

Chairboys

Gas

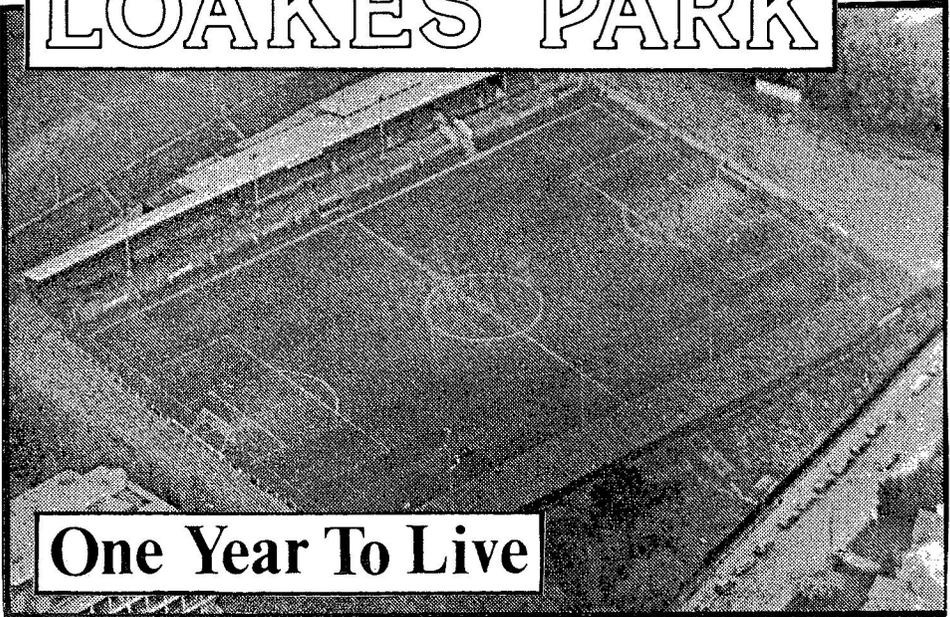
*A Magazine by Supporters
of
Wycombe Wanderers F.C.*

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NEWS
&
FINAL TABLES

LOAKES PARK



One Year To Live

"Out by 14th May 1990"

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Chairboys Gas

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to mark the 25th anniversary of
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1988/89

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Wycombe Wanderers F.C. The Blues Club, or the Editor. This magazine has no official connection with Wycombe Wanderers F.C. or The Blues Club.

EDITORIAL

Congratulations on tracking down this issue of CHAIRBOYS GAS - the sixth of the season. Pass on the word if you know of any regular readers who have missed out on this issue.

We have taken most of this issue to look back on last season, which by all accounts was a hugely enjoyable for the supporters who have stuck by the Club over the years. I also hope that those who have returned to Loakes Park or are newcomers have seen enough to continue their support during next season.

Next season is a very important one for the Club. It will be the final one at Loakes Park and one where local and national expectancy will be high. The third price rise in as many seasons will also see the final visitors to the 'Cow Shed', the 'Gasworks End' and the 'Hospital End' pay £3 for the privilege. To the Club's credit, discounted season tickets are available from the Club Offices prior to 1st August (£42.50 for adults) and we urge all regular Wycombe supporters to consider this offer.

First Conference game of next season is on Saturday 26th August. Pre-season games take in visits to Egham and Bracknell plus home games with Aylesbury (August 12) and possibly Wealdstone. See you there.

NEXT ISSUE

Out at the start of next season. Contributions, written, clippings, photos, etc. most welcome to the above address.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you wish to subscribe to CHAIRBOYS GAS for next season (at least 6 issues) and receive your copy by first class post, the cost is £3.00. Cheques payable to CHAIRBOYS GAS.

BACK ISSUES

Back copies 1986/87 (7 issues), 1987/88 (8 issues) 30p each and this season 40p. All previous requests will be dealt with by the start of next season. If you haven't received your order by this date please write nasty letters to the above address.

OUTLETS

SPORTSPAGES, Cambridge Circus, London, and locally at POPPS NEWSAGENTS, Frogmore and BARNES NEWSAGENTS in Castle Street, plus hopefully other good local newsagents. If you know of any possible outlets - let us know.

Contributions and assistance for Chairboys Gas this season has come from Phillip Ball, Ian Blacklidge, Simon Burrage, Geoff Hutchinson, Jim Kelman, Paul Lewis (Ed), Steve Maguire, Pete Oxbrow, John Reardon, Andy Reston and Simon Wilde.

Hillsborough Saturday, 15th April, 1989

THE HILLSBOROUGH DISASTER left many people dismayed that such a tragedy could happen in apparent civilised times - the full horror being brought home by the fact that it could have happened to any football supporter.

While we await with interest the outcome of the inquiry and the repercussions for football in general, we couldn't let this issue begin without passing some comment on the subject - SIMON BURRAGE relays his thoughts soon after the event.

KENNY DALGLISH - the self-confessed 'man of few words' (i.e. he's not inclined to keep feeding the tabloid journalists and TV interviewers with their essential diet of bland clichés) visited Anfield shortly after the Hillsborough disaster. The Anfield gates, pitch, goalposts and terraces were smothered with thousands upon thousands of scarves, bobble hats, bouquets, wreaths and mementoes, left by football supporters from literally all over the country, and he said simply "*it is the saddest sight I've seen...and also the most beautiful*". As far as I'm concerned, if Mr Dalglish never says another word as long as he lives, he'll have said more about Hillsborough, football and people in that one sentence than I could ever hope to. A sordid handful of journalists, politicians, the 'odd' UEFA President here and there, tried desperately to forward their view that Hillsborough was another example of what was 'wrong' with our sport and our country, while it was patently clear to most of us from everything we heard, read and saw that absolutely the opposite was true. Only football people could really understand how demoralised we all were by the tragedy. Everytime we saw a news programme that week we saw Anfield, we saw Cathedral services, we saw the whole City of Liverpool come to a complete standstill in silent tribute, and we saw players, players wives, supporters and club officials behaving with such genuine dignity, compassion and sensitivity that I, for one, felt prouder than ever to be part of our sport and our country.

Like many others, I suspect, my sadness and pride did give way to some anger and despair, however. During that week we had to endure endless hastily-arranged TV discussion programmes in which politicians and TV personalities spouted rivers of drivel on why it had happened and what could be done to prevent it happening again; it was virtually a competition to make the most ill-informed, short-sighted assessment. (Of course, I exclude the honourable spokesman of the Football Supporters Association, Rogan Taylor, and politician, Roy Hattersley, from this). They talked about causes and possible solutions as though there was some kind of mystery about the whole thing, rather than answer the basic questions to which everyone of us knows the answer; 1. Would the disaster have occurred if there had been no perimeter fencing (NO) 2. Is perimeter fencing absolutely necessary (NO) and 3. Could perimeter fencing be removed from every ground tomorrow. (YES). Instead they preferred to discuss the possibility of inflicting all-seater stadiums on us. That's right chaps, let's ignore the obvious cause and remedy that is staring us all in the face (literally) and dream about some pie-in-the-sky utopia which none of the people that really matter actually want anyway - splendid.

