

Please resolve this matter

AS a Wycombe Wanderers supporter, I find the club's reaction to the Dave Carroll, England selection situation quite amazing.

It appears both club and player were prepared to accept international honours, and the prestige associated with such honour knowing full well that he, the player, was not entitled to play for England.

What would have been the outcome if such knowledge was discovered after the event? Surely the cap would have been withdrawn.

The club have been shown to be less than honest in this affair, and however badly they feel treated by Pete Lansley's reporting of the matter, they should withdraw any restrictions placed on him and allow him to continue reporting the club's games.

Please resolve this matter as soon as possible as it will only harm all parties concerned, particularly the supporters who rely on the Bucks Free Press for information of the club.

Bernard Carvell
Ridgeway Close
Marlow

Reporter was doing his job

AFTER reading of the episode of the Dave Carroll saga I had to respond.

The response by Mr Ivor Beeks over loyalty to Dave Carroll I can understand, but it is very immature for a man in his position.

Every day there are impositions and infringements on people's liberties by the media. Yet I am sure like most people he either shows no interest, or is indifferent to the influence of the media.

That is, up to this particular incident concerning Dave Carroll playing football for a semi-pro team representing England.

The reporter in question, like those around the world in newspapers, was doing the job he's paid for.

Research, enquiry, journalism, phone, publish are all the stock in trade of a journalist. As an ardent Wycombe Wanderers supporter when I can attend, I think it is very unfair for Mr Ivor Beeks to deprive the general public, the disabled, the hard of hearing, those who work on Saturday, and any other groups from a report in the Bucks Free Press.

Mr E Ball
Shrimpton Road
Booker

Just keep telling the truth

I'VE JUST read the article in the Bucks Free Press concerning Peter Lansley's difference with Wycombe Wanderers Football Club.

I've been a Wycombe supporter now for 30 years and have seen them play some superb football but I've also seen them play like carthorses, but I accept you've got to take the good with the bad.

I wouldn't tell anyone that Wycombe play fantastic football all the time because they don't, and as a genuine supporter I want to read about the club whether it's good or bad.

I now know that when Peter Lansley writes an article on Wycombe Wanderers, on the field or off, it's going to be the truth, not a story that reads nicely.

So on behalf of all true Wycombe supporters please don't back down to these bully-boy tactics, stick to your guns and give us the truth, warts and all.

At the end of the day, the supporters are the backbone of any club and when Martin O'Neill moves on to greener pastures, and the present squad have hung up their boots, and Mr Beeks has tired of his new toy, the supporters will still be supporting.

Eric Buckle
Pigeon Farm Road
Stokenchurch

This fight belongs in playschool

AS A Wycombe Wanderers Season Ticket holder and regular BFP reader I can only describe your editorial and sports column in last week's BFP (19th) as the biggest own goal I have seen scored this season.

The petty squabble between the Chairman and your Deputy Sports Editor has no place in what we are expected to believe is one of the leading regional newspapers. It belongs in Playschool where both participants have clearly fallen out of their prams.

Your articles have let the fans down, let the BFP readership down and let your competitors step in. What price the well-worn newspaper cliché - 'The public have a right to know.' Come on Mr Lansley - grow up!

C R Doe
Linnet Close
Booker
High Wycombe

Get together and sort it out

I AM sorry to learn that the Bucks Free Press and Wycombe Wanderers have fallen out. The resultant deprivation of news from Adams Park fills me, and I am sure many others, with dismay.

I suggest that both parties get together over a nice soothing drink of Ribena and sort it out. They should leave their rattles at home in case they are tempted to take a swipe at each other.

D Wiltshire
Gregory Road
Hedgerley

It's full marks for good reporting

I READ with disgust Wycombe Wanderers' proposed conditions and treatment to be given at future fixtures to a respected and most professional member of your staff.

It seems to me that your Mr Peter Lansley has been penalised for reporting a true fact about a player who was not eligible to play in the English squad, surely he can't be blamed for that, after all it's full marks for good reporting.

I cannot see what they are going to achieve by taking this particular action, maybe they were hoping you would put him in the dock, but I'm afraid it misfired. They didn't quite understand what a most valued member of staff they were dealing with.

I think the officials responsible for this childish behaviour should be ashamed of themselves, after enjoying the support and encouragement given by the BFP for so many years - something that is a major factor in a club's success.

I sincerely hope that this little affair will not deter you from your honest and fair reporting, and that you will carry on the good work for many years to come.

Ron Buckland
'Revola'
Clay Lane
Booker

Paper should not be obstructed

AS A true and regular Wycombe Wanderers supporter of over 22 years, may I express my whole hearted support to the Bucks Free Press for standing by Pete Lansley, for both him and the paper to be able to cover WWFC without hindrance, obstruction or interference by the club.

This whole episode appears to be a classic case of a football club objecting to a reporter rather than the paper itself, hoping that the Bucks Free Press will quietly change the reporter to avoid any more fuss or unpleasantness.

