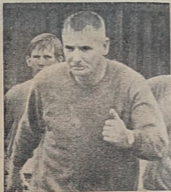


DICK GRAHAM (right) resigns as manager of struggling Third Division club Orient—then . . .

Angry wife slams Orient



By BRIAN SCOVELL

ANN GRAHAM last night leaped to the defence of her husband Dick after Orient chairman Arthur Page had accused him of "a cowardly action" in resigning as manager of the hard-up Third Division club.

"No one could ever call Dick a coward," said Mrs. Graham. "He's never turned his back on anything in his life. He's so conscientious it isn't true."

"Everyone in football knows that. He's a man of ambition. A man who wants to do something in his life."

with a handful of players? The frustration was driving him up the wall. I'm glad he's out of it. Graham resigned because Orient haven't the cash to buy players to keep out of the relegation zone. But angry Mr. Page denied that he stopped Graham adding to the staff (11 ft players at yesterday's count).

"We were negotiating for two players," he said. "Never have I said Graham couldn't buy. His resignation has come as an absolute shock to me, right out of the blue."

"It's disgraceful. He has treated us shabby. You hear of clubs sacking managers but this is the other way round. He's walking out with more than four years of a contract to run. We're still losing money every week but the fight will go on. Peter Angell, the trainer, will pick the team until a new manager is appointed."

'MADE ME THINK'

Graham first resigned on Monday. Page asked him to think again. Yesterday morning skipper Brian Whitehouse told Graham: "The players want you to stay on."

Said Graham: "That made me think hard. It was 1959. But I couldn't go back on my decision."

This business has been eating me up. If I'd been the sort of bloke to sit back and draw my wages every week and not care if I wouldn't have happened."

"But I want something to aim at, otherwise it's no use going on."

I asked those players for everything and they gave it. Often they played when they were injured. But we couldn't go on with 11 fit men and the ground staff less."

"I had enough of being expected to be a miracle worker."

DEDICATED

Graham has cut Orient's debt considerably since joining them as manager nearly two years ago. But whatever still greeted income and the board no longer composed of amateurs as in the First Division days couldn't give him the resources he needed.

He wouldn't have been going down with a last asked if Orient are relegated but he is such a dedicated professional that relegation is defeat to him. He shouldn't be out of work for long. Division 4 and Fulham want a coach and here one of the best

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PHOTOGRAPH BY GUY A. HINDS