

Police cop soccer stars for charity

DIEGO Maradona and Garry Lineker were among the sparkling line-up of football stars signed up by local police to score a £700 charity winner.

Now their efforts will buy a new washing machine for an 82-year-old robbery victim as well as swelling the coffers of local organisations.

When police at Gerrards Cross heard the star footballers would be staying at the Bell House Hotel in Beaconsfield they saw their chance for a unique charity drive.

The players were there with the Rest of the World team to take on the England side

in the FA Centenary match at Wembley.

Said Inspector Mervyn Edwards: "We sent along a football and asked the team to sign it. The idea was to raise some money for the station's children's party at Christmas."

The kind-hearted cops had no idea that the prized football would raise a staggering £700 when it was auctioned at Wycombe Wanderers Football Club dinner on Monday by sports commentator Alan Parry.

Said Inspector Edwards, himself an enthusiastic football fan: "Everyone involved has been fabulous. For me it was

lovely to be in possession of the football just for a little while."

He added: "We were delighted with the auction, We got far more money than we ever expected."

Now he and fellow officers have decided to spend some of the cash on helping an 82-year-old widow from Chalfont St Peter who lost her life savings of £165 when two men broke into her home. The policeman's lucky strike means that she will get a new washing machine as well as a cash gift.

Donations are also to go to charities at Gerrards Cross and High Wycombe as well as to a new police convalescent home.