

Where is the sense in axing WWFC academy?

WYCOMBE Wanderers RIP.

I have previously written regarding the proposed new stadium with a 20,000 capacity when the football team struggles to attract 5,000.

The farce at the club continues! You reported that Wycombe Wanderers are closing their academy in the same week that Crewe have transferred a product of their academy to Man Utd. for a fee that could rise to £6 million. The club spokesman [supporters' trust chairman] also said that they do not know how much the facility costs to run. How worrying!

On the basis that WWFC cannot afford transfer fees and recruit 'out of contract' players (who presumably cost more than home developed trainees) where is the financial sense?

Also where is this leading?

I was involved in coaching some leading local clubs over a period of ten years.

In this time Southampton and Crystal Palace scouts were regularly in attendance. Chelsea and Reading scouts were also seen occasionally. WWFC only once!

A club that we are told had Championship ambitions are incapable of scouting local talent and developing it and, with no money to buy players, there is one conclusion: the demise of WWFC.

**Colin Helps FCMA CGMA
MBA, Hazlemere**

Let's copy Roosevelt

A TERRIFYINGLY high number and proportion of 16-24 years of age are out of work and despondent about ever finding work.

One thing we in England can do is to follow the Scottish example and appoint a Minister for Youth Employment who, amongst other things, might like to inquire whether President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's several work creation programmes would be feasible in Great Britain now.

**M L Grey, West Wycombe
Road, High Wycombe**

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Michael England, 59, a printing assistant from Oxford, who was in Marlow shopping, said: "I'm going to Bournemouth. At the moment, with the Euro crisis, I don't really want to go anywhere else. The weather doesn't really bother me, but we had five years going abroad, so I just really want to stay in this country. Just want to wait for everything else to get settled."

LOOK WHO'S TALKING

WITH COLIN BAKER

Let's hope silence is not ominous for us

THIS is a time of year when football usually fades from the headlines.

But with the European Championship dominating the television schedules, football is still very much on everyone's mind.

Locally too, we would be hardly thinking of our local team beyond keeping a casual interest on the back pages of this paper for news of transfers and the fixture lists for the upcoming season. Not this year.

As a Wycombe Wanderers supporter and season ticket holder it has been hard to watch the recent dip in fortune of the club in the wake of the failure of the new stadium bid and Steve Hayes' subsequent decision to sell the club.

The club and the Supporters' Trust issued a joint statement back on 14th May announcing that negotiations were taking place for the latter to take over the ownership of the club. They said that no further statement would be issued until the negotiations were concluded and five weeks have now passed.

Meanwhile, other clubs have been active in the transfer market but our manager has been effectively hamstrung by the still ongoing negotiations and the club's consequent inability to submit its annual accounts.

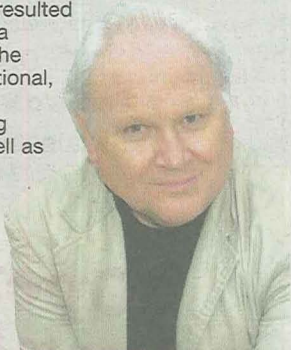
The closure of the academy for undoubtedly pressing financial reasons signals too an end to the club's previously very welcome revenue from its star young players being sold on to clubs in higher divisions.

Undoubtedly, behind the scenes, the directors of the trust are doing all they can to secure the future of the club without exposing themselves and the club to untenable and potentially disastrous financial commitment, but the longer the process is protracted the less time Gary Waddock will have to muster a team that is capable of matching all the other teams who will be fighting to climb out of the bottom division, or indeed stay in the league.

Let us hope that the five weeks of silence is not ominous.

Against this backdrop, we can however celebrate the MBE awarded to Ivor Beeks, who has been Wanderers' club chairman for nearly a quarter of a century supporting the club in many ways in the good and bad times.

His modest reaction to his well deserved honour is typical of the man whose love of sport and community service has resulted in his being a member of the FA's International, Judicial and Safeguarding panels as well as representing this area on the FA Council.



● Colin Baker is best known as BBC's Dr Who. He lives in High Wycombe with his family. See his archive of columns on our website bucksfreepress.co.uk

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