Behind the Goal

with Simon Burrage

Before the season started, I personally had two main hopes in mind; 1, that we would finish in our highest ever Conference position (with the previous best being 19th there was a fair chance of this) and 2, that we would finish above Aylesbury (the prospect of our local rivals outshining us by way of league position was too horrible to contemplate). On the basis that No.1 was achieved by a margin of 15 league places and No.2 by 16, I am - as I think all WW supporters are - absolutely delighted at the Club's performance over the season. It has been particularly rewarding for those of us who follow the Chairboys to away games, with no less than 11 away wins (12 including Newport), many of them coming at places we'd only dreamt of conquering on previous occasions. A quite extraordinary transformation has taken place since Jim Kelman took over as Manager, and, dare I say, since Ivor Beeks took over as Chairman. Two or three years back many of us felt the Club was not being as aggressive or ambitious as it could have been, and that the Club had great potential which was not being realised. The last 18 months must show that these feelings were more or less correct - the Club is now both aggressive and ambitious, and the potential has been proved. Fourth place in the Conference and average gates well over 2,000 were absolutely unthinkable a few seasons ago - they are now statistics we are already taking for granted, and those responsible deserve all the credit in the world - including the Club's supporters. We'll always have gripes, of course - another two 'pre-Kelman' players, Norman and Durham, appear to have fallen out of favour and may not be seen again in Wycombe shirts, and if that's the case we'll all be sorry to see them go. As for Gary Lester, he has a testimonial scheduled for August against Oxford United but rumour has it that Mr Kelman may not even select Gary for this match. (Only joking Jim). Of course, it is not a managers job to be 'nice' - it is his job to produce winning teams, and we have no complaints on that score.

Looking back at matches played since the last edition of CG, our magnificent home gates continued with the visits of Macclesfield and Kettering, 3873 and 4890 respectively. 'Maccy' would appear to be better supported away than they are at home; they didn't bring a great number to Loakes Park but those that came were noisy and enthusiastic, and, surprisingly, neither ignorant nor racist. I say surprisingly because of our own and others previous experiences about the Moss Rose crowd. A few cavemen types were again in evidence on our visit there near the end of the season, when many Wycombe fans were amazed that a club which had just reached the Trophy final and was supposedly looking forward to Wembley was suddenly down to gates of 700 (versus Fisher) and just over 1,000 (against us, including our support). As for our home game with Kettering, then leading the table, a crowd of nearly 5,000 including almost 1,000 from Northants, saw a superb performance from our team - for the first hour at least - but, unlike the home game with previous leaders Kidderminster, the goal we deserved never came, thanks mainly to a couple of brilliant saves by the KT 'keeper. We then conceded a freak, deflected goal at the other end, and that was that. The visiting fans were generally well-behaved, although there were a few problems in the surrounding streets before and after the game, but it's at least gratifying that our Club and local police know how to segregate and move large numbers of away fans sensibly; this was the first time in Loakes Park's history that a large number of away fans were 'locked-in' for a time after the game, as is common at many Football League grounds.

After the minor disappointment of failing to win our last home Conference game of the season, versus relegated Weymouth (a disappointment softened by the players taking the trouble to do a 'lap of honour' afterwards, shaking hands with supporters as they went), it was especially satisfying to end the season so well at Northwich - though it has to be said that the unrestrained joy at our end of the Drill Field was not entirely due to our own team's performance. Wins for Stafford and Kidderminster finally sent the 'Duckboys' of Aylesbury down and for some of us this was the cue for a party which lasted all the way home (The Northwich supporters were evidently somewhat confused by the celebrations at our end of the ground as Radio Staffordshire announced that Stafford had taken the lead against Kettering). As I mention all this I'm aware that there are some who regard our delight at our rivals demise as being rather distasteful and unsporting, but so what? We all know WWFC is never going to be the biggest or greatest football club in the world but we are fiercely proud of its position as the top club in the locality, in Buckinghamshire at least. Aylesbury's presence in the same league as ourselves for the first time was a threat and a challenge, and their relegation - if, indeed, they are relegated - is a tremendous relief. It's all good, clean, fun really, ha ha ha.

In any case we can now enter the close season, or more accurately, the rumours' season. The Midweek and Bucks Free Press will not print another word about football until late July, so we will be kept listening to rumours about whose ground has been rejected or accepted for promotion, which players are leaving the Club, who might be joining us, etc, etc. If Leytonstone/Ilford are promoted, will they share grounds with Dagenham or Leyton Orient? If they are not accepted, will Farnborough take their place? Will Aylesbury escape the drop if they don't? Will Barrow return to the Conference despite not yet holding a Ground Safety Certificate? If not, will we have to suffer league matches on Hyde's plastic instead? Will Maidstone really be allowed into the Football League when they don't have a ground and they share one 18 miles away which is hardly good enough for the Conference anyway? Could this be the beginning of the end of the automatic promotion to the League? Once again we probably won't know the exact composition of the Conference for next season until well into the summer, and we won't get our fixture list until the pre-season friendlies are almost underway. Ah well, roll on 1989-90 - Merthyr Tydfil, Darlington, Leytonstone, Barrow here we come! (I hope).





MAIDSTONE UNITED clinched the Conference title when Kettering Town failed to beat Enfield at home on May Bank Holiday Monday. 'The Stones' final run in to the season included an 18 match unbeaten run stretching back to their defeat against Wycombe on New Years Eve at Watling Street. The run was ended when they lost at Barnet on 3 May but a 1-0 win at Runcorn, their 13th away win of the season, saw them take the title by a record 8 point margin.

Maidstone's subsequent promotion to the Football League has caused controversy amongst some League clubs who are concerned with Maidstone's ground 'sharing' scheme with Dartford. Maidstone have used the £3m raised from the sale of their London Road Stadium to pay the £25,000 plus annual rental to Dartford, buy over £150,000 worth of players and provide a reported £100,000 worth of ground improvements to Watling Street to bring it "up to Football League standard". This leaves Maidstone with over £2m in the bank and coupled with a lucrative sponsorship deal with Wiseoak Homes, is seen by many as giving them an unfair advantage over their rivals. Maidstone will point to Bristol Rovers and Charlton Athletic who have similar arrangements, although both are seeking to return their clubs to their rightful home towns. Despite their success on the field, attendances have risen by just 6%, with only half of their 20 home League games reaching attendances of over 1,000.

Maidstone's Manager John Still, resigned shortly after the end of the season after failing to agree terms with the Club. Former Gillingham Manager, Keith Peacock, takes over Still's job. Meanwhile 'The Stones' Chairman, Jim Thompson, has been succeeded in his position as Chairman of the Conference by Bill King, a member of the Board at Northwich Victoria. Cyril Gingell, Chairman at Kettering Town, takes over as Vice-Chairman of the Conference.

DARLINGTON will replace Maidstone in the Conference next season following their 92nd placing in the Football League. They were virtually condemned to relegation when they lost at home to fellow strugglers Colchester United in an end of season encounter before a 7,000 plus gate at Feethams. Since their relegation they have sought legal advice on their position, using the Hillsborough disaster as a lever to express fears over the apparent lack of safety standards at Watling Street. Spurred on by Southend United Chairman, Vic Jobson, Darlington have circularised the other 91 League Clubs in order to gain support even though the protest will ultimately fail.

Of course, if Darlington were to win the Conference they would be entitled to 'automatic' promotion back to the Football League - indeed promotion may be extended to two Clubs if plans to expand the Football League to 94 Clubs are successful. With the likelihood that the First Division will return to 22 Clubs, the remaining three divisions will be reluctant to have their numbers reduced and thus the 2 extra clubs would be made up from the Conference. And whose to say that the second place won't be offered via the route of the now 'successful' play-off system?

BARNET gained some unfortunate national publicity when Chairman Stan Flashman banned local sports reporter, Alex Spillius, of the Hendon Times for printing a quote that according to Flashman was "off the record". Flashman was quoted as saying "If I go, Barnet goes. It will be out of the league. I am the club. If the supporters get silly they are in for shock". The article reported a growing unrest amongst Barnet supporters and followed an incident after a home game with Welling on Good Friday when it was alleged that Flashman struck a supporter before being pulled off by two policemen. The fan was then apparently ejected under the instructions of Flashman.

Barnet continued their apparent buy and sell policy at the end of the season when they sold Gary Bull to Sparta Rotterdam for a reported £50,000 fee. Gary, who is Steve Bull's cousin, joined Barnet in March 1989 from Cambridge United in a joint deal with Gary Poole worth £5,000.

