

in BRIEF

FA in hunt for founding fathers

FOOTBALL: The FA have launched a hunt for relatives of one of the founding fathers of football, who ended his life living in Brighton.

Charles William Alcock lived at 7 Arundel Place in the city from 1903 until his death four years later in February 1907, aged 64.

The Sunderland-born father-of-eight joined the FA committee in 1863, became secretary from 1870-95 and captained Wanderers FC to victory in the first FA Cup final in 1872.

Alcock, a sports journalist and writer, also captained Middlesex against Surrey in the first county cricket match in 1867, organised the first Test match between England and Australia in 1880 and was the managing official at the birth of the Ashes.

The quest to find relatives of Alcock is part of a nationwide search launched by the FA yesterday for living descendants of the eight founding fathers of football, who created the rules of the game 150 years ago.

The eight men include Alcock's older brother, John Forster, both privately educated at Harrow.

Living descendants who can be identified and located will be invited to a special ceremony at Wembley in October where their ancestors will be honoured as part of the FA's 150th anniversary celebrations.

Cultural historian Jane Clayton, who is helping the FA trace the tree of football, said: "Charles Alcock moved to Brighton for health reasons. It would be fascinating to know if there are descendants of him."

"I haven't found any. That is where the public search comes into its own."

Email foundingfathers@thefa.com if you can provide any information.

Trio miss out



RUGBY: Sussex's three British Lions hopefuls have all missed out on the tour to Australia.

Joe Launchbury, Joe Marler and Billy Twelvetrees, left, had hoped to be part of the 37-man

party announced by team manager Andy Irvine yesterday. However, none made the cut.

Twelvetrees was widely regarded to have the best chance but coach Warren Gatland has gone for greater experience at centre, taking Jonathan Davies, Brian O'Driscoll, Jamie Roberts and Manu Tuilagi.

Former Crowborough colt Dylan Hartley has made the squad.

Wales star Sam Warburton has been named captain but there is no place for England skipper Chris Robshaw and 2003 World Cup hero Jonny Wilkinson turned down the opportunity to join the squad.

Rooks triumph

FOOTBALL: Midfielder Char Bennett scored the only goal with a powerful header in the 30th minute as Lewes secured a valuable 1-0 win away to bottom side QPR in the FA Premier League Southern Division.

The Rooks are in action against West Ham at the Dripping Pan on Sunday (2pm).

It's all about

PAUL BARBER'S first ten months as Albion's chief executive has been both challenging and rewarding. In the first of an exclusive two-part interview with chief sports reporter Andy Naylor the former FA commercial director and executive director of Spurs discusses season ticket prices, his relationship with Gus Poyet, the club's response to constant speculation surrounding the future of the manager and the impact Financial Fair Play will have on the playing budget.

ALBION have already made it clear season ticket prices will rise if promoted to the Premier League. Any clues as to how big that jump will be?

"No, partly because we are football fans and we are superstitious, so to talk about things like that before it happens we just don't do it. We don't even talk about the p-word, apart from progress."

"Of course, we have talked about it in the context that if we go up we need to look at it but we haven't got to percentages. What we have done is look at what other clubs have done in a situation like ours and where we are and the increases we have already made. We have also looked at the fact there are fewer games."

"I know the immediate reaction of fans is that fewer games means an automatic increase. That's true but from a matchday revenue point of view there is also a decrease. That is where it is an issue for us, because whilst we gain on one hand we lose on the other."

YOU were on the Board at Spurs when Gus Poyet left. Has that made things awkward?

"I was part of the Board that took the decision to remove Juande Ramos and Gus, obviously, was one of Juande's assistants. If there was going to be an awkward time it would have been when I joined and there wasn't."

"Gus is a very professional, focused and talented young manager and when you have got talented people in any position, it doesn't matter whether it's Gus Poyet or Liam Bridcutt, you are always going to have interest in talented young people."

"That's the nature of the beast, it's the nature of the business and the world we are in. We are very realistic about all of those things."

"As things stand Gus is our manager, he is doing a great job, he is under contract. Long may it continue."

THE MANAGER is always near the top of the bookmakers' lists whenever there is a vacancy. Does the club just accept it or does that irritate?

"Focus, focus, focus. It doesn't matter whether our job is to kick the football, coach the players to kick the football, be the team behind the coach to provide whatever support we can, we have just got to stay focused."

"We let social media, mainstream media speculation go on around us. That's why we don't and we didn't get engaged in any kind of comment (over Reading's interest in Poyet)."

"As soon as we start commenting then we are part of

the circus around these situations which we can't control. It's not our circus, we are not the ringmasters. The media will write these things, talk about these things. We just stay focused on our jobs."

"Clearly, we would rather not have the distractions but if you stay focused the distractions are minimised and our message during the whole of that period (Reading) internally was 'stay focused on what you are doing'."

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"More than ever before, Financial Fair Play is about working to the budget."

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TOMORROW
Barber on training ground sponsorship, shirt sponsorship and kit manufacturers, his relationship with supporters and clubs bending the Financial Fair Play rules.

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"He's stayed focused, he has kept his staff and players focused. He deserves the success we've had, because nine defeats in 45 games in this division is unbelievable. Only one other club have achieved it and that's Cardiff City, and they are champions going into the Premier League."

"We have conceded less than a goal a game. Our form has been consistent throughout the season. I think we had one little bad spell."

"I love the fact that he has played at the highest level, he

has seen what it's like to coach at the next level, he knows what it takes to get the football club to the next level and he is very open, so if he has got a problem he will call or text me."

"He is very easy to work with in that sense. It doesn't mean to say we will always agree and we don't always agree to some of the things he might want or might want to do but what you see is what you get."

"That's a very positive environment to work in. Occasionally, it might mean he goes off in a direction (in

the media) and you think 'Oh no', but that's part and parcel of the world we live in."

"It's almost impossible to be word perfect in this business when you are under constant scrutiny."

YOU ARE dealing with Financial Fair Play and what lies ahead and cutting costs. Managers, by nature, would always like more money, one more player. How do you strike that balance?

"It's like anything else, we have a budget. The chairman (Tomy Bloom) is an incredi-