the club and are desperate to see it succeed. Yet you accuse them of showing "apathy".

The club has revised its wage structure for players, in keeping with G.M. Vauxhall Conference status, and has made considerable money available to the manager for the purchase of new players. Yet you accuse them of a "pathetic, money-pinching attitude."

"The board agreed a new contract for Noel Ashford which would be the envy of most players in the Conference. Yet you accuse them of "an out of date amateur approach."

At a five-hour meeting, on the night before the opening match against Stafford, the board discussed the appointment of a new manager. All applications were debated at length and the directors made a UNANIMOUS decision to appoint Peter Suddaby. Yet you say: "the board is supposed to decide things, but it is the chairman who has the real authority."

Your attack on Brian Lee was particularly harsh. "He is holding the club back." "He revels in his power and is loathe for anything to challenge his authority." "He still meddles in team affairs."

Those remarks were simply inaccurate and untrue. Wycombe Wanderers F.C. is a democracy and Mr Lee, as chairman, has exactly the same power as any other director. To suggest that Mr Lee is deliberately "holding the club back" is an insult to a man who has devoted a large part of his life to Wycombe Wanderers. No-one in recent years has given the club more in terms of time and effort.

The chairman certainly has strong views on the game, and is keen to express them, but his is just one of many voices which have a say in club policy.

We, at Wycombe, firmly believe that the club is going in the right direction to achieve our stated aim of a place in the Football League. We also believe that the community, including the local press, is firmly behind us.

We respect your right to criticise when necessary and hope that you respect our right of reply. Now that you've had your say. I would ask you to let the club have their's by publishing this letter. Thank you."

Yours sincerely, Alan Parry, Wycombe Wanderers F.C., Press Officer.