Conference runners-up, KETTERING TOWN, finished with the highest average home gate in the Conference (2,506). While the highest Conference gate of the season goes to the Wycombe/Kettering game on 8 April - a crowd of 4,890 at Loakes Park being the sixth highest ever gate in the ten year history of the Alliance. Kettering were one of the four clubs to average over 2,000 gates in the Conference last season - the others being BARNET (2,431), YEOVIL TOWN (2,395) and WYCOMBE WANDERERS (2,248).

The battle to avoid relegation from the Conference provided some remarkable last day of the season stories. With WEYMOUTH already relegated, STAFFORD RANGERS and AYLESBURY UNITED went into their last games, at home to Kettering and away to Kidderminster respectively, knowing that either club could be relegated. Aylesbury got off to the worst possible start when they conceded a penalty inside the first 20 seconds - while Stafford also had 'keeper Ryan Price injured during the first minute and after conceding a goal, had to leave the field after 20 minutes to be replaced by defender Fraser Wood. Half-time at Aggborough had Aylesbury losing 2-1 with 8 players in the book - all three officials coming from Stafford. Second half action saw 'The Ducks' fall 3-1 behind while Stafford pulled back to 1-1. Aylesbury then closed the gap to 3-2, but amidst ecstatic scenes at Marston Road, the 1,600 crowd celebrated a famous 2-1, victory over 'The Poppies' to ensure their Conference safety and send Aylesbury down - who eventually lost 4-3 at Kidderminster.

After just one season in the Conference, 'The Ducks' will be left wondering what effect a mid season boardroom coup had on the Club with two of the ousted Directors eventually being convicted of falsifying tax returns at the Club. After a poor start to the season, United finished the season with just one defeat in nine games, they also achieved a respectable average home gate during the season of 1,177 - a 24% increase on their gates in the Beazer Home Championship season. However there was the realisation that their ground was not sufficient to cater for the obvious potential for support in the area, summed up by a Trevor Gould quote in the Bucks Herald at the end of the season; *"The supporters have been brilliant all season but we have learned that the ground is not quite good enough. We've got to improve both on and off the field"*. Aylesbury will join the newly titled Vauxhall Football League (formerly Vauxhall-Opel and Isthmian) for the first time in their history next season while fellow relegated club, WEYMOUTH, will return to the Beazer Homes League.



GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE TABLE 1988-89

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MAIDSTONE UNITED	40	12	5	3	48	22	13	4	3	44	24	84
KETTERING TOWN	40	16	1	3	35	15	7	6	7	21	24	76
BOSTON UNITED	40	12	3	5	36	28	10	5	5	25	23	74
WYCOMBE WANDERERS	40	9	7	4	34	25	11	4	5	34	27	71
KIDDERMINSTER H.	40	10	4	6	32	32	11	2	7	36	25	69
RUNCORN	40	11	3	6	39	22	8	5	7	38	31	65
MACCLESFIELD TOWN	40	9	5	6	31	26	8	5	7	32	31	61
BARNET	40	11	2	7	36	30	7	5	8	28	39	61
YEOVIL TOWN	40	8	5	7	34	30	7	6	7	34	37	56
NORTHWICH VICTORIA	40	8	5	7	31	30	6	6	8	33	35	53
WELLING UNITED	40	8	6	6	27	16	6	5	9	18	30	53
SUTTON UNITED	40	10	5	5	43	26	2	10	8	21	28	51
ENFIELD	40	7	4	9	33	32	7	4	9	29	35	50
ALTRINCHAM	40	6	8	6	24	23	7	2	11	27	38	49
CHELTENHAM TOWN	40	7	7	6	32	29	5	5	10	23	29	48
TELFORD UNITED	40	5	5	10	17	24	8	4	8	20	19	48
CHORLEY	40	6	4	10	26	32	7	2	11	31	39	45
FISHER ATHLETIC	40	6	4	10	31	32	4	7	9	24	33	41
STAFFORD RANGERS	40	7	4	9	27	32	4	3	13	22	42	40
AYLESBURY UNITED	40	7	4	9	27	30	2	5	13	16	41	36
WEYMOUTH	40	6	7	7	27	30	1	3	16	10	40	31

CLUB EVENING - 26th January 1989

"I can promise you that the gentlemen here this evening are prepared for a really frank and honest evening - no questions will be ducked or deflected or refused." That was how Alan Parry introduced the CLUB EVENING held at the Blues Club on Thursday 26 January 1989 and although this report trails the event by over 4 months, many of the points raised are still valid - some even more so following events elsewhere - these are the highlights.

Perhaps the shock of such an open approach by the various Directors and Club Officials present resulted in an embarrassing silence as the first question was asked for, but to get things moving Alan Parry stepped in with a hypothetical question - namely *"What might happen if we got into a situation where we could except promotion to the Football League?"*

The question was answered first by Chairman IVOR BEEKS who was said to be *"rather disturbed at the question"* pointing out that he had talked to the Bucks Free Press about this point but they had apparently *"decided not to report totally factually what I said to them"*. Beeks emphasised that *"if we were able to gain promotion and it was going to cost us money to do so to develop this ground - WE WOULD DO SO, because we would probably only get the opportunity once and if we got it we would grab it with both hands."* BRIAN LEE added *"We do not have to leave this ground at any particular time...only as and when the new ground is ready. The target is the end of the 1989/90 season."*

On the subject of the new ground, a concerned supporter enquired about the terracing at Adams Park, adding that he had stood over at Aylesbury on Boxing Day and struggled to see. BRIAN LEE answered this point by stating *"You've got to remember that the 'sore point' about the ground is that we have got permission for 6,000 people at the new ground. There are a lot of comments that it's not big enough...Well next time we get 6,000 in this ground, I'll be delighted and so will the Financial Director. As far as the Conference is concerned we have got to have a ground that is operational at 5,000 and has the potential for 10,000. At the new ground it doesn't say you have to be 'shoulder to shoulder' standing - you have a bit of space around you - it will be a very comfortable 6,000 - I don't want to say anymore than that. Going on to the terracing... the terracing will be better and more of it than Aylesbury."* - a comment greeted by loud applause.

Staying with the new ground another worried supporter asked with regards to Adams Park and promotion to the Football League that *"the Club will try and resist to having ridiculously high fences, to enable people to see properly and be safer"* BRIAN LEE again answered first, stating that *"To a great extent it is up to you (the supporters) and me (the Club)...how we run our affairs. If we run our affairs satisfactorily then the police officer will take that into account. At the moment it depends entirely on the interpretation of the act locally and I can say at the moment that no fencing for keeping people off the pitch is planned. Indeed the fire officer on the new ground wants a number of gates so in the event of the worst you would be able to get onto the pitch."* He went on to describe two local matches he had recently attended, one at Aylesbury where you could spill onto the pitch if there was 'trouble' and at Reading where the pitch is fenced in on three sides. He emphasised *"As far as we are concerned we do not intend to ask for fencing."*

The subject of share ownership is often a mystery to many supporters and it was pointed out by GRAHAM PEART, the Club's Financial Director, that to become a shareholder you had to be a season ticket holder for three consecutive seasons. IVOR BEEKS also suggested that *"It would be marvellous to have lots of share holders. Perhaps it would encourage more people, if they were share holders, to become more involved"* He went on to emphasise *"There has never been since we've been involved any part of the Board which has discouraged the buying of shares and there's no intention in the future."*

The Evening suddenly burst into life when someone asked "What do the Directors think of the local press coverage given to the Club?" IVOR BEEKS immediately stepped in to answer by boldly stating that "I'm sure everyone here is not happy with a lot of the content and reports we've had - when you've gone and seen the matches and the report afterwards....we've actually been in touch with the paper (The Bucks Free Press) about their style of reporting." He went on to comment about the coverage of the Club in general - making particular reference to the Charles Mann column (reproduced in Issue 4 of CG). Beeks pointed out "The way to build the Club with the press is to try and feed them information. It's like tonight - communication. I wrote in the programme at the beginning of the year 'If you want to know something ask'. We can't be more open than that. We are here this evening to answer your questions. If you see us on the terraces and you want to know something ask - if you don't ask we can't tell you."

