

Adams Park sells its name

Stadium shock as Blues drop Adams Park from the title

WANDERERS will kick off the 2003/4 season at home to Stockport on August 9 but it won't take place at Adams Park.

The club has sold off the name of its famous stadium to a company who have insisted that they drop Adams Park from its title.

Adams Park will now be named after its new sponsors for the next three years in a deal which will net the club between £150,000 and £300,000 in total.

The controversial pact, which has caused a boardroom split, has only been signed with letters of agreement at the moment but Wanderers expect the contract to be rubber

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stamped next week.

The news will be a bombshell to fans who had been told that the club was looking for stadium sponsors but had been re-assured that the ground would still incorporate the name Adams Park somewhere in its title.

But finance director Rod Tomlin insisted: "There is no halfway house. If you don't drop Adams Park from the name, the benefit to the sponsor is diluted because people will continue to call it Adams Park."

Wanderers will face fierce

criticism from traditionalists for selling off part of their identity, but that won't stop them taking down the distinctive Adams Park sign and replacing it with the sponsors name once the ink is dry on the deal.

Tomlin said: "At the end of the day we know it will probably upset a number of people.

"Some will look at it as though we've sold our heritage down the river but I don't. I hope that in the present climate, people will accept it was right in the interest of the financial stability of this club.

"We have seen teams with a very long heritage, like Notts County, in administration. Heritage at the end of the day counts for very little when you are looking at the financial

dynamics of running a football club today."

Wanderers' stadium takes its name from Frank Adams, Blues' former player, administrator and patron who gave the club its old Loakes Park stadium.

Tomlin said: "I think most people including the Adams family would accept that it is part of the future well-being of this club.

"If it helps to ensure football and rugby are played here for many more years to come, I hope that people will see it makes sense."

In a bid to maintain the link with the Adams family, Wanderers will retain the name Adams Park in all their conference, banqueting and

entertainment events at the ground.

If the sponsors don't renew at the end of the three-year term, the ground will revert to its traditional name if a new sponsor can't be found.

And, in another fund-raising move, Wanderers this week put the stands around the ground up for sale starting the bidding at £25,000.

● What do you think of the Adams Park name change. Fax us on 01494 534015 with your thoughts or e-mail dpeters@london.newsquest.co.uk and then see Tuesday's Bucks Free Press Midweek for the full reaction.

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