

Football ground parking debated

By **SIMON
ROBERTS**

THE problem of parking around Wycombe Wanderers FC will be discussed at a police consultative group meeting held especially at the club's ground.

At the meeting on Thursday April 2, Superintendent Suzanna Becks will report on the latest moves to ease parking around the Adams Park ground on Hillbottom Road, Sands.

Parking around the stadium has been a nightmare ever since the ground opened in August 1990. Now local residents will be told of the meeting so they can have their say.

Alan Hutchinson, the club's press officer, said he was pleased with the venue. He said: "It makes sense from a number of points of view - parking at the ground, access by a single road.

"The fire was a tremendous test of the police and fire services where it was proved it could be served without too many problems."

Clerk to the police authority Mike Byfield said of the meeting: "It was the group's view that it should be moved there, having heard concern expressed.

"There's no better place for it really. We are actually leafleting all the residents about the meeting which is something we don't normally do. We think they should be given the opportunity to come along."

STANDPOINT

PERFORMING on Adams Park at the moment must be like trying to play football on an enormous sponge.

In the first six months of the new stadium's life, teams used to visit Wycombe, lose and go away complimenting the pitch. It's a great help to good footballing sides, they'd say, slick passers are in their element.

Blues have still got many skilful players in their squad, and they're still winning games. But isn't it just so frustrating watching Dave Carroll, who by no coincidence has hit his best form early in each of the last two seasons, struggling to stroke the ball even 20 yards in a straight line. Remember that miss against Wotton? I'd rather not.

If Wanderers keep winning into May and get promotion, I wouldn't care if they had to play in the car park. What about after that?

Departing groundsman Rod Lavers wonders if I have any insulting terms left for his pitch.

Many First Division pitches are in their worst condition for years, and last summer's short close season did Rod's grass seeds' survival chances little good. The World Cup preceded last season, the European Championships follow this, so the intervening close season was only two months long. There was little rain last June, so that didn't help either.

Then, despite the players' inherent abilities and the manager's knowhow, the players have to practise. Colchester do it every day, and our lads thought they ought to do a bit.

The youth and reserve teams play on the pitch as well, and all in all, it's clear why the surface is a long-suffering sponge.

Take the training sessions and the feeder teams elsewhere, and that would give the pitch a breather. Combine these needs in a suitable training pitch and the Adams Park pitch might provide talented footballers with a longer portion of the season to express themselves.

The club and the council await judgement from the Department of the Environment on June 17 to say whether Blues can build a training pitch and complete the groundwork they have laid to become a Football League club.

Imagine the boost to club morale, as they battle to win promotion, if they were told the council wanted to help on the training pitch front as well as with the car parking.

Take your minds back ten months to when Blues won at Wembley and the town got carried along on a blue wave of euphoria. I believe the council were pretty happy to be involved. A place in the Football League has been Blues' pipedream until now: a few more results like this week's and Wycombe will be on the brink. That could be fun: time for a party. Would the council want an invite?

Darts teams miss out on food

THE Blues Club Darts Team has been playing darts in the Plow League for many years. First in the Club at Loakes Park with no problems (except results).

The team moved to Adams Park, where we had a meeting with the Centre Spot Manager (Centre Spot, the new pub/club) concerning food for Darts Nights.

Being told we could not cater for ourselves, we reached or thought we reached an agreement on the quantity of food and the price.

Within a few weeks the quantity got less and less. After consultations, the reply was for the price what do you expect? At which we went to the Board of Directors. Their solution was, we would pay £8 and the Football Club would pay £5 making £13 (any other team in the Plow League or any other league would pay £5 to £10 to their Landlord for double the quantity? The quantity went up and down for the rest of the 1990/91 season.

1991/92 season: Three teams are now playing at the Centre Spot, one ladies team on a Thursday, two mixed teams alternating on a Friday, all moaning about the food.

Things were much the same as last season, invariably apologising to the visiting team for the food offered. Things got worse when the new banqueting manager took over the food, the quantity got less than before. More consultations were required.

A small meeting took place with the banqueting manager, he asked what we required, "Two trays of sandwiches and a large bowl of chips and some small extras." His reply was "Well you can do your own food, but let me go to the Board and see what we can do."

Their or his reply was for that quantity of food the price would be £25. This is unacceptable. A letter was drafted, stating the amount of income brought to the club (approx £200-£300) and people that see the Centre Spot might want to come again. Also that the other mixed team are leaving due to this matter, and we have heard the Ladies Team are considering leaving as well.

The letter was given to the chairman of the football club. On reading the letter it seemed to anger him, saying "Why didn't you come to me first, I'll sort this out." At which a meeting was arranged, which he would attend. The meeting took place, no chairman but a lone director who said "That there was no way we would be able to do our own food, also the price quoted of £25 was final".

As to the extra income brought into the Centre Spot, the football club was not interested what extra income was coming in. His attitude was, if we did not like it then lump it. It appears that they do not want darts teams in the Centre Spot, if so why not come right out and say it?

So if we cannot find another venue for our remaining fixtures, may we now apologise to all teams who have fixtures with the Centre Spot Blues for the rest of 1992 that there will be no food after the darts matches. Sorry.

**Players and Officials of Centre Spot
(Blues) Dart Team**