

Paper halts its Blues coverage

THE Bucks Free Press stopped its coverage of Wycombe Wanderers this week after reporter Pete Lansley was allowed only restricted access at Blues' Adams Park ground.

The paper didn't cover Tuesday night's Conference match against Dagenham Redbridge and won't be present for tomorrow's FA Trophy game with Bromsgrove.

Deputy Sports Editor Lansley said he was informed of a message from club chairman Ivor Beeks by secretary John Goldsworthy on Tuesday.

The message said he was allowed only limited access for the game against Dagenham Redbridge.

Lansley would be allowed to watch the match from the Press box, though there would be no use of a phone, and would be denied access to any other part of the club's premises.

After speaking to director Alan Parry during the afternoon to try and resolve the situation, Lansley spoke with Beeks at 6.45pm Tuesday evening.

"I said the paper has to be allowed to report in the way it sees fit. He said that he did not like the way I chose to go about my job and repeated I could cover the match but was not allowed in his building," said Lansley of his conversation with Beeks.

"I said that was a restriction of the way I needed to do my job and that if it wasn't withdrawn the newspaper would pull its coverage of the club."

Lansley had written a story about Dave Carroll who was picked to play for the England semi-professional side and was then dropped after the Football Association discovered, through Lansley, that Carroll is Scottish.

Beeks this week refused to comment.

Meanwhile, Bucks Free Press Editor Tim Blott said: "It would be a tragedy if the Blues' greatest season to date were to be marred by this storm in a teacup."

Think again, Wanderers

DEPUTY Sports Editor Peter Lansley is being punished for writing the truth. Wycombe Wanderers didn't like what they saw and decided to get their revenge.

The story concerned player Dave Carroll, who was picked to play for an England semi-professional side. Dave Carroll told Peter Lansley he was Scottish. Peter checked with the Football Association, which consulted its rules and promptly dropped Carroll.

It seems that Wycombe Wanderers, or certainly some of its officials, were well aware that Carroll was Scottish. It was certainly something he had never hidden. Sadly, the sloppy Football Association had not bothered to check.

Rather than take their anger out on the Football Association, Wanderers decided to blame Peter Lansley.

The chairman issued an ultimatum to him through the club secretary, hours before the kick-off on Tuesday. Peter was told he could go to the press box at the start of the match and leave at the end, but should not enter the main building or try to talk to the players or manager.

Such restrictions are an unacceptable infringement of a journalist's freedom to do his job. This newspaper was told that other members of staff would be allowed the freedoms that Peter was being denied.

We informed the club that we would not allow Wycombe Wanderers to choose who would cover their matches.

It seems that club officials forget the thousands of words that Peter Lansley has written in this newspaper in praise of the club. Few clubs have such devoted journalists covering their activities.

But Peter has one failing in the eyes of Wycombe Wanderers. He also tells the other side, the stories that they would prefer the public not to know about.

Some of this emerged from Peter's book *Out Of The Blue*, written in his own time as a genuine tribute to the club.

This also contained some information that some in the club would have preferred kept secret. The result was that, although the club helped to finance the book, it has received little promotion.

The Bucks Free Press has had a good relationship with the Blues over a number of years, despite the odd bumpy ride. This is why we urge them to think again over their treatment of Peter Lansley.

BLAMING others for your own problems is nothing new, and judging by Wycombe Wanderers' treatment of our own

Pete Lansley, it will go on a while yet.

What problems can the Blues have? I hear you ask. They should go up this season. They may win the FA Trophy, too. But success breeds its own troubles. Perhaps the tension is starting to tell.