ALAN PARRY put in his own opinion as a journalist by adding "You can't stop people having their views of the game, even if they widely disagree with your own - I think that's a dangerous area. But where I would agree is that I find it very disappointing if that clearly 1,800 people bother to watch the Club through the turnstiles and there are 1,000's more who are interested and I then pick up the paper and find, without being dismissive to other sports, there are pictures of Rugby Union matches with Wycombe Wanderers buried away in the inside back pages - I find that rather strange.....It's interesting that this is such a contentious issue and perhaps if you all feel so strongly about it, perhaps a page full of letters would convince them of the volume and passion of feeling."

Confession time next as it was innocently asked "What has happened to LeagueLine"? Commercial Manager ALLAN ROBSON explained the story "LeagueLine was launched successfully. It started off with 500 members...unfortunately, for many reasons, and I think a major one was the Club's performance a couple of seasons when we went straight back down again and then struggled on again last year and just made our bid in the Conference safe, a number of people dropped out of LeagueLine. The 500 reduced its way down to around 260. We've attempted to get people back..we've resurrected one or two things that I think we started in the first instance and, for what ever reason, they have tailed off. One of those items was the LeagueLine newsletter, which really took sometime to come about, but are now going out regularly." Robson went on to explain "The situation today is that we are not much better off than a break even figure on LeagueLine. It is important that we attempt to build LeagueLine a bit better than we have in the past, from a sounder footing, with promises being made, being kept and I can assure you that, that it is my endeavour to do that" Sadly I have to report that LeagueLine is still struggling for members - a massive leafleting campaign at the Merthyr, Kidderminster and Boston games encouraged just 40 new members to join the 290 existing members and the last LeagueLine Newsletter at the time we went to press was ironically the one issued on the day of the Club Evening. Clearly the Commercial Department has to reassess the marketing strategy behind LeagueLine and concentrate on satisfying existing members and then like any good product, let 'word of mouth' do the selling.

Manager JIM KELMAN joined the 'frontline' following a training session with the players and immediately clarified the position over Martin Blackler and Kevin Day and also confirmed that the Club would be offering a testimonial to long serving 'keeper Gary Lester, which by Gary's choice will be arranged by himself. Jim was also asked why the Berks & Bucks Cup wasn't being taken seriously - referring in particular to the game with Winslow. Kelman answered "That particular night the team I played with was the only team I had. God bless Alan Hutchinson and the Youth Team because without them I would probably have been playing along with Ivor and Brian Lee as well. We had injuries, not big injuries, but if they had gone and played it would have jeopardised their place on Saturday in the Conference. Yes, I suppose I would put the Conference above the Berks & Bucks. We did take it seriously - you ask the players who had to play through extra-time"

continued over....

CLUB EVENING - continuation.

Asked if the same players would be heard next season, the Manager replied *"The worse thing that could happen is that the same players remain for too long...some people call it loyalty. Some teams become complacent and league positions slip. I think there's got to be a change around but a small change around to keep the fans happy and to keep the players 'on their toes'."* He added *"We are always looking for good players but not at the scale we did this time last year."*

On the subject of attendances the question was asked if the Club were thinking of following Aylesbury United's and Kidderminster Harriers policy of admitting 'Kids in for Free' accompanied by an adult to Conference games.

Despite the immediate claim that *"We've already done it"* GRAHAM PEART, the Club's Financial Director, offered a more truthful assessment of Club policy when he said *"On some occasions last season we gave 100 tickets to a number of schools, but not every Saturday."* He also pointed out that some children had been admitted free for the Welling game earlier in the season and said *"I think those type of activities will continue but it would place quite a burden on this Club if we were not able to take that gate money as it covers nearly a third of our total expenses. We don't want to appear mean but we really do need the gate money"* BRIAN LEE added that the Club currently pay a large proportion of Kevin Day's wages at the local Sports Centre at Handy Cross and that this should be borne in mind when we talk about what we do for the young.

A suprisingly enjoyable and lively evening was ended with an excellent buffet. The Club is apparently trying to organise another of these evenings - using them mainly as a membership boosting exercise for LeagueLine - the £5 entrance charge may seem excessive but this did include an excellent buffet and first drink. However, it did provide the chance for supporters not only to hear the views of those in power at the Club but also to gauge the characters of the figures that are seldom seen or heard. Look out for the next one - you won't be disappointed.

P.L.

ADAMS PARK UPDATE - June 1989

Hey Presto, one tongue in cheek comment in the last issue of CG and in move the bulldozers at Hillbottom Road and Adams Park is now seriously underway.

Contractors moved onto the site at the end of April and began the laborious task of levelling the site in readiness for the seeding of the pitch and the laying of the foundations. At the start of June the levelling had virtually been completed and tests were being carried out to check the firmness of the base for the foundations. It's difficult to imagine that a football ground will spring-up out of the chalk covered site but rapid progress is expected as soon as the foundations are in place.

HARD HATS

As usual the press coverage given to the new ground has been extremely disappointing, still no plans have been given a public viewing and there has been nothing but token comments in the Club Programme - the so called 'mouth piece' of the Club. The Bucks Free Press to their credit did carry a small piece on the commencement of the ground, where under the obligatory picture of Club Directors in hard-hats standing before a bulldozer, it included the comment, *"The futuristic 6,000 capacity stadium, funded by the sale of Loakes Park, will put most Football League grounds to shame when the £3,000,000 project is complete. In the meantime, fans will continue to enjoy the traditional comforts of the Gasworks End."*

TENDER MOMENTS

But what is there to report on? The answer to that question is suprisingly, a great deal. The Club stated at the close of the season that, contrary to earlier statements, they were to be out of Loakes Park by the 14th May 1990. Previous to this they had submitted tenders for the proposed ground and

apparently got quite a shock at the costs, forcing the Club to submit amended plans to Wycombe District Council on 21st April 1989. The Planning Committee noted that the tenders had "proved unacceptably high to the Club. As a consequence, the project has been re-appraised, the Club concluding that the use of a proprietary structural frame would not only effect cost savings but would also enable the contract period to be reduced."

The amended plans show no change to the capacity or siting of the stadium nor any increase in the overall area covered by the facility and associated landscaping. The essential difference between the amended plans and the original plans considered last September is, according to the Planning Committee "in terms of the detailed design of the stands and ancillary buildings which are now of a more conventional design and appearance with a profile more usually associated with football stadia."

SLATED

This change of design has resulted in the lowering of the overall height of the buildings (approximately 3m on the main stand) and the scrapping of the "futuristic" shape of the roofing shown on the much publicised 'artists impression' of Adams Park (See CG No.3 1988/89) - the new design of roof being of a more 'box' type shape to be clad in slate blue plastisol sheeting.

The Planning Committee summarised the issue by stating "Whilst the detailed design of the built elements may now lack some of the flair and imagination exhibited by the original proposals, an attempt has been made to retain visual interest, particularly on the entrance elevation, so as to produce a design which is not wholly dictated by function and moreover will be constructed of the same materials as previously stated."

Make your own conclusions from the above but once again the Club draws little credibility from their apparent silence on what appear to be innocent changes to the design of the stadium. It is an attitude that you would not expect from a Club that is aiming to become fully integrated with the local community.

Paul Lewis



Next season almost every mention of Wycombe Wanderers by the media will mention the move to the new ground. THE TIMES got the serious discussions underway amongst a series of articles by John Goodbody, entitled; FOOTBALL-THE WAY AHEAD. The following appeared on May 18 1989.

At High Wycombe, Brian Lee, the development director, is excited about the move from Loakes Park. Wycombe are switching to a 6,000-seat stadium being built on poor agricultural land just outside the town.

There will be some other sports facilities but, as Lee says, the town already possesses plenty of these. Instead, Wycombe are concentrating on providing the social facilities that are less available, such as a banqueting suite, and a stadium which will be adequate for the lower reaches of the Football League to which the club aspires.

