

Omnishambles

Picture by Anita Ross Marshall



■ Wycombe Wanderers suffer a huge PR gaffe as their home game with Fleetwood is called off 20 minutes before kick off because of a frozen pitch – even though they've got undersoil heating

■ Supporters are left fuming by the late decision and lack of communication before and after.

■ Football League might take action against Wanderers.

Blues players leave the pitch at Adams Park after their game with Fleetwood is called off.

WANDERERS were caught cold as frost in December led to Sunday's home game with Fleetwood Town being postponed just 20 minutes before kick off.

Adams Park has undersoil heating but it was not turned on overnight before the game, only being switched on at around 7am on matchday morning.

By then it was too late to help thaw the pitch out, with Wanderers saying the club chose not to turn the heating on as no ground frost had been forecast.

It costs the club money to have the undersoil heating on but Blues insist this did not have any bearing on the decision to leave it off.

Referee Andy Davies waited as long as possible before eventually deciding the pitch hadn't thawed out enough while players from

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both sides were warming up at an eerily deserted Adams Park.

Blues were expecting a crowd of around 3,200 to attend their final home game of 2013 but supporters were kept outside while a decision on whether to play the match was made.

Inspections were carried out at 1.30pm and 2pm and Davies – who courted controversy by abandoned Blues' home game with Bristol Rovers last season over health and safety fears, with Wanderers 3-1 down – instructed the players to warm up in case the match was able to be played.

But it quickly became obvious

the match wouldn't go ahead as both sets of players warmed up gingerly on the surface, with the noise from their boots on the frozen ground sounding like the clattering of horses' hooves in the stable yard.

The match was finally called off at 2.40pm – leaving Fleetwood players and staff to contemplate a fruitless 450-mile round journey.

It may not be the end of the matter though, with the Football League confirming it is mulling over reports from both clubs and the referee before deciding whether to take any further action.

Wanderers manager Gareth Ainsworth said he was frustrated at the late call-off, saying he was keen to get out and put right the 1-0 reverse his side suffered on Box-

ing Day at the hands of Newport County.

He said: "You don't want fixture congestion but it can't be helped if the frost's caught everyone out."

"The lads were ready to play but unfortunately there's a last minute call-off and we have to live with that."

"The referee's deemed the goal-keeping areas dangerous and one or two little patches. Fair enough this happens – I think the frost has caught everyone out."

Meanwhile, a spoof Twitter account of the undersoil heating system was spawned as a result of the drama.

The @AP_undersoil account tweeted the official Fleetwood Town feed: "Alright lads, sorry about the other day, too much turkey, slept in."

THE FANS' PERSPECTIVE:

CHE:

It's difficult to assess the damage today will have done to our beloved club but it's fair to say it will be significant.

The name of Wycombe Wanderers is now mud. Our reputation is in tatters. We won't be able to give season tickets away next season.

People will not accept being treated like this. I'd like to think we will receive an explanation but to my knowledge we haven't even received an apology, just an expression of thanks for our understanding and patience. It's just not good enough.

I am full of admiration of the indefatigable efforts of the Trust, most notably chairman Don Woodward, but today really is a horrible day in the history of our football club some people really should be considering their positions...The right intentions are not enough. You and I have those but they do not qualify us to run the club.

BEN:

Today was a big wake up call...Today, as correctly described by many below, has been a complete disaster and new low at WWFC. However it has actually provided us with a massive wake-up call.

The ST [Supporters Trust] did superbly to rescue the club and they steadied it excellently. Having supporter ownership is great but it is clear to see that it isn't working at the moment and the blunt truth is that the club is rapidly going backwards after 18 months of the ST being in charge.

Those currently running the club undeniably have the best interests of WWFC at heart, but the ever increasing number of mistakes being made shows that they are simply not capable of doing so at this moment in time.

Therefore, now it is time to bring someone experienced in the football industry, of running football clubs, to WWFC to help and guide those in charge...

RUSS:

You have to appreciate it was not just the fact that it was called off it is the manner in which it was done. It still mentioned nothing on the club's website by the time I got home! I rang the club at 2.15 to see if the game was on and the phone was on answer phone on a matchday!

It should have been plastered all over the website that there may be an issue but nothing! It is quite honestly beggars belief.

ANONYMOUS

I assume the club will need to provide a report to the Football League explaining how they were the only club to have a game postponed...I wonder if the club will also share the explanation with its fans, who have still to get an explanation about the Boxing Day kick off fiasco. It's about time they communicated with us!

ANONYMOUS:

Sorry club, the ref was doing his best to allow a game to start that clearly should have been called off much earlier as the ground was solid.

The reason it was solid was that the heating was n't on – entirely due to the club.

Gritters were going round Wycombe at 6pm, cars were white by 7pm and temperature was 1 degree. Someone in authority at club MUST have been able to see this and do something and not wait until morning. We are a laughing stock of L2 and Fleetwood are quite right to demand some answers.

JSWWFC:

Very disappointing that it seemingly stops short of a full apology and it actually raises further questions. It was freezing on Saturday night and Bucks County Council had begun gritting the roads from 6pm. Were the club aware of this?

I am also uncomfortable with the reported attitude of some ticket office staff towards Wycombe Wanderers supporters which looks as though it will slip by unaddressed.

BILL TURNBALL'S TWITCH:

Only saying they 'regret' is not enough of an apology. It's pathetic. I really hate to say this but stuff like this just smacks of amateurism. The fans deserve better.

We can't afford to lose yet more fans, but I fear that we will over this debacle. Please do something to sort out the communications between the club and fans. We are supposed to be a fan's Trust led football club. We deserve much better.

HOMERLONE

At the rate the club appear to be turning away existing supporters by their PR gaffs, there will be few left to vote, never mind stand, at the next elections.