

New sponsor for Isthmian

WYCOMBE Wanderers, the biggest winners of prize money in non-league football, have a chance to earn some precious income with the announcement that Berger Paints are sponsoring the Isthmian League to the tune of £50,000 over the next few years.

The four categories under which money can be won have not changed since the Rothmans days, although there are one or two minor changes.

The Premier Division prize money list is, of course, the one that interests Wycombe. The new champions, in each of the next two seasons, will win £1500 with £1,000 and £500 go-

ing respectively to the second and third placed clubs.

Teams finishing out of the top three stand a chance of winning the £500 prize as the division's leading scorers. The top three are excluded in an attempt to spread the money to as many different clubs as possible.

The goal scoring incentives for individual games are still there, with £40 going to each side that wins by a three clear goal margin.

Most of the changes have come in the Sportsmanship Pool to which the Isthmian League attaches a great deal of importance.

SLIGHT CHANGE

In the past each team has started with eight sportsmanship points, losing one for a caution and four for a sending off. This year's system is slightly different.

This season each club is allowed 12 points. One point

will be given for a caution, three points for a sending off for persistent misconduct after a previous caution, and six points for a sending off without a previous caution. The sponsors clearly feel that a sending off for two bookings is less serious than one following violent conduct.

Any team totalling 12 or more points, disqualifies itself from the pool of £2,500, which will be divided pro-rata according to the number of points.

In addition any club with more than 12 disciplinary points will not qualify for any of the prizemoney for a top three finish or for the highest scorers.

Berger will continue to back the Isthmian Youth Cup, the winners of which will receive £500 while even the first round losers will get £50.

Barry East, chairman of the Isthmian League, and one of the original football administrators to realise the importance of commercial support in non-league football, welcomed Berger Paint's involvement with enthusiasm.

"At a time when the good points of football are not always well promoted," said Mr East, "the Berger Isthmian League will be blazing a trail of exciting, attacking and disciplined football. This will set an example for all areas of the game."

"The spirit amongst Isthmian clubs has always been linked to a large and happy family," he added, "but there's no doubt that the incentives offered to the 64 clubs will lift and inspire them all to achieve even higher standards of actual play, sportsmanship and indeed comradeship in football."