"If we were to draw Liverpool in the FA Cup, we would hire Queen's Park Rangers' ground for the day, just as you might hire a hotel room for your daughter's 21st birthday, rather than hold the function at home," Lee says.

He explains that Wycombe first considered moving nearly 20 years ago and they had to struggle with the local council for planning permission; they eventually won it on appeal to the Department of the Environment. Other clubs trying to emulate Wycombe may be less fortunate.

DO THEY MEAN US?

a final look at the close of season media maligning

The 1988/89 season may well be looked back on as the season when Wycombe Wanderers F C finally woke up from their "sleeping giants" tag. Although no honours were collected - not even the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup - the name of the Club is now associated with promotion talk, thoughts of a move to a new ground and of the Club who get the 'big' gates.

One of those 'big' gates and subsequently the biggest gate in the Conference this season, was for the visit of Kettering on April 8. The press accurately predicted the gate at being around 5,000 but the estimates of the expected away travel from Kettering did prove a little over optimistic. 1,500 to 1,800 was predicted in the BUCKS FREE PRESS, while in the BUCKS OBSERVER, Kettering Manager Peter Morris was quoted as saying they expected to bring 2,000. They say if you say things often enough, you tend to believe them but as it was on the day Kettering 'only' had just over 1,000 amongst the 4,890 crowd. Just over 900 of these were in their segregated area under half of the 'cow shed' opposite the main stand. As the capacity of this section stands at approximately 2,000, it's probably just as well that the predictions were over estimated.

"IT'S OVER" was the headline that followed the 1-0 defeat to Kettering, and referred to Wycombe's chances of taking the Conference title and NOT to press coverage of the Wanderers for the remainder of the season - or was it?.....As the season drew to a close, match reports slipped back into the inside back pages again and reporters were not sent to the 'long distance' away games. Preference was instead centred on the more traditional press pass-time - that of transfer speculation. Kevin Durham, Lawrence Osborne, Keith Barrett, Sean Norman and John Granville were all said to be on the verge of leaving while Jim Kelman regularly continued his search for that "mystery striker". So engrossed in these trivia stories did the press become that the traditional end of season review was apparently forgotten. Still room for improvement and consistency, I feel.

If Wycombe ever do gain promotion to the Football League then the press will undoubtedly be camped out at the Club, as this years Champions Maidstone United have found out. 'The Stones' have been featured almost daily in the nationals, although this has probably more to do with their ground problems than the actual playing side. That wonderful institution for the younger reader SHOOT MAGAZINE picked up on the ground share angle but also uncovered a major embarrassment on the playing side - namely former Wycombe defender Mark Hill. They found out that Hill, who played for Wycombe in season 1982/83, is a former Male Model. Chants of "Action Man, Action Man, Action Man" at our game at Maidstone on New Years Eve show that many Wycombe fans are already familiar with this but when questioned by Shoot, Hill said "Oh no! How did you find out? When I was at Wycombe Wanderers no one knew until one of my team-mates found his sister's magazine. Suddenly there were photos of me pinned up all over the dressing-room and I really took some stick." Hill, who modelled for My Guy and Oh Boy, went on to say "But my worst experience was when I was a French Resistance fighter for Eagle Comic, and we were filming in Richmond Park. I had been an apprentice at QPR..but by this time I had just left Brentford. Then the whole of Brentford's Reserves went past in a minibus on their way back across London after a match. They fell about laughing at all the nazi helmets and I packed in modelling soon after - much as I enjoyed it". Copies to the editorial address please.

News travels fast in non-League circles thanks mainly to that marvellous development of mankind known as the GroundHopper. Leo Hoenig is a self-confessed 'Hopper', infamous for his blantly blurred and out of focus photos in non-League publications. He also writes for GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE and was apparently upset at having to note 11 changes to the Wycombe team for the game at Marlow, as his piece in the May issue proves.

The more major con was recently perpetrated by the Wycombe Wanderers Football Club, when they fielded a side that was not even recognisable as their reserves in a County Cup match at Marlow, going down to a 5-0 defeat. Many people will say this is not important, as everyone knows that County Cups are not always taken seriously, and weak sides are not all that common - but in Wycombe's case, they compounded their guilt, by selling advance tickets for the match; and then informing their own supporters, only after they had coughed up their pennies to become the majority of a 1500 crowd, that they were not going to be treated to the sight of the first XI. That Wycombe's team was under-strength, may have been understandable, with the match being played between important League and FA Trophy fixtures; but it is an absolute disgrace that they should then become profiteers, and cheat their own fans in this way.

Some suprisingly valid points from Mr Hoenig considering his usual output although they would have been more credible if they had been made by a Wycombe supporter.

Team sheet

NORTHWICH VICS SUTTON UNITED

GREEN shirts CAMBRIDGE BLUE
WHITE shorts OXFORD BLUE

Dave RYAN	1	John GRANVILLE
Ian NOLAN	2	Steve ABBLEY
Mark JONES	3	Andy KERR
Paul MAGUIRE	4	Glyn CREASER
Alan KENNEDY	5	Keith BARRETT
Steve McNEILIS	6	Mark ROS

NORTHWICH v WYCOMBE PROGRAMME 6 May 1989

Well, at least they got the colours right!

IN TOWN TODAY
Wycombe Wanders

I suppose we couldn't leave this final DO THEY MEAN US? of the season without some reference to Aylesbury United. No gloating at their relegation, instead we delve back to September 1987 just after 'The Ducks' had beaten us in the F A Cup at Buckingham Road, when their next home programme contained the following;

For years we have lived in the shadow of our near neighbours but over the last few seasons we have gradually been challenging for the tab of leading Non-League side in the Berks & Bucks area. Even though they are now in the General Motors Conference there must be some debate as to which team holds that top spot. We have now defeated them in two of our last three meetings and even the loss at Wolverton in last season's Berks & Bucks Final came less than 24 hours after our game at Crawley in the Southern League.

Do THEY mean US?...They surely DID! MORE NEXT SEASON.

VAUXHALL-OPEL



A bitter legal battle has broken out after LEYTONSTONE/ILFORD won the Vauxhall Opel League Championship and then were refused promotion by Conference officials.

VAUXHALL-OPEL



Visits by the Conference ground grading committee deemed that the Green Pond Road ground used by the club fell well short of Conference standards - with estimates of up to £70,000 worth of improvements necessary.

'The Stones', with John Still now back in charge, are still looking to move from the ground they inherited from their amalgamation with Walthamstow Avenue but have still to attain planning permission for a proposed site in Chingford. Temporary ground tenancy schemes have been discussed with Leyton Orient and Dagenham but both Clubs failed to agree terms with 'The Stones'. Leytonstone are now seeking legal advice on the decision by the Conference to refuse them promotion but are unlikely to succeed.

Green Pond Road, in its heyday, was one of the finest non-League grounds in the country - regularly seeing crowds of 5,000. Nowadays it has been left to fall into an appalling state of neglect following the decline and demise of Walthamstow Avenue and gates rarely exceed 200.

FARNBOROUGH TOWN, favourites for the title for most of the season, now look almost certain to steal the promotion place with their runners-up spot. They have been granted £50,000 and loaned a further £20,000 by their local Rushmoor Council in order to bring their Cherrywood Road ground to within Conference regulations. So far this has involved installing extra-turnstiles and additional terracing.

MARLOW's great escape at the bottom of the table sent TOOTING & MITCHAM out of the Premier Division for the first time since they joined the Isthmian in season 1956-57. CROYDON join Tooting in Division One and will be replaced by STAINES TOWN and BASINGSTOKE TOWN. Ironically when Staines were relegated from the Premier Division in season 1983/84 when their ground failed to come up to Isthmian Grade 'A' the club who were reprieved in 21st place were Tooting and Mitcham.



MERTHYR TYDFIL's success in the Beazer Homes League completed an incredible second half of the season for the Welsh club who were in the relegation zone back in December.

