

I've got the Blues after putting my foot in it

I scored a huge own goal this week when I went round proudly telling friends and colleagues the WRONG name of the new Wycombe Wanderers manager.

I thought former West Ham legend Billy Bonds had got the job – and I wasted no time in telling people. My foul play came after I was sent on an all-day course in London on Tuesday.

I rang the office at 11am to ask what was going on and was told that Wycombe would be announcing the identity of their new boss at 2pm.

"Any ideas on who it is?" I asked.

"Oh, it's Billy Bonds," I was told after a short interlude.

Wow, I thought, how exciting that the former England defender should come to Adams Park. It was tea-break on the course, so I had nothing better to do than tell various other editors that Big Bill was on his way to Wycombe.

That evening, I rushed home to break the news to Mrs Editor's Chair, who said: "Who's Billy Bonds?"

I spent the next hour explaining his merits and how he

had led West Ham to glory...

Finally, I managed to convince her that it was a good move. I then turned on the Teletext on my new TV to try to find out some more details about Billy.

Imagine my surprise when his name did not appear on the sports index.

There was only one mention of a new managerial appointment. The headline was something like: 'Gregory gets the job'.

What job, and who's Gregory?, I wondered.

I flicked to the page and gasped in horror when I saw that it was Aston Villa coach John Gregory and the job was the Wycombe one.

I then had to spend the rest of the evening explaining to Mrs Editor's Chair that Billy Bonds had nothing to do with Wycombe and that the real new manager was not in any way related to Gregory Peck.

A quick investigation the following morning revealed why I had been misled.

Our sports desk had received a

tip-off on Tuesday morning from an unsuccessful applicant who told us: "I didn't get it, but Billy Bonds did."

Luckily, the truth emerged on Tuesday lunchtime.

But I had my mobile phone switched off and no-one thought to contact me because we didn't have a paper to produce until Thursday.

Of course, our papers make stringent checks on facts such as these before putting them in print.

So there was no danger of that false rumour ever going in The Star.

But almost everyone in the world, me included, falls victim to shooting our mouth off with incorrect facts before we've thoroughly checked them.

Perhaps, then, we should all keep quiet and refuse to gossip until we're entirely sure of each and every situation.

So I won't mention the latest tip-off, the one about Wycombe buying Alan Shearer for £16m, just in case it's wrong.

Help John lift us out of the Blues

THE Bucks Free Press wishes new Wycombe Wanderers manager John Gregory every success.

No one is under any illusions about the difficulty of the task that faces him.

He inherits a team second from the bottom of the Second Division, having won just two league games since the start of the season.

Before the start of last season, Alan Smith took over a side which had just missed the play-offs by the narrowest of margins.

He somehow managed to turn them into a side which lacked heart, organisation or any belief in their own ability.

Disillusioned supporters, unhappy with the shortage of success and on-field entertainment during match-days, have started staying away in their droves.

It is clear John's job is not going to be easy. However, this is a fresh start and hopefully the dawn of a new era for the Wanderers.

That's why we would appeal to Blues supporters to be patient and give him a fair chance.

And what better way to welcome him than turning up in numbers for his first home game against Wrexham tomorrow.

Perhaps an even bigger fish – the suggestion of Dalglish made me drool in anticipation.

Then the news filtered through that the new man in the hot seat was to be John Gregory. John who? Has anyone heard of this man we hope will revive the Adams Park glory days?

I, of course, wish John every success. At least he can't possibly do as badly as his predecessor Alan whatsisname.

I EAGERLY awaited news of the next Wycombe Wanderers manager on Tuesday.

I had a feeling it was going to be big. A former England international, like Cyrille Regis, possibly, or even Ray 'Butch' Wilkins.

Charles Mann