

Wanderers decide to go for a change in image and luck

Bluey the Swan facing the bullet

WYCOMBE Wanderers' waddling mascot Bluey the Swan, is set to be killed off and replaced by a new football-related version, possibly based on Loakes Park scoring sensation 'Bodger' Horseman.

The club want to replace Bluey because they are fed up of having the only swan in the world who doesn't like the wet. His appearances at Adams Park have been restricted to dry games only.

Blues' sales and Marketing manager Mark Austin said: "Bluey doesn't weather too well in the wet. He went out in it once and came back in an awful mess.

"We are looking at a more durable and practical mascot."

The club are still discussing what Bluey's replacement will be.

They have approached Tony Horseman, who blasted a record 529 goals in 900 appearances for Wanderers, and have asked him whether he would mind the new lucky charm being called Bodger in honour of his nickname.

Horseman said: "It would be an honour if the club names its mascot after me. I had a lot of good luck as a player at Wycombe Wanderers and I hope the mascot gives the team as much luck and good fortune as I enjoyed.

"I'm very happy if they want to take my name so long as they don't expect me to walk around the pitch in a costume."

But incredibly Wanderers' plans to get rid of the swan are being threatened by some fans who say they will not renew their season tickets if Bluey is not there.

Austin said: "A lot of children and their parents like Bluey. They were disappointed when it was raining last season and Bluey was not there. Some of them wrote to us saying they would withdraw their season tickets if Bluey is not there."

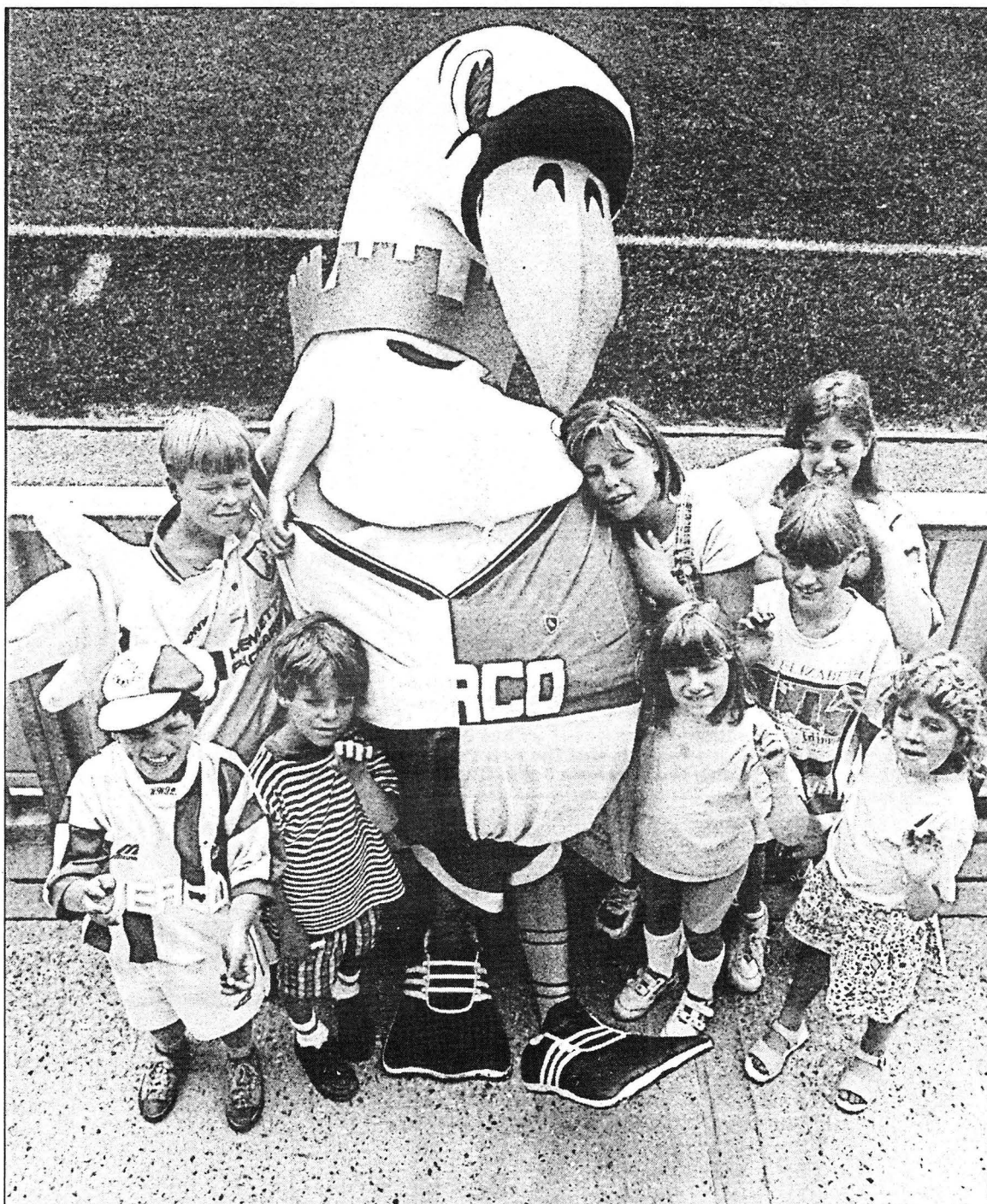
The other factor which could yet save Bluey is cost. A replacement mascot would cost thousands and that would be hard for Wanderers to justify when Blues boss Neil Smillie has been told he has got no money to spend.

Austin said: "The ideal situation would be a mascot who doubles up as a centre forward."

● Terry Venables' first game in charge of Crystal Palace will be against Wycombe Wanderers.

The former England boss will bring his new club to Adams Park for a pre-season friendly against the Blues on July 15.

The match will go down in history as Wanderers' earliest



Dying Swan: Bluey's swansong will be the friendly against Terry Venables' Eagles

Ref: 96-02587F6

pre-season friendly and marks Venables return to English club football management after leading England in Euro 96 and Australia's unsuccessful World Cup qualification bid.

Blues have taken advantage of the change in date of the official close season to squeeze the match in early.

● County councillors are claiming

£1,546 from Wycombe Wanderers for work done in granting the club a safety certificate last year.

● Jason Cousins is set for the biggest match of his life tomorrow when he marries Dina Garrett.

Blues striker Keith Scott is his best man returning a favour after Cousins was the best man when Scott married Jason's sister.

Scott said: "I'm honoured to do

it for my brother in law and looking forward to it."

Blues stars Paul McCarthy, Dave Carroll and released goalkeeper Brian Parkin will also be there.

● Season ticket holders have until 5.15pm on June 19 to renew their tickets. After that unsold tickets go on general sale. Fans can save up to £65 off the price of a season ticket by buying it before Friday, July 3.