

Godspeed needed

By ROBERT MENDICK

VICAR Frank Hillebrand's wife Sue will be ready at the wheel of a getaway car to speed her husband from a church service to catch the last moments of Wycombe Wanderers' FA Trophy Final.

Football-mad Rev Hillebrand's bizarre plan was hatched after he discovered that a Girl Guide service clashed with Wanderers' Wembley showdown with Runcorn on May 9.

The Girl Guide Association of Buckinghamshire's prestigious Banner Service and the final both kick off at 3pm.

But Frank, vicar of All Saints, is undeterred. He will dash from the church as the final hymn dies down and leap into his wife's car.

"Immediately it finishes, I can take off for the match and see the last 20 minutes," said Frank. His master plan relies on Wycombe Wanderers' chairman Ivor Beeks arranging a parking space at Wembley Stadium.

"Hopefully, we will have sorted it," said Ivor. "We need him at the church

Vicar prays he will make it to Wembley for match

first to say a prayer before he comes."

Frank said: "I hope there are no speed traps between here and Wembley." And the vicar joked: "If it was a Scouts service, we might have cancelled it and arranged another date."

Frank will not be the only person making a mad dash from All Saints on May 9. Dignitaries attending an earlier church service to commemorate the closure of the US Air Force base in Daws Hill will be praying for a prompt finish.

Mayor Ted Collins and High Wycombe's Charter Trustees will be robed up in all their regalia for the civic service in honour of the United States Air Force.

The service starts at 9.30am and Ted has revealed the service will not run past 11am, to allow people to get to the FA Trophy Final. Most of the supporters' coaches are leaving at noon

for Wembley.

Ted and the Charter Trustees will go on a procession along High Wycombe High Street after the service, and will then change out of their official clothes at the council offices in Queen Victoria Road.

And Ted has already made plans to leave the Mayor's Parlour at 11.30am with council chairman Peter Cartwright to get to the national stadium. They need to be at Wembley by 12.45pm for an FA lunch.

Ted said of the service: "It's short and to the point for all those who are going to Wembley. Everyone in the civic party will be going."

●Blues have sold 20,000 Wembley tickets since they went on sale last week. They are still available from the club and various outlets around the town.

●See Sport Page 27 (in the fourth section) for details



Football crazy: The Rev Frank Hillebrand