It is an important point of principle that the BFP does not give in, because if WWFC get away with it this once they will think that they can do it again any time they like. It would also make the job of any future reporter almost impossible at the club.

WWFC have an obligation to their supporters to co-operate fully with the BFP and the media in general, whoever they choose to represent them. Anything less is a betrayal of the previously-held good reputation of the club.

I cannot believe that a club that includes as a director such a notable media figure as Alan Parry, appears to be acting in such a vindictive and childish manner to a journalist who is the best reporter WWFC have had covering their activities for several years.

It seems that the club are quite happy for the BFP to cover them in a 'propaganda' type of way, not questioning anything they do and giving free advertising space to their commercial schemes.

But should any of their reporters actually try and be objective and see all sides of any arguments or debates surrounding WWFC, their days of covering the club seem to be numbered.

If this whole David Carroll affair is just an excuse for certain WWFC officials to let their personal grudges, for whatever reason, against Pete Lansley surface, they quite simply do not deserve to hold their positions of power and great responsibility within the club.

After all, were WWFC suggesting that Pete Lansley join them in a deception of the football authorities with regards to Dave Carroll's international qualification? Had his ineligibility not been discovered until a later and more embarrassing moment in time, it could have had serious consequences for both the player and club.

Lastly, please withhold my name and address if you print this letter, as on current form WWFC may well attempt to ban any supporter who merely expresses their opinion in print.

Name and address supplied

I am incensed by the club's attitude

Open Letter to Club Secretary John Goldsworthy

I HAD been intending to write to you after reading your article in Tuesday night's programme for the Dagenham/Redbridge game.

After seeing today's Bucks Free Press and learning of Wycombe Wanderers' actions against them I am even more incensed.

I and my sons are regular Wanderers supporters, having seen every home game and many away games this season, but I think that your outburst in Tuesday's programme regarding the Dave Carroll affair was completely uncalled for.

What a sorry, and dangerous, state we are heading for when a local newspaper is criticised for investigating and reporting the truth.

The fault for any disappointment caused to Dave Carroll lies fairly and squarely with the Football Association. It is surely not too much to expect that the governing body of football in this country should check the eligibility of any player they select to represent England BEFORE they announce the squad to the press and public.

In the event of a mistake being made, as in this case, then surely the responsibility lies with the player's club to notify the FA of their mistake immediately.

Far from doing this it appears that Wycombe Wanderers were prepared to try and cover up the facts. Not only was this a thoroughly unprofessional stance to take, it was also dishonest. I do not expect a club with the ambitions and potential of Wycombe Wanderers to behave in this way.

This has now been compounded by your totally unjustified treatment of Pete Lansley and the Bucks Free Press. I and my sons will continue to support the club but we would urge you to resolve the current situation as speedily as possible and endeavour to act more honourably in the future.

**Don Dolby
Copes Shroves
Hazlemere**

Childish boycott hit the public

IT IS a sign of the times that journalists are so full of their own importance that they forget what their main role in society is – namely to provide news for the general public. The Bucks Free Press have provided the most perfect illustration of this with your childish boycott of covering Wycombe Wanderers last week. Apparently, because Wycombe Wanderers did not like your reporter doing or saying what he wanted, we all now have to do without any news about our favourite football team.

I do not know (or care to know) the full story behind the reason for the boycott, although I can sympathise with the club because I have myself been the victim of an over-zealous journalist in the past. But what is surely clear is that you have no right to use your near-monopoly position as the provider of news about our local football team to bully them into letting you do what you want. The question is not whether you are more important than a football club, but that the public is more important than you both. And here I think I am right in saying that the public does not want to be used as a weapon in your petty quarrel.

You have misjudged the values of this reader, at least, and we are cancelling our subscription to the Bucks Free Press until you re-commence your coverage of Wycombe Wanderers and I would urge all Blues fans to do the same.

I wonder if your stated principles of press freedom will extend to publishing this letter in full in your letters page.

**A V Kuliukas
Lime Avenue
High Wycombe**

Think how Dave Carroll must feel

I HAD just got back from work on Friday evening and in buying the Bucks Free Press looking forward to reading coverage on Wycombe Wanderers' GMVC game with Dagenham and Redbridge. I was shocked to see that the paper had decided to stop its coverage. With an open mind to your reasons I see your argument with Wycombe Wanderers as being very petty and childish and mostly on your part.

Dave Carroll was originally selected to play for the England semi-professional side even though he is Scottish. Therefore, sooner or later he was going to have to be withdrawn.

But I feel that it was the action of how your deputy sports editor, Pete Lansley, handled the issue that provoked the club to restrict his access. And this restriction was for only one fixture, i.e. Dagenham and Redbridge.

In Pete Lansley's article on the matter in Midweek he did not actually state how the Football Association discovered Carroll's nationality. In fact it was he who informed the FA.

The club has a right to know what is being informed to the FA about one of their players. His action not only ruined the chance of Carroll playing in the England game but ruined his chances of playing in the future.