Two goals from top scorer Dave Webley and another from Paul Giles saw Merthyr beat Crawley 3-1 on the last day of the season, to take the title before a crowd of 3,341 at Penydarren Park. Earlier in the week a 3,500 plus gate saw a vital home victory over V S Rugby and shows the potential benefit to Conference attendances next season.

Merthyr's late run saw DARTFORD slip to second place for the second season running while V S RUGBY finished in third place after also threatening to take the title during the closing weeks of the season.

In the regional divisions CHELMSFORD CITY ended a one year exile from the Premier Division with a run-away Championship success in the Southern Division. They are joined by fellow 'sleeping giants' GRAVESEND & NORTHFLEET, who return to the Premier Division after a three year absence.

In the Midland Division GLOUCESTER CITY were promoted as Champions with the other promotion spot being taken by ATHERSTONE. Atherstone clinched the runners-up spot on the final day of the season with a 2-1 victory over Rushden, thus pipping TAMWORTH on goal difference who had finished their fixtures.

TAMWORTH were offered some consolation for missing out on promotion by their success in the F A Vase. A Vase Final record crowd of 26,487 saw the Tamworth/Sudbury tie at Wembley - beating the previous best Vase gate set in 1986 by Halesowen and Southall by more than 8,000. The gate also proved to be 8,000 bigger than the Telford/Macclesfield Trophy final and bettered by only 3 of the previous 19 Trophy finals.

The game itself ended in a 1-1 draw with Dave Hubbick heading Sudbury in front and Martin Devaney equalising for Tamworth. A crowd of 11,201 turned out for the replay at Peterborough the following Wednesday and saw Tamworth triumph 3-0 with goals by Ian Moores and Mark Stanton (2).



BARROW return to the Conference for their third spell following their third Championship in the HFS Loans League (formerly the Northern Premier League).

Barrow, who were last relegated from the Conference in 1986 along with Wycombe and Dartford, sealed the Championship with a 1-0 victory at Caernarfon Town on May Bank Holiday Monday. The Championship was presented to them the following evening before their home game with Hyde United before a crowd of 2,010 at Holker Street. Colin Cowperthwaite, a relic from their Gola League days, finished the season as Barrow's top scorer with 22 League and League Cup goals.

HYDE UNITED stole second place in the Premier Division after they won their final game of the season and nearest challengers WITTON ALBION could only draw at South Liverpool.

WITTON ALBION played their last ever game at their Central Ground on May Bank Holiday Monday before a crowd of 1,015 for the game with Frickley Athletic. Witton are moving to a site at nearby Wincham during the summer.

With no Conference club being relegated to the HFS Loans League, only WORKSOP TOWN are relegated to the First Division.

COLNE DYNAMOES clinched the First Division title with a 1-0 win at second placed Bishop Auckland before a crowd of close to 3,000 in County Durham on 22 April. Colne who celebrated their 25th anniversary during the season scored over 100 goals in their League campaign and were beaten only once. They also collected the Lancashire Challenge Trophy for the first time when they defeated Chorley 1-0 before a 3,000 plus gate at Burnley's Turf Moor ground.

BISHOP AUCKLAND, in their first ever season away from the Northern League, finished as runners-up and will join Colne in the Premier Division next season. 'The Bishops' success has encouraged more Clubs from the Northern League to investigate the ambitious switch of Leagues. Spennymoor United are the latest club to have expressed an interest to join and has prompted the Northern League to review its position within the non-League pyramid.

VAUXHALL OPEL LEAGUE - PREMIER DIVISION

Final Table 1988/89

POS		PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	LEYTONSTONE/ILFORD	42	26	11	5	76	36	88
2	Farnborough Town	42	24	9	9	85	61	81
3	Slough Town	42	24	6	12	72	42	78
4	Carshalton Athletic	42	19	15	8	69	36	72
5	Grays Athletic	42	19	13	10	62	47	70
6	Kingstonian	42	19	11	12	54	37	68
7	Bishop's Stortford	42	20	6	16	70	56	66
8	Hayes	42	18	12	12	61	47	66
9	Bognor Regis Town	42	17	11	14	38	49	62
10	Barking	42	16	13	13	49	45	61
11	Wokingham Town	42	15	11	16	60	54	56
12	Hendon	42	13	17	12	51	68	56
13	Windsor & Eton	42	14	13	15	52	50	55
14	Bromley	42	13	15	14	61	48	54
15	Leyton-Wingate	42	13	15	14	55	56	54
16	Dulwich Hamlet	42	12	12	18	58	57	48
17	St Albans City	42	12	9	21	51	59	45
18	Dagenham	42	11	12	19	53	68	45
19	Harrow Borough	42	9	13	20	53	75	40
20	Marlow	42	9	11	22	48	83	38
21	Tooting & Mitcham	42	10	6	26	41	81	36
22	Croydon	42	4	9	29	27	81	21

BEAZER HOMES LEAGUE - PREMIER DIVISION

Final Table 1988/89

POS		PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	MERTHYR TYDFIL	42	26	7	9	104	58	88
2	Dartford	42	25	7	10	79	33	82
3	V S Rugby	42	24	7	11	64	43	79
4	Worcester City	42	20	13	9	72	49	73
5	Cambridge City	42	20	10	12	72	51	70
6	Dover	42	19	12	11	64	47	69
7	Gosport Borough	42	18	12	12	73	57	66
8	Burton Albion	42	18	10	14	79	68	64
9	Bath City	42	15	13	14	66	61	58
10	Bromsgrove Rovers	42	14	16	12	68	56	58
11	Walsdore	42	16	10	16	60	52	58
12	Crawley Town	42	14	16	12	61	56	58
13	Dorchester	42	14	16	12	56	61	58
14	Alvechurch	42	16	8	18	56	59	56
15	Moor Green	42	14	13	15	70	85	55
16	Corby Town	42	14	11	17	55	59	53
17	Waterlooville	42	13	13	16	61	63	52
18	Ashford Town	42	13	13	16	59	76	52
19	Fareham	42	15	6	21	43	68	51
20	Leicester United	42	6	11	25	46	84	29
21	Redditch United	42	5	7	30	36	105	22
22	Bedworth United	42	4	7	31	36	102	19

H F S LOANS LEAGUE - PREMIER DIVISION

Final Table 1988/89

POS		PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	BARROW	42	26	9	7	69	35	87
2	Hyde United	42	24	8	10	77	44	80
3	Witton Albion	42	22	13	7	67	39	79
4	Bangor City	42	22	10	10	77	48	76
5	Marine	42	23	7	12	69	48	76
6	Goolle Town	42	22	7	13	75	60	73
7	Fleetwood Town	42	19	16	7	53	44	73
8	Rhyl	42	18	10	14	75	65	64
9	Frickley Athletic	42	17	10	15	64	53	61
10	Mossley	42	17	9	16	56	58	60
11	South Liverpool	42	15	13	14	65	67	58
12	Caernarfon Town	42	15	10	17	49	63	55
13	Matlock Town	42	16	5	21	65	73	53
14	Southport	42	13	12	17	66	62	51
15	Buxton	42	12	14	16	61	63	50
16	Marecambe	42	13	9	20	55	60	47*
17	Gainsborough	42	12	11	19	56	73	47
18	Shephed Charterhouse	42	14	8	20	49	60	44#
19	Stalybridge Celtic	42	9	13	20	46	81	40
20	Horwich	42	7	14	21	42	70	35
21	Catashed	42	7	13	22	36	70	34
22	Worksop Town	42	6	5	31	42	103	23

* 1 point deducted for fielding unregistered player
6 points deducted for fielding unregistered players

VALUABLE REVENUE

The G M V C may be making great progress in many areas, but clearly programme production is not one of them. As most clubs seemingly strive towards emulating their Football League counterparts in bland, banal drivel, many clubs further down the non-League pyramid, on a fraction of Conference attendances, produce issues that put the so called elite of non-League football to shame. Meanwhile in the Conference, 'serious' questions must be asked; like, how do Telford get the grass so green on their cover? Who is responsible for the sketch on Altrincham's cover? Why was Cliff Hercules' shirt removed of sponsorship halfway through the season? and will Wycombe ever get the statistics page right in the centre-pages?

