

Fixture chaos now for Blues as ...

EARLY CALL OFF IS SLAMMED!

By ROLF NIVEN

W Y C O M B E
Wanderers have claimed referee Colin Grady passed judgment too early on Tuesday night's attractive Hitachi cup-tie — which he called off because of fog.

Wanderers' officials are adamant that had Mr Grady delayed his decision 15 minutes, the third-round clash with Bishop's Stortford would have gone ahead.

"We feel that he made his decision far too early," said a disappointed Wycombe secretary, John Goldsworthy.

Detect

"Had he waited for an extra quarter of an hour he would have given the green light and that would have avoided all the fixture problems we now face."

The Guildford referee made his inspection at 7.15pm, when Loakes Park was still shrouded in a thin blanket of fog — and im-



JOHN GOLDSWORTHY
... problems.

mediately called a halt.

"The referee said his linesman would not be able to see across the pitch to detect offside," explained Mr Goldsworthy.

"By 7.30pm we could see the length of the pitch, never mind the width."

Blues' boss Paul Bence was also annoyed at the postponement. "It was a very poor decision," he stated. "I thought we could have played even when he called it off at 7.15pm. There was no reason why he could not have waited to see if conditions improved."

It was an expensive decision which leaves Wanderers having to cover the travelling expenses of both Bishop's Stortford and the match officials.

The Herts club also

protested at making a wasted trip, but blamed the referee. "It was a terrible decision and we are extremely annoyed," said a spokesman.

"We spent four and a half hours in a coach on Tuesday all for nothing. It was a long, boring and difficult journey we could have done without."

"It could have been avoided had the referee not been so unbending."

"Most of our players and committee men had to ask for time off to travel to Wycombe and that can cause friction at work," he pointed out. "The referees do not seem to take this into consideration. Now we must go through it all again."

The two clubs have agreed, subject to Isthmian League approval, to play on Tuesday.

Complicate

Blues are scheduled to meet Hayes in a Premier Division game that night, but hope to postpone it.

Two FA Trophy matches on Saturday complicate matters further.

If Stortford draw with Billericay or Hayes tie with Sutton, then those replays will be held on Tuesday instead, as they take precedence over Hitachi Cup games.

Should that happen, then an alternative date for Bishop's Stortford's visit has been set for January 8.

Blues' striker Declan Link voiced feelings of his team-mates when he said: "Tuesday night was a big let-down."

"After Saturday's win at Harrow we were all raring to go."