

Kelman quits in Creaser storm

**Report by
Sports Editor
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JIM KELMAN resigned as manager of Wycombe Wanderers this week, just two days after his side's humiliating FA Trophy defeat against Metropolitan Police.

His decision was accepted by the Wycombe board at a meeting on Monday night, completing a split described by both sides as "amicable."

Disappointing

A successor had not been named at the time of going to press and the job is to be advertised nationally.

The affable Scot's departure, two years, almost to the day, after his arrival, came as no great surprise following a disappointing first half to the season and the concession of 13 goals in the last four games.

But the final straw came two weeks ago when the board refused to finance a £4,000 contract which would have kept skipper Glyn Creaser at the club for at least another two seasons.

Kelman told the Free Press on Tuesday: "I have nothing against the club and I wish them well for the future. But after the Creaser affair I could see no way forward."

"Glyn had already put in one transfer request because he felt the board were not backing me. But he was ready to commit himself to Wycombe until the idea of the contract was turned down flatly."

"People like Glyn are the backbone of the side and I told the chairman after Saturday's game that I could see no light at the



■ Glyn Creaser

end of the tunnel. When Glyn found I had resigned, he told me he would be putting in another transfer request immediately.

"Last season I received backing and we had our best season ever. This year I have not received the same backing. Good forwards have not been replaced with good forwards."

"Unless the club is prepared to live in the Conference, it will die in the Conference."

Kelman said his goodbyes to his players at training on Tuesday night and the mood in the dressing room was reportedly gloomy when he left.

Creaser is not the only player keen to get away from Wycombe. Mark West has also asked to go on the list and others are expected to join him.

Gloomy

Things look grim for a side which Kelman had to take to Flackwell Heath for a Berks and Bucks Cup game last week with men on the bench who had not played for four and six weeks respectively.

But the outlook is not so gloomy for Kelman himself, a qualified FA coach who will remain as the Football Association's Berks and Bucks representative and who has a lucrative iron in the fire which should him from the workhouse.

He said: "I went out to celebrate with my wife, Diane, on Monday night after I had resigned. All that has happened is that I am no longer in charge of the Wycombe team. The rest of life goes on."

"I will still keep strong links

with the area and the club through the community coaching scheme and my FA work. My work with youngsters in the area was there before I joined Wanderers and it will still be there now I have left."

"I have enjoyed my time with the club and I have made a lot of friends. The fans have been great and I am pleased to be leaving now, rather than in a few weeks time when the crowd might have really been on my back."

"Ivor Beeks has been a superb chairman and he has treated me excellently as a manager. His policies will have to be pushed harder at Wycombe if the club is to recover from its present condition."

In a statement issued on Monday, Beeks said: "We have accepted Jim Kelman's resignation in the best interests of the club."

"Jim was the first to admit that he was no longer getting the best out of the players and the situation could not be allowed to continue."

Critical

"The lack of motivation in the team was apparent for all to see against Metropolitan Police and we all agreed that matters had reached a critical stage."

"Jim has done a terrific job at Wycombe, but there was growing discontent among our supporters about the team's recent form and it was obvious a change was needed."

"As always, the future success of this club is the most important consideration."

"The board would like to place on record its gratitude for the job Jim has done as manager particularly his coaching involvement in the local community."

Kelman joined Wanderers from Maidenhead United on January 16, 1988 after the departure of Peter Suddaby from Loakes Park.

The ex-Hungerford and Newbury Town boss was regarded as something of a surprise choice at the time, but he kept a struggling side in the Conference in his first year and led it to its highest-ever position, fourth, last term.

He managed the Wanderers team for 104 competitive first-team games, winning 49, drawing 25 and losing 30.



■ Jim Kelman - waving goodbye to