

VIEW FROM THE STAND

By Ron Barnett

Bubbling Blues do us proud

OUR Coca-Cola Cup certainly fizzed and sparkled on Tuesday evening, as the Blues treated us to their best home performance of the season.

It's just a shame we didn't get that elusive winning goal our attacking play deserved.

The atmosphere in the ground was superb and I'm sure the excellent support from the fans encouraged the team to keep taking the game to Manchester City. If only we could get this number of fans and level of vocal support every week.

In truth, Manchester City looked a poor Premiership side and it's not surprising they are wallowing at the bottom. So, we're off to Maine Road in a couple of weeks and I believe we still have a very good chance of making Alan Ball eat his words.

There was an interesting off-the-ball incident towards the end of the game. When Wycombe were swarming all over the City defence during the last ten minutes, three long lens cameras were trained on a nervous and agitated Alan Ball. In the end, the City substitutes positioned themselves at the side of the dug out to screen their manager.

Hopefully he will have to go in hiding again after the second leg.

Our three new faces all seem to be settling in, although John Williams has not yet shown his true form. Jason again gave a very accomplished performance but David Farrell was my man of the match.

He is looking an excellent buy and is proving to be better at tracking back and delivering the ball than Mickey Bell managed earlier in the season.

■ Can anyone explain the policy on Parking in Carrisbrooke Avenue and Rydal Way in Sands? Last year Wycombe District Council fitted No Parking signs along these roads which were only to be used on match days.

However, these signs are very rarely used, even for matches that are bound to attract large crowds, such as Manchester City.

Now I'm not complaining about being allowed to part in these roads, it suits me fine, it's just that it appears to be a lottery as to whether someone has bothered to open up the signs.

Has a decision been made to allow match day parking or do we have to take pot luck each week?

Public bar



A QUICK missive from m'learned Badger this week as I don my shorts for training - yep, far from being a flabby old badge I do indeed take part in a variety of sports.

Running is a favourite pastime, marathons have been tackled, I have fenced for Eton, played rugger for my school, and enjoy tennis, regular squash etc..

But the love of my life is soccer. So it was with pain this week that I saw the Blues fall foul of the newest loathsome introduction to the noblest of all games.

Wycombe played well and they were undoubtedly due a win for their performance against a humbled Premiership side.

As I goaled a few dribbles of the right stuff passing my open lips I mused on what referees now see as their latest mission to stamp out cheating in the artful muse of football - diving by players who pretend they have been brought down by what they see as a whimp of a challenge.

Just then Williams rose to the bar.

M'learned friend, himself ensconsed with the most delightful Sicilian beauty, first brought this to my attention because an Italian ref in their Serie A league had insisted on resigning if his ref federation didn't fall into the line on the punishments that should be meted out to those found guilty of diving.

"Look, it's like this," whistled Williams. "There is always a case that a man may be looking for a penalty, and quite obviously most of us can see when he goes for a dive or the challenge warrants him going down."

"But refs both here and abroad are going overboard on this new attack and booking or sending off players just because they see their going to ground as a quick way to a goal or merely a slight advantage."

"Anyway whatever they see it as - they want to stamp out the sportsmanship approach to dealing with an unwarranted challenge."

Quite so Williams, that's exactly what they did with that fine fellow Desouza at Adams Park. It seems there was contact, and as such he had a right to go down if his progress was hindered thus. But out comes a yellow card for diving - why not just not award the Blues the free kick, why penalise the chap.

I can see many a clean, good player attaining a disciplinary record for no more than going to ground after a dodgy tackle. Let's blow the whistle on this one eh, refs.

Badger