

Novel takes us back to magical day in 1984

by MICHAEL PICKARD

WATFORD: Writing his first published novel has allowed one lifelong Hornets fan the chance to relive the day Watford met Everton in the 1984 FA Cup Final.

Author Nick Corble uses the only time the Vicarage Road side have reached Wembley as the backdrop to his new book, *Golden Daze*, which follows protagonist Colin Westlake facing a series of life choices as he stands on the brink of adulthood.

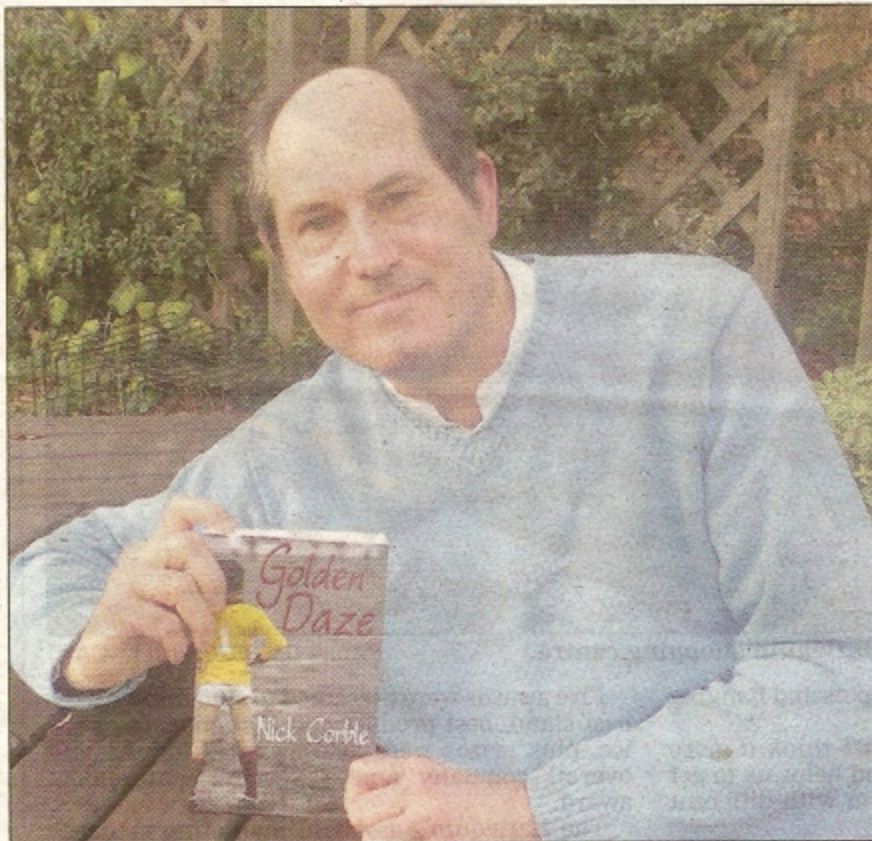
Nick, 50, owns his own management company and has previously written several non-fiction books about local history, canal boating and walking. But this is his first novel.

He said: "I've always had a hankering for writing. I've been looking for something to allow me to move into fiction and I thought of the 25th anniversary of going to Wembley."

The characters in *Golden Daze* weave in and out of the timeline that begins during the General Election of 1983 and sees the Hornets reach the final the following May.

Nick said: "I've written three or four fiction books but I've never been happy enough to put them out. This one wrote itself. It all just seemed to click, remembering what happened the day of the final.

"It's not an autobiography but



Author Nick Corble's first published novel uses Watford's 1984 FA Cup Final as its backdrop.

any fiction writer will tell you if you're not drawing from your own experiences you've lost your way."

And for the author, who has been a Hornets fan since they played in

the old Division Four during the 1970s, it was a chance to relive one of Watford's greatest occasions.

He said: "It was nice to have that moment in the sun. They were magical days where under Taylor they could build a side and get into the

top flight and stay there. I'm glad we tasted it and when you go back it's nice to taste it again.

"It was nice to remember all that, but they were different times. You still walked around the ground and you stood. You only had one substitute. They were more innocent times. I think we have lost some of that.

"What I remember most is the sheer profusion of yellow. It was the days before replica shirts and Graham Taylor told everyone to go yellow. The whole town was decorated.

"At the end of the game, everyone went mad. For us, getting to Wembley was the absolute pinnacle."

Nick, from High Wycombe, added that although the storyline revolves around Watford's famous cup run, his book is not just for football fans.

He said: "People have said to me that you don't have to be a football fan to enjoy it but if you are, you get it on another level as well. It's about the rhythm of a football season and what it means to be a football fan.

"For us, just to be there (at Wembley) was the fun."

Nick will sign copies of his book at Waterstones in the Harlequin shopping centre, Watford, from 12pm to 2pm on Saturday, January 24 - hours before the Hornets' FA Cup Fourth Round tie against Crystal Palace at Vicarage Road. Fans can also read his account of the 1984 final in the match programme.

Copies can also be ordered from www.nickcorble.co.uk.