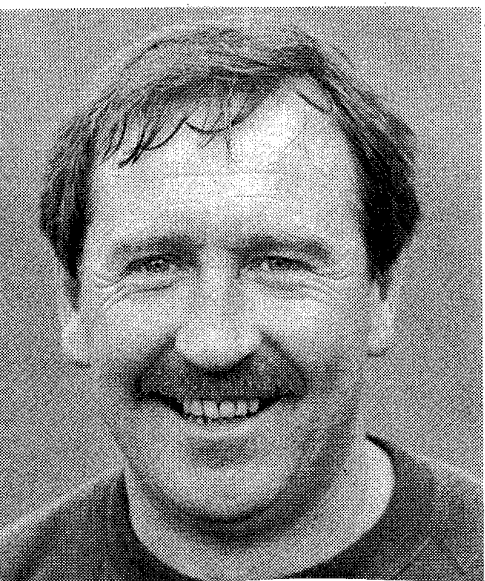


Beeks promises big promotion cash spree



WANDERERS' chairman Ivor Beeks has hit out at the rumour mongers who are pouring cold water on the club's booming bid for promotion.

Blues are currently riding high on the crest of a 10 game unbeaten run, but a gloomy minority of fans have been speculating that the Loakes Park board will veto a move into the Fourth Division if Wycombe head the Conference at the end of this season.

The knockers claim that, with a move to the new £3 million stadium at Sands set for 1990, Beeks would be unprepared to stump up the £100,000 which would probably be required to bring the current ground up to Football League standards.

The wealthy building tycoon, however, has stepped in quickly to stop the spread of these doom-laden tales and has pledged his full support for manager Jim Kelman's table-topping ambitions.

He said: "With the club doing so well at the moment, I can't understand the pessimists who are spreading these stories.

"This subject came up at the beginning of the year and the board committed itself to getting the club into the Fourth Division and spending whatever was necessary on upgrading the facilities at Loakes Park so that it could be used for League football.

Enthusiasm

"The new ground will be going out to tender in about a week and it is scheduled to be finished in 1990. Whether that will be at the beginning or the end of the 1989-90 season is hard to say, but we are not afraid to spend money on Loakes Park in the interim.

"It would need to have improved segregation, the terraces would have to be repaired and there would also be the possibility of increased security and surveillance.

"But the chance to get into the Football League might only come along once in a lifetime and we are not going to waste it if this happens to be our season.

"I think we have as good a chance as any of the seven clubs above us and there is certainly no lack of enthusiasm and commitment from the manager, the squad or the scouting staff. It would not be in our interests to turn down the chance of promotion and we don't intend to do so.

"We would need to strengthen our playing staff, but then we are always looking to do that anyway. It would not be right



■ Ivor Beeks

to quote any figures because that would put a ceiling on what the manager has to spend.

"Let us just say that players are a lot happier to join a winning team than a losing one and, if the right people became available, we would give Jim all the support he needs.

"There is not a bottomless pit of money, but we are looking not just to get into the Fourth Division but to stay there and we are prepared to spend accordingly.

"Wycombe Wanderers will be a different club when we get to the new ground and we have to become more professional both on and off the field if we are to realise our ambitions.

"I believe we are better equipped now for the Football League than we were two years ago and, if it is a question of whether the board is backing the manager, the team and the fans, the answer is abundantly - YES!"

Kelman himself is disappointed at the way recent successes have brought the doom-merchants out of the closet. He said: "When you are near the bottom of the table no-one says anything, but as soon as you get into the top six people start saying you can't afford to go any higher.

"Yes, we might have to go a season in the Football League at Loakes Park, but what both Ivor and I want to dispel are the rumours that the club doesn't want to go up this year.

"Some are saying this will be just a building year and that it will all be for nothing if we win the Conference. Of course it is a lot to ask of a team which hasn't been together as long as the likes of Barnet, Kettering and Kidderminster - but if we do it then there is no question of us missing out on the rewards.

"The outlook here is optimistic."