Had the club informed the FA of Carroll's circumstances he may have had a better chance of being picked for future fixtures.

Wycombe Wanderers FC have, I feel, let Pete Lansley off lightly. Limited access does not mean censorship.

The fact that when I go to see a football match and am not allowed to go into the Press box does not mean that I am being censored. What I see as being censorship is when I am not able to read what I want.

Therefore the Bucks Free Press is using censorship to argue its point. The restrictions put on Pete Lansley do not mean that he is unable to report on a match.

Therefore, the Bucks Free Press is getting things totally out of proportion, and is censoring the public over a petty matter. What's a one match restriction compared to how Dave Carroll must have felt after being so suddenly dropped from the England team?

**Andrew Rubis
Cannon Court Road
Maidenhead**

Your decision was undemocratic

I FEEL that you have made a drastic mistake in your judgement not to carry any reports on matches played by Wycombe Wanderers Football Club. As I comprehend the situation your reporter has been restricted to the Press Box, and has been refused access to other parts of the ground.

How is this undemocratic? He can still freely report on the games, and is only being restricted from entering official areas, and speaking with players, etc.

Where does it say in the constitution that everyone has to talk to the press? Indeed many occupations, sports people, and other bodies have a policy of making 'No comment' to the press, or referring the reporter to a higher authority.

Where does it state in any Act of Parliament that the press have access to any building without consent? Your reporters are often denied access to scenes of crimes/accidents etc., but still manage to professionally report as fully as possible.

I feel that you have been 'undemocratic' by refusing your readers access to match reports. Especially affected are those people who, like my nine-year old son, were unable to attend Tuesday evening's game. Also affected are those of us who are unable to get to away matches, and rely on your paper for 'match reports' of an unbiased nature. I am not that interested in what some player or official has subsequently to say, e.g., 'Over the moon', etc, but how he performed.

As a subscriber to your paper if you are no longer intending to include match reports on Wycombe Wanderers FC, then I shall cancel my subscription. That is my democratic right, and on this principle you are wrong.

Martin Elliott
Slade Road
Stokenchurch

Insult to readers' intelligence

THIS is the first time I have written to a newspaper. However, I took such exception to your decision not to include any coverage of Wycombe Wanderers games in your latest editions.

As I purchase your papers, mainly to read these reports, I purchased this week's copy for nothing.

Your reporter's decision to inform the Football Association of Dave Carroll's details served no sound journalistic purpose other than a cheap story, therefore depriving a very talented and loyal servant of Wycombe Wanderers, probably his only chance of an International Cap.

To try to justify Peter Lansley's actions by setting him up as a defender of journalistic freedom and even democracy itself (Star), I find an insult to the intelligence of your readers.

I purchased Peter Lansley's book *Out of the Blue*, which I greatly enjoyed, but find his actions this week most distasteful.

Needless to say, I will not be taking any of your papers again until this matter is resolved.

R Dover
Chesterton Green
Beaconsfield

Journalist was out of order

I HAVE always enjoyed the Bucks Free Press, particularly for its sports coverage. I am therefore dismayed at the paper's decision not to report matches at Adams Park.

In my opinion your reporter Peter Lansley was completely out of order in going against the club and depriving David Carroll of gaining international recognition.

He must have realised what the outcome would be when he informed the FA of David's birthplace. It was a cheap story which obviously upset all the players and officials.

I think he should have been big enough to apologise to the club and in the meantime get on with his job of reporting from the press box. If he felt unable to do this then the editor should have sent another reporter to cover the matches.

To deprive the public of any reports and fill the space with news of Chesham is very childish.

Until the Bucks Free Press decide to continue the reports of Wycombe Wanderers games I for one will not be purchasing the paper.

David Pledsted
Copes Shroves
Hazlemere

Don't make crisis out of drama

IN refusing to cover and report on Wycombe Wanderers, you sink to the level of the pettiness shown by those whose decision to bar your reporter, while pathetically juvenile, does not warrant a complete 'blackout'.

If a personality clash is at the root of the problem, then let it be resolved through level headed discussion.

That much abused phrase 'freedom of the press' comes over as a very hollow excuse for denying readers the pleasure of reading about the team which has done so much to bring Wycombe into a talking point in the football world.

There is enough paranoia floating about without creating a crisis over someone's liverish reaction.

C Palmer
Masons Close
Prestwood

Both sides are being silly

I FEEL that both sides of this incident are very petty. The Bucks Free Press reporter for not first of all going to the club and asking their views first on the matter of Dave Carroll's nationality, and Wycombe Wanderers FC for not realising that the player was of Scottish birth.

This of course does not allow him to play for England. Also the player himself should have spoken up when finding out his selection for the England squad.

Please, please, for all the readers of your excellent sports coverage - also Wycombe Wanderers officials for your supporters, shake hands and forget this stupid and silly child like behaviour.

PS. I'll still stand in the Bucks Free Press stand and shout for Wycombe Wanderers.

Michael A North
Candlemas Mead
Beaconsfield