

Wanderers' fans don't want segregation

I WAS interested to read your report of an interview with Brian Lee in the last issue of the Bucks Free Press in which Mr Lee defended the segregation of the Wycombe fans at Adams Park.

Mr Lee is certainly a clever man with words; his carefully worded statements imply the message that the segregation was due to Conference regulations enforced upon the club. Careful analysis of the situation, however, reveals that this is not in fact the case.

There are indeed tight new safety regulations in force in the light of the Taylor Report, and we are all 100 per cent behind measures to increase safety, but let us put this into perspective.

The cause of the Hillsborough disaster was overcrowding and fans surging forward crushing the spectators at the front. If, and when, the Adams Park terraces are full, no-one will argue that 'segmentation' is a good thing, but whilst that is not the case then overcrowding and surging is not a problem.

Indeed were the Woodlands Terrace ever full to capacity then surging could well be a problem (and the club could be in very serious trouble) as there is not a single crash barrier on that side, which could result in serious crushing if the crowd surged forward.

Indeed, if Hillsborough had had enough crash barriers, of suitable strength, then the disaster would not have even happened.

What 'disaster' is the club therefore catering for, if not crushing, when he says they need to know 'how many people they are looking for'. I am sure that the concrete is not going to burst into flames. A bomb perhaps, or a lightning strike?

Whatever this disaster may be, I am damn sure I am not going to stand around to be counted as a survivor. I will be long gone in case it happens again. Perhaps they wish us to stick around as the police will probably have nothing better to do than to count us.

In future there may indeed be regulations brought into enforce 'compartmentalisation', but there is not at present, and no other clubs feel the need to do so. In truth the club, as usual, will not admit they are wrong, will not change to please the fans, and are just doing it to be stubborn.

We all accept that segregation from opposing fans is important when there are enough of them, or they have a bad reputation, but I appeal to the WWFC directors, only segregate when necessary, and don't segregate Wycombe fans from other Wycombe fans.

Colin Boyle
High Wycombe

(Rules 3 and 3A Of The Licensing (Special Hours Certificate) Rules 1982)

Application For Special Hours Certificate

We, Brian Russell Lee of "Shelleys", Bisham Village, Marlow, Bucks SL7 1RR and Ernest John Woods of 5 Mayhew Crescent, High Wycombe, Bucks hereby give you notice that we intend to apply to the said Licensing Justices at the Transfer Sessions to be held at The Law Courts, Easton Street, High Wycombe in the County of Buckingham on the 12th day of October next for a Special Hours Certificate under Section 77 of the Licensing Act 1964 for the part mentioned below of the licensed premises situated at Hillbottom Road, Sands, High Wycombe in the County of Buckingham and known as Adams Park that is to say the Function Suite and the Executive Suite.

And further take notice that if such a Certificate is granted Section 76 of the said Act will apply to the said part of the premises from the 12th day of October next.

Any person intending to oppose the application shall give notice in writing of his intention to the Applicants and to the Clerk to the Licensing Justices specifying in general terms the grounds of his opposition not later than 7 days before the commencement of the above Session.

Dated this 14th day of August 1990.

Winter-Tailors

8 High Street
High Wycombe
Bucks HP11 2BB

Solicitors for and on behalf
of the above-named Applicants

IT LINGERS ON

In a letter to the Bucks Free Press of 21st September 1990, Mr Colin Boyle again raised the issue of segregation. Brian Lee replies: "As we have said before, we will answer supporters' letters in the programme and not the Press and would encourage a letters page in the programme. This time the letter was headed 'Wanderers fans don't want segregation'. As a Club neither do we! Let me reiterate that the compartmentation requirements and the numbers fixed for each part of the ground are associated with the Ground Safety Certificate. The Conference requirement for segregation is as follows - 'All Clubs must have provision for ground segregation acceptable for the Safety Committee or Local Authority. Any installation must meet The Safety at Sports Grounds Green Code.' Mr Boyle mentions the 'cause' of the Hillsborough disaster and the possible surging on the Woodland Terrace. The number for each half of this terrace, taking into account no crush barriers at present, has been fixed at 866. With that number there would not be any serious crushing. Whilst we obviously share the view about a fire in a concrete and steel stand, it is now a bomb that has to be taken into consideration. All new grounds are subject to much stricter building and spectator control regulations than can be enforced at existing grounds, together with the interpretation of the Act and the individual requirements of the Local Safety Committee. However let me return to my original point, we do not want to inconvenience any supporters, home, away or casual visitors - but in the end it is 'people' in one role or another who have got us into this situation. Now enough of that! Let us get on with the game and be thankful in this day and age that we can support our team in a new stadium.