

TOWN HALL

WYCOMBE DISTRICT

By **SIMON ROBERTS**



Now the boot seems to be on the other foot

LEAFING through the Daily Telegraph on Saturday I came across a familiar symbol – the stylised W of Wycombe District Council.

The success of High Wycombe's football team, it seems, can be used to sell the district to any businesses which might be floating around looking for a new home. The full colour advert – which, when I phoned up with the measurements, would have cost £10,080 – featured a picture of the team in action with the caption: "In business to win."

With the council's obvious enthusiasm for the Blues, you could be forgiven for forgetting that the two have not always had such an amicable relationship. Consider this slice of recent history:

- May 1989 – the club has two applications for plastic training pitches thrown out by councillors
- May 1990 – an application for a grass training pitch is thrown out
- May 1991 – Blues win FA Trophy at Wembley. Thousands of fans jeer the council for refusing permission for a training pitch
- July 1991 – council refuses permission for fourth pitch application and 224 extra parking spaces. Blues appeal
- January 1992 – squad is forced to start regular training on the Adams Park pitch
- February 1992 – club director Alan Parry accuses the council, in the Daily Telegraph no less, of turning its back on the club
- June 1992 – talks are held between club and council
- January 1993 – conditional permission is granted for training pitch and car parking.

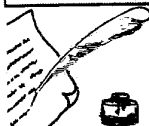
The decision to place the ad was taken by the council's Economic Development Team – a group of officers, not councillors – and the council will not reveal exactly how much it cost.

PR man Eddie Russell said the council was trying to market the area as effectively as it could and the response had been good.

But to conclude, perhaps it's worth reflecting yet again, this time on something Cllr Clare Martens said back in January last year when the pitch approval was given. She wanted to turn down the scheme again and paraphrased American president John F Kennedy: "Let us not ask what the district can do for Wycombe Wanderers but what Wycombe Wanderers can do for the district."

Well, it looks like they've done it.

CHURCH VIEW



By **ARTHUR CHURCH**



Keep feet on the ground as Blues fly high

IF you are a non-sport person then move on for a few paragraphs.

Meanwhile, I have received a phone call from an old friend Pat Smethurst, widow of ex-superintendent of police Jack, who was for some years chairman of Wycombe Wanderers.

Pat, over the moon with the Blues' successful invasion of Wembley – once more – now lives near her son in Scotland and the family likes to keep in touch with the Wanderers and their exploits.

The Wycombe team was highly successful in its sphere during Jack's chairmanship – remember the Middlesbrough highpoint? – and Pat asks me to express her congratulations now to the present chairman, Ivor Beeks, and his colleagues, which I gladly do.

I well remember going along to the Weymouth ground to watch a game there while we were on holiday together. As I recall, Weymouth, then semi-pro, were well above us in league status. The game was fast and furious but Jack was convinced that our amateurs could take them on. How times change. Both Weymouth and Wycombe have new homes but whereas the seashiders are now almost minnows the chairboys (ancient term!) are having a whale of a time ascending to the second division of the Football League.

Who knows where we'll go from here? There will be nail-biting days ahead, I have no doubt, but Ivor has, like Jack, boundless enthusiasm for the task.

Time was when the soccer season ended in April and left us to the smaller ball and the whites until September. Not any more. The controversial play-offs take us just short of flaming June and by the end of July we will be into friendlies.

While there will be no games to watch in this country in that short interim period my guess is that for many in Wycombe and district a prime topic of conversation will

Call (0494) 729000.
scheme costs £177.25 per child.
Amersham. The Chiltern Leisure
Woodrow High House.
15-year-olds can sign up for
week-long August camps at

CHILTERN: Adventurous name to