Chairboys Gas have exclusively commissioned IAN BLACKLIDGE, who has taken time off from sending atrocious programme covers to When Saturday Comes, to review this season's Conference 'valuable revenue' collection. Yes that's right it's time once again when the coveted Chairboys' Gas Best (& Worst) of an Ordinary Bunch programme awards are handed out.

TOP THREE

1. KIDDERMINSTER HARRIERS: It just goes to show how bad the general standard is when a Club who did the unforgiveable, ie. raised its cover price (50p to 60p) during the season, wins the top spot. However, The Harriers are there on merit for actually daring to put a bit of thought into a well designed and illustrated issue - whatever next?

2. ENFIELD: Just beaten after a photo finish, Enfield's effort is relatively very good, especially when their undeserved low crowds are taken into account. Obviously some time, pride and sheer hard work have gone into this issue. This must be applauded when many of the other clubs simply can't be bothered. If its cover price was 50p instead of 60p it would have 'won' first place hands down.

3. CHORLEY: Nothing too special about this one but as their publication was the cheapest in the League at 40p, when most others charged more for the same, Chorley deserve recognition for not ripping the punters off.

RELEGATION ZONE:

20. AYLESBURY UNITED: Matching their League position on the field, 'The Quacks' programme has achieved what was previously thought of as being impossible - namely it went from average, to poor, to worse than poor during the course of the season.

21. TELFORD UNITED: Approximately 30 of its 40 pages contain advertising. What's left is so pitifully inadequate that the said advertising seems more interesting. Appalling value for money.

22. WEYMOUTH: No surprises here, the terrible 'Terras' are bottom of the pile yet again. This 'programme' is quiet simply an insult to the League, themselves and at 50p, most importantly to their supporters.

Lastly I simply couldn't close without mentioning Sutton United's wildly over rated publication. Arrgh! Why, why, why does this issue always win every award going? OK it may be glossy & have a flashy colour photo on the cover (albeit printed the wrong way around!), but you don't need to be a genius to work out that most of the non-advertising pages are filled with boring material that is repeated week after week. Obviously the Wirral Programme Club judges get turned on by the countless lists of Vice Presidents, obscure sponsorship deals and prize money won by the Club. Yawn, Yawn.

RECLAIM THE GAME !!



One of the few positive aspects to have come from the 'Hillsborough Disaster' has been the emergence of the FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS ASSOCIATION as the voice of the football fan. The F S A is now called upon to comment on football matters that directly effect supporters as often as the F A , the Football League or the numerous self appointed experts within the game. Furthermore, FSA Chairman, Rogan Taylor, has become the 'voice of reason' amongst those with purely political or business interests at heart.

However, the FSA cannot sit back and think the fight is over. It must campaign for increased membership, making the organisation truly representative of football supporters, and continue its fight against the national 'Football Membership' Bill.

The FSA holds its annual National Conference on Saturday 24th June, ironically in Sheffield, at Brammel Lane home of Sheffield United F C. Many issues will be discussed, including; I.D. Cards, facilities for away seated fans and conversion of terraces to seated areas. The Conference will not pre-empt the findings of the Taylor (Hillsborough) Inquiry, in which the FSA is heavily involved, but will provide the basis for future FSA policy which will either send the organisation forward as an even more credible body or into a state of lack of direction.

The FSA has to break down the apathy that exists amongst Football Supporters and encourage more people to become actively involved in the fight to save our game. The Conference, with its obviously high media profile, could provide just the platform necessary. CHAIRBOYS GAS will be represented at the Conference. In the meantime membership of the FSA is currently just £2 per year. This covers the cost of six bi-monthly newsletters called RECLAIM THE GAME. So go on do it, RECLAIM THE GAME for the people who make or break it.

write to; THE F S A, 59 Oakwood Road, Halewood, LIVERPOOL, L26 1XD

CHAIRBOYS GAS continued its search for non-League fanzines when the Wanderers travelled into Cheshire for the games with Macclesfield and Northwich during April and May.

SILK YARNS is the title of the 'Maccy' fanzine, Issue 1 of which was issued in time for their F A Trophy Semi-Final, while Issue 2 came out in time for the final at Wembley and featured Marilyn Monroe on the cover. Why Marilyn, I hear no one ask? Well apparently if Ms Monroe was alive today she would be exactly the same age as 'Maccy' defender Mickey Roberts, whose classic own goal won us the game at Moss Rose.

Moving on to Northwich for our final game of the season, we managed to track down those responsible for RESIGN ROBERTS RE-SIGN, one of the Vics magazines, visit Witton Albion's ground just before it was demolished and to pop into OMEGA RECORDS to buy BISHOP 3-1, the Witton fanzine and WHO'S HE ON LOAN FROM, yet another Vics Fanzine. Consequently this meant arriving in Northwich at 10.45am.

For the uninitiated, Witton's Central Ground is less than a mile from the The Vics' Drill Field, and explains the intense rivalry between the two Clubs that has also, obviously, worked its way into the fanzines.

RRR is the most coherent of the Northwich fanzines, with voting catching articles on Groundhoppers and concern over the standard of some GMVC grounds - yes you've guessed Aylesbury, Sutton, Welling and Fisher. WHOLF (that' short for Who's He On Loan From and saves me typing out such a mouthful) could well be just a one off and judging by their geography it may be just as well - they said they 'ventured into London' for the Wycombe game last August. Don't get lost next season!

BISHOP 3-1 doesn't appear to be too upset at moving to a ground that is 'carbon copy' Aylesbury - but give them time. We bumped into some Witton fans on the way back from Northwich at Hartford station - they had just blown third place in the HFS Loans League but appeared to be quite pleased at the fact that we had beaten the Vics 3-2.

See for yourself what they're really like;

SILK YARNS

50p plus A5 SAE
96, Branksome Road, Brixton,
London, SW2

RESIGN ROBERTS RE-SIGN

50p plus A4 SAE,
488 London Road,
Davenham, Northwich,
Cheshire, CW9 8HW.

BISHOP, 3-1

20p plus A5 SAE,
122 Cromwell Road,
Winnington, Northwich,
Cheshire, CW8 4BX

W. H. O. L. F.

50p plus A4 SAE,
27 Hodge Lane,
Hartford, Northwich,
Cheshire.



LETTERS

Dear C G,

I set out to write to you some months ago but, as the Wanderers' great run continued week by week, I decided not to interrupt things and indeed hoped eventually to write at the end of the season with one more major trophy on the shelf.

Well, the infamous result came about at Hyde United, which did cause me to write to 'The Times' non-League reporter to point out that he had omitted the word PLASTIC from his Trophy summary on the Monday morning. How life has changed in many ways, of some of the things imposed on our beautiful game this must be among the worst.

Now to the main point, which is to thank you and your colleagues for the marvellous job you do, and the sheer joy that "Chairboys Gas" brings to me and doubtless scores (hundreds?) of others. As a constructive suggestion, would it be possible to include the season's results to date, as well as the forthcoming fixtures, towards the end of the magazine? And if you can again delve into past seasons, that would bring further pleasure.

My own time supporting the Wanderers started around 1946, when with my own father and two brothers I would usually stand at the Hospital End, graduating by the mid 50's to the half-way line opposite the tunnel. In those mid-50's I had the privilege to be "on the books" with such greats as Moring, Westley, Bates, Tomlin, the Truetts, Frank Smith, Syrett, Trott, Wicks, Worley and so many others. In fact, in those two years under the direction of Sid Cann, when I never got near the First Team but played on Saturdays for Holmer Green, the Wanderers won the Isthmian League twice in succession and lost the 1957 Amateur Cup Final at Wembley against Bishop Auckland (ah, that disallowed goal by Jack Tomlin, when we were given instead not a penalty but an indirect free-kick in the box - was there any justice?).

