

BLUES REACH A WEMBLEY FINAL

WYCOMBE shrugged off their recent poor league and cup form to reach the final of the **Berger Isthmian League five-a-side** competition in a gala night of football at Wembley arena on Thursday night.

Wanderers so nearly became the first ever winners of the Prince Philip Cup because with a minute left in the final, they were leading Division One side Bromley 2-1. But the Kent team equalised and then hit the first goal in a sudden death play-off.

But there was considerable consolation for Wycombe, who received the runners-up trophies from the chairman of the League, Mr Barry East to the acclaim of the two to three thousand crowd, who attended the night which was in aid of charity.

This should prove a tremendous boost for Wycombe's confidence. After all, it is more than 20 years since they reached a Wembley final — even

Report by MICHAEL KNOX

though this was on a mini scale.

The man chosen as player of the night was Bromley striker Ian Parsons who netted two goals in the final. But a strong contender must have been Wycombe captain Paul Birdseye, who netted four goals during the evening in addition to his defensive role.

It is a surprise, on this showing, why Birdseye has never been appointed captain of the full Wycombe team. Indeed, during the past two years, he is about the only player who has not been considered for the position.

On target

Wycombe started the evening in quiet fashion with a 1-0 victory over Harrow Borough, who missed numerous good chances before Tony Price clinched the winner in the last minute.

Price was also on target in the first half of their second round match against Dulwich. Ossie Bayram equalised before the break but a fierce low shot by Birdseye in the second half proved decisive.

The highlight of Wycombe's evening came in the semi-final when they gained a thrilling 5-2 victory over Dagenham, who had twice led, through George Duck and Jimmy Holder.

Wycombe, who spent 90 minutes battering away at the Dagenham defence without success in a recent league match, found the target more easily this time.

Birdseye, with a low drive from a free-kick and Terry Scott, with a great shot on the turn, made it 2-2, before Wycombe went mad in the closing two minutes against the rapidly tiring Dagenham side.

Two goals from Price and another by Birdseye saw Wycombe romp home and earn a place in the final against surprise side Bromley, who had beaten both Barking and Enfield on penalties after the teams had played out draws in these 12 minute matches.

So to the final itself. Despite some brave saves by Chris Way, Bromley took the lead just before half-time when Parsons nipped past Birdseye to score.

Scott equalised following good work by Price and when Birdseye scored from a quick break, Wycombe looked home and dry. But a great 10 yard shot from Derek Brown put Bromley back in the hunt and Parsons netted the winner in extra time.

One of the memorable aspects of the evening was the commentary of Jimmy Hill and Brian Moore from rival television channels. They kept the crowd informed in their inimitable style.

The only time Jimmy Hill went slightly 'over the top' was in the celebrity game between the Goaldiggers, who included Brian Moore, Geoff Hurst and Jimmy Greaves in their ranks and a team of test cricketers. The result of the match was a 3-3 draw.

Wycombe squad: C. Way, A. Price, P. Birdseye, T. Scott, S. Smith, P. Miles, J. Jacobs.

RESULTS

First round: Slough 1, Bromley 2; Barking 5, Billericay 4 (after pens); Walthamstow 3, Woking 2; Enfield 3, Hendon 0; Wycombe 1, Harrow 0; Croydon 0, Dulwich 2; Tooting 2, Dagenham 4; Sutton 2, Carlshpton 1.

2nd round: Bromley 3, Barking 2 (after pens); Walthamstow 0, Enfield 1 (after pens); Wycombe 2, Dulwich 1; Dagenham 6, Sutton 5 (after pens).

Semi-finals: Brunley 2, Enfield 1 (after pens); Wycombe 5, Dagenham 2. **Final:** Bromley 3, Wycombe 2 (aet).