

There's no real game, so I may just pretend

PARK LIFE

By Steve Brown

YOU wouldn't believe how glad I was to hear that the table football game, Subbuteo, has now won a reprieve.

I was very upset to read in the Independent newspaper last week that they were not going to make the game any more because it has been overtaken by computer games. But I understand they have changed their minds now because so many people wanted it to stay.

I'm pleased because it was a big part of every football fanatic's childhood. We used to play all day.

Everyone in our street had it and we even had our own league. I was also a member of the Subbuteo club. It was so big, they used to have a World Cup at Wembley Arena and the World Champion even had his fingers insured.

I've got to say, though, for all our hours of playing it, we were never that good. My brother, Billy, was always the runaway winner of our Subbuteo league.

It was great fun even though we used to have the hazards of the cat or the dog stepping across the pitch.

I had all the stands and the floodlights, but I remember we needed candles as well because the lights weren't very bright.

It almost came to a nasty end when my mum threw our set out. But luckily I managed to pick up another one, just like it, at a car boot sale and we've still got it at home.

As I've got a spare Saturday tomorrow, I might go and get it out again this weekend and challenge my brother to a game.

Nowadays all the Wycombe players are into the Playstation and we always have it with us on away trips.

Last week, I was playing knockout 2000 with Mark Rogers and he's the king of that, he beat me twice.

Players are big kids. I even bought Martyn Lee's Dreamcast off him.

Back to the real game though, and I couldn't help but agreeing with our chairman Ivor Beeks' comments in last week's BFP, saying referees should be paid more to attract ex-players to take up the whistle.

I would certainly consider it if they paid ex-pros to do it. I think players would make good referees because they would already have the respect.

At the moment the gulf between refs and players is getting wider and something needs to be done to change that.

I think if you asked 100 players if they would consider reffing after their football was finished the majority would say yes because it would be an opportunity to extend their careers.

I've never played in the Premiership but if the chance to referee a match in that division came along, I would jump at the chance to do it.

HOW THEY STAND

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Wigan	27	10	3	1	25	8	5	8	0	23	14	56
Bristol R	27	9	3	1	18	7	8	2	4	25	14	56
Preston	26	10	1	2	23	12	6	6	1	23	11	55
Millwall	28	8	5	1	22	11	6	4	4	21	18	51
Burnley	26	11	1	1	28	9	2	7	4	9	13	47
Stoke	27	6	5	3	18	13	7	3	3	20	11	47
Notts Co	28	6	3	5	21	16	6	4	4	18	14	43
Gillingham	25	8	2	3	26	15	4	4	4	18	18	42
Brentford	28	8	3	3	23	16	3	4	7	15	22	40
Luton	27	8	4	1	28	16	2	3	9	9	22	37
Wycombe	28	7	3	4	22	18	2	6	6	13	18	36
Bour'm'th	28	8	3	3	26	12	2	2	10	13	31	35
Bristol C	27	3	11	0	15	8	4	2	7	16	23	34
Oldham	27	5	3	5	16	13	4	4	6	13	19	34
Colchester	28	6	3	5	23	25	3	4	7	15	28	34
Bury	25	5	5	3	26	23	2	5	5	12	12	31
Wrexham	26	4	5	4	14	14	2	5	6	11	23	28
Scunthrpe	26	4	2	7	11	19	3	4	6	15	23	27
Cardiff	27	3	7	3	13	16	2	3	9	13	21	25
Oxford	26	3	4	6	13	19	3	3	7	11	20	25
Blackpool	27	2	6	5	16	23	2	4	8	14	24	22
Reading	26	3	8	3	14	14	1	2	9	15	32	22
Camb Utd	26	4	4	5	22	21	0	4	9	10	20	20
Chesterfld	26	2	4	6	7	12	1	5	8	8	19	18