Going back still further, I can still name the team that lost the epic semi-final at Griffin Park in 1950 (again the bloomin' Bishops); LODGE, FLIPPANCE, JACKSON, GEARING, KRUPA, WAY, BLIZZARD, McCULLUM, MIKRUT, BUTLER, BIRDSEYE sub WESTLEY.

Then there were those custodians Scarlett (R A F), Hallwood and Holliman; the Likes of Frank Avery, Tommy Andrews and Arthur Redford; Crump and Vickers and Ernie Bunce; the unorthodox but brilliant Malcolm Hunt; and Holmer Green's own Arthur (Aber) Dean. I wonder if my old mates Colin Hussey, Colin Rackshaw, John Walker, Terry Bond and others read the magazine?

What memories of matches against Pegasus and Barnet in the Amateur Cup, Ilford likewise, Corinthian Casuals in both cup and league and on and on. Later in the 1970's and 80's, accompanied by one or more of my own sons, we saw the Wanderers lose twice in cup matches at Kettering, one a second replay against Boston; at home to St Albans in 1970 in the Amateur Cup; and at Hungerford Town in what I gathered was a real needle match in the B & B; although those were to some extent balanced by the great Trophy win at Kidderminster and the two nerve-wracking replays (at Worcester City) versus Leek Town.

So much of the pleasure and the memories centre, of course, on Loakes Park. Yes, the slope was always something of an embarrassment and I am sure an advantage to the home team (much less so than plastic), but what a splendid ground it is, and in such a fine setting. I am truly sad about the planned move, and hope that the magazine will help tell past supporters and players details of the final matches and wakes. Reading between the lines, I am far from alone in expressing regret at this particular stage in the Wanderers' glorious history, but I imagine - even looking to the Valley - that there is no turning back now.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Rear, Lichfield, Staffordshire.

CG: There is no turning back but it does not stop us from reminiscing about the happy (and sad) times at Loakes Park. The saddest moment, of course, is still to come but hopefully during next season we will be building up to the fateful day with a nostalgic look back at the history of Loakes Park. We will be glad of any contributions.

Dear Sir,

I write this letter unashamedly as a former member and long-term supporter of Aylesbury United. However, having been educated in High Wycombe I have also felt a certain support for and loyalty to Wycombe Wanderers and have watched them home and away on many occasions since the early 50's.

It appears from the undisguised hatred in your magazine (a copy - No.4 88/9 - of which I purchased at Sportspages for the reason stated above) for Aylesbury United as expressed by apparent meat-head like Mr Burrage, that it is impossible for todays "fan" to comprehend that one can support more than one team.

I would contend that it may have been good for Buckinghamshire football in general for Aylesbury to have survived and the county to have had two clubs in the GMVC.

Also continuing local derbies may have given great pleasure to genuine football lovers, not to mention providing good gate receipts for both.

Well your prayers have been answered, Aylesbury are gone - perhaps it's as well that dear old Loakes Park is to be vacated rather than have its terraces tenanted by the mindless, neanderthal "gomerals" who apparently purport to support the Blues these days.

Yours in sadness,

John Sullivan, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset

CG: There is a difference between 'undisguised hatred' and a sense of loyalty and pride for your club that hopefully magazines such as ours hope to project. Some publications have gone over the top but we have NEVER been abusive to Aylesbury and don't ever intend to be. In fact we, as Wycombe fans, have far more in common with Aylesbury fans than with the people who attempt to run the game and as soon as more people realise this the better. They had a laugh when we went down, we had a laugh when they went down. There's nothing wrong or new in that, in fact football is nothing without rivalry. I can imagine the reaction from a similar letter sent to Glasgow, Manchester or North London.

Dear WSC

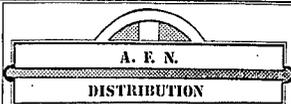
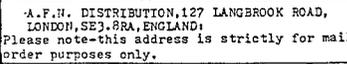
With regard to Martin Thomas's letter about the inane commentaries of Tony Gubba (WSC no 26), I would like to offer the view that Alan Parry on ITV runs him a very close second.

Both make so many mistakes in identifying players. How many football observers (let alone people actually paid to know their stuff) would consistently mistake Beardsley for Aldridge, as Parry did at White Hart Lane. He also called a Spurs defender, 'Holsten' and didn't know the rules of the game sufficiently to realise *immediately* (not after 10 minutes of waffle and several replays) why Aldridge's goal was disallowed.

While we all make mistakes, what grates with me is the arrogance of these commentators. When have you heard Gubba or Parry admit an error, no matter how obvious it is? At least commentators like Brian Moore and Barry Davies make an occasional self-deprecating remark, or correct a mistake.

Tim Sugden
Camberwell

The above letter was published in the May issue of WHEN SATURDAY COMES (now known in these quarters as the flagship of Football Fanzines), and shows that we can all make mistakes - just some make more than others, but we won't mention those Franz, I mean Alan.

		
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End of Term Reports

WYCOMBE WANDERERS FOOTBALL SCHOOL

ABBLEY, Steven: Excellent new boy from Cheltenham Comprehensive. Has snatched Kirk Corbin's crown as the most skillful and exciting right-back to have studied at the Loakes Academy for many years. Has broken School records for the 100 metres hurdles over outstretched legs whilst dribbling a football. Could be on drugs.

BARRETT, Keith: Former Headboy, but like most of the pupils appears to be allergic to plastic. Is likely to be sent to the Staines retirement home for Loakes Park old boys this summer at the request of former Honorary Master, Alan Gane.

BLACKLER, Martin: Splendid worker in the middle of the park - ball-winning and team spirit first-class. A keen philatelist, he needs to keep his mind off stamps, especially when playing Aylesbury, or risks being expelled. Thought to be our first boy to be allowed to wear an ear-stud, though school records are vague on this.

CARROLL, David: Very talented young man. Thinks he's Glen Hoddle, though he we can't remember Glen Hoddle ever being asked to play at left-back.

CREASER, Glyn: New Headboy. So impressed Form-Master Jim Kelman when delivering the fore-arm smash to Mark West's face while playing for Barnet that he was immediately transferred to us. Mark's comments on this are unrecorded. We were letting in too many goals before Glyn's arrival; now we don't, simple as that. Could do better at the other end though - only one League goal during the season.

DURHAM, Kevin: A most demanding young man, according to his Form-Master Mr Kelman. A popular member of the school, lacks concentration in some lessons but shows flashes of brilliance in others. If not careful with his demnads over sweetie-rations he could be sent to the Underhill Boarstal.

EVANS, Nicholas: A mature student but is the newest pupil at the school. Worked very well in his first few lessons but has been off sick ever since. (Has a history of absenteeism at his previous school). A very smart young man, always well turned out, but refuses to wear school caps in case it "spoils his barnet" (we thought Messers Flashman and Fry had already done that.)

GRANVILLE, John: Seems to like throwing things around; this habit has got him into trouble on a few occasions. Otherwise, an excellent terms work.

KERR, Andrew: Very welcome new boy from Telford. Talented, committed worker, an inspiration to the other boys. Was very naughty at Altrincham but soon became Teachers Pet when he bowed to the school audience after scoring against Kidderminster School. His Form Master immediately ordered 1,000 photographs of him.

KERR, John: Young American lad who took some time to settle down in his new surroundings but has proved his worth ever since. Has returned to the U S A for the summer to re-inforce the accent we all love here so much and hey, we look forward to his return, man. Played truant on the last day of term

NORMAN, Sean: Solid, dependable, fiercely competitive at the back, but will be sent home early if he turns up for school again with such a disgraceful change of hair colour.

ROBINSON, Andrew: A model pupil - works hard whenever and wherever he's told. Awarded a Diploma by the School's Governors at the end of term, almost smiled when he received it.

WEST, Mark: Requires constant supervision according to the Form-Master but has nevertheless put in an excellent terms work and remains a very popular and valuable member of the school. A very grown-up young man, he has a moustache.

NEXT TERM STARTS 26th AUGUST 1989