

Respected 'Robbo' wants to finish the job



● CHRIS SEYMOUR gets up to head Yeovil Town's second goal in the FA Cup victory at Tiverton on Saturday. Picture by Nigel Andrews.

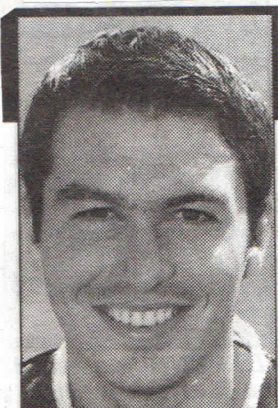
Rutter tells Robbo 'you should win'

STEVE Rutter, the manager who led Yeovil Town to more FA Cup giant-killings than the legendary Alec Stock, sent a message to Graham Roberts when he heard that Yeovil Town would be heading to Merthyr Tydfil in the FA Cup on Saturday week: You should get through - but don't take it for granted.

Rutter is now manager of Trowbridge and it was his team that lost 1-0 to Merthyr in Saturday's third qualifying round tie.

FOUR POINTS SEPARATE GLOVERS FROM PREMIER DIVISION PACK

Yeovil move clear



● Rob Cousins: - great respect

GRAHAM Roberts is the ICIS League's manager of the month. But some Yeovil Town fans, confident that their team will emerge as Premier champions, are increasingly doubtful whether the 37-year-old boss will be around next May to join in the celebrations.

Only one defeat in the first 13 matches has put the spotlight on Roberts, capped six times by England during a glorious career at the highest level. He has already turned down overtures from clubs higher than Yeovil in soccer's pyramid, including one from the Nationwide League.

Crucial He says he's started something at Yeovil... and he wants to finish it. But the rumours persist, the latest that he was being tailed by a top Scottish club who fondly remembered his playing days at Glasgow Rangers.

Roberts' value to Yeovil can hardly be overestimated. As a player he still oozes class, and as a manager, his pedigree ensures that there are always players wanting to head to Huish Park.

Summer signing Rob Cousins from Bath City summed it up: 'I jumped at the chance to play for a manager who has been everywhere and done everything'. But there is a darker side to the story.

Roberts doesn't hide his feelings, and some directors who have experienced the sharp end of his tongue are muttering veiled threats into their gins. They have planned to see Yeovil in the Nationwide League within five years, and first they have to get back into the Conference.

Winning the ICIS League championship this time is, therefore, crucial. And Roberts knows that. He also knows that his contract runs out at the end of the season and that one or two 'vultures' have already appeared on the horizon, letting it be known that they would love to guide a West County club into the big time.

But 'Robbo' has never been one for politics. He wears his heart on his sleeve. On and off the field, he remains as enthusiastic as when he joined Southampton more than 20 years ago. The fans love him for it, and one suspects that although he has shaken hands with royalty, Roberts is more at home on the terraces than in the boardroom.