

MAN WHO WANTS ANOTHER WATFORD

New signing Sullivan sees Wycombe as the next big thing

Midweek's Dave Peters talks to Wycombe Wanderers' new marketing man Mike Sullivan about his big plans for second division Blues

THIS is the man who Adams Park traditionalists are banking on to delay the changes in Wanderers' constitution which chairman Ivor Beeks has described as 'inevitable in the future.'

Former Crystal Palace and Watford marketing guru Mike Sullivan signed up this month and joins Mark Austin and Claire Ramsden in a powerful new marketing team.

Wanderers now have two of the top dogs in the football finance world on their side with Austin, the chairman of the league's Commercial Managers Association, now being flanked by its secretary, Sullivan.

With Ramsden, the three of them have now been set the task of pumping more cash into Wanderers coffers.

Austin and Ramsden have hit their budgets every year and Sullivan's arrival is designed to help Wanderers attract more businesses and support.

Sullivan was with Watford during their glorious first rise up the divisions, into Europe and into the FA Cup Final and then moved to Palace for the ill-fated Terry Venables and Mark Goldberg era. He is relishing his new challenge.

He said: "I've come here because I think Wycombe can be another Watford. It's a lovely warm club. I've seen both sides of the coin at Palace and Watford. It's been a learning curve and the thing is to take the best things from both jobs."

"The marketing department here have done a magnificent job now the aim is to go out and attract even more business."

Part of his aim is to increase crowds but he knows the club must also increase its non-matchday activities.

He said: "In reality the football club is only open for 48 hours a year for matches. We've got to make more use of this stadium on non-match days."

"We need to get people who haven't been here and make them aware of what we have got."

The team will adopt an



Mark Austin



Man with a plan: Wanderers' latest signing Mike Sullivan

aggressive new stance to attract business and support within a 20 mile radius.

Sullivan plans to stage several sporting luncheons and increase the stadium's useage for conferences and business meetings.

Ticket giveaways for kids are also on the agenda as Sullivan, a Gillingham fan by birth, bids to

buck the trend of local youngsters supporting Premiership giants.

He said: "I support Gillingham because it was the first club I went to see. We've got to try and get to children before they are ten. We need to do things to encourage them to come here before they build up an allegiance with another team."

Sullivan shares team boss Lawrie Sanchez's ambition to see the stadium full for the first time ever. He knows it won't be easy, but he won't be lacking stamina for the job.

In his spare time he's a keen runner. He has run 17 New York and London Marathons and is also a class A referee.

Blues face backlog after another match falls victim to freeze

WYCOMBE Wanderers are facing a fixture pile-up after Saturday's second division match at home to Cambridge United fell victim to the weather.

The match was called off on Friday afternoon because the half of the pitch which is shadowed by the double-decker stand at Adams Park was frozen solid.

The decision was a blow to Wanderers who

had hoped to give new-boy Gerard Lavin his first run out in the Wycombe quarters.

It also means that Wanderers now face a hectic run-in to the season as they continue to fight on three fronts.

They are still chasing promotion via the play-offs and have cup interest in the FA Cup and LDV Vans Trophy.

The Cambridge match joins the games

against Millwall at home, Swansea away, and Stoke at home, which will now have to be played later in the year, while the Berks and Bucks Cup game at Windsor must also be rescheduled.

The Swansea game is so far the only fixture of those four to have been re-arranged with the Blues now due to visit the Vetch Field on Tuesday, April 10.