

Blues relegated for first time in history . . . on goal difference

DOWN!

WYCOMBE are out of the Gola League!

The Blues, who swept into the non-League's top bracket on a wave of euphoria last season, were sensationally relegated for the first time in their 101-year-history at the weekend by the smallest possible margin — goal difference.

Having failed to gain the vital victory needed to ensure their survival on Saturday, Wycombe's fate was sealed 24 hours later when Dagenham drew with Runcorn to banish Alan Gane's men back to the Vauxhall-Opel League.

And there was more heartache for Gane's side on Bank Holiday Monday when they crashed 1-0 to underdogs Aylesbury United in the final of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup.

"I feel absolutely gutted," said shell-shocked Blues' boss Gane.

By ROLF NIVEN

"The club has never been relegated before and neither have I.

"It is a pretty sick feeling.

"Our changing room was like a morgue on Monday and I don't think that would have changed even if we had won the county cup.

"We had three chances to stay up last week and we blew them all. Dagenham only needed a draw on Sunday and they got it with a bizarre goal by their keeper in the very first minute.

It is a tragic end to the season for Gane's team who less than two months ago appeared secure.

But their exit from the FA Trophy quarter-finals at Kettering on March 17 sparked a disastrous slump which saw Wycombe lost 10 of the 14 remaining matches.

Twice last week they had the chance to save their skins, but in the end they were not good enough.

A dreary 1-1 draw with Dagenham and an unfortunate 1-0 defeat by Altrincham, caused by a ridiculous own-goal from Graham Pearce, left their future still in doubt.

Victory on Saturday against Kettering would have been enough for Blues.

They failed again, managing only a drab goalless draw.

Elsewhere, their relegation rivals succeeded in their equally desperate efforts to stay up.

Maidstone made certain of avoiding the dreaded drop by hammering Dartford 3-0 while Nuneaton moved ahead of Wanderers on goal difference when they drew 1-1 at Telford thanks to a late equaliser.

It was Dagenham who pulled off the greatest escape.

A last-minute winner from defender Frank Coles earned them three vital points at Northwich and took them

within a point of Blues.

The loss of 38 goals in 14 games had left Wanderers with an appalling goal difference and it was painfully obvious to all Blues fans that Dagenham only needed to draw at Runcorn on Sunday to send Wycombe down along with Barrow and Dartford.

A freak goal in the opening minute from The Daggers reserve keeper gave them the result they needed and spelt the end for Wycombe.

Gane's first priority next term will be to get the club back into the Gola as quickly as possible.

"I was intending to buy Gola League players to strengthen the squad for next season but now I am going to have to look in the Vauxhall-Opel.

Time will tell whether Gane loses any of his present squad.

But the Blues' boss admitted that striker Simon Read's future is in doubt.

"Simon is waiting to hear about a new job in London," explained Gane.

"If he gets it he will find travelling to Wycombe very difficult and may be forced to leave."

GOLALEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	42	27	10	5	94	47	76
Frickley	42	25	10	7	78	50	69
Kidderminster	42	24	7	11	99	62	67
Altrincham	42	22	11	9	70	49	63
Weymouth	42	19	15	8	75	60	61
Runcorn	42	19	14	9	70	44	60
Stafford	41	19	12	10	61	54	59
Telford	42	18	10	14	68	66	51
Kettering	41	15	14	12	55	53	48
Wealdstone	42	16	9	17	57	56	47
Cheltenham	42	16	11	15	69	68	46
Bath	42	13	11	18	53	54	45
Boston	42	16	7	19	66	76	44
Barnet	42	13	11	18	56	60	41
Scarborough	42	13	11	18	54	60	40
Northwich	42	10	12	20	42	54	37
Maidstone	42	9	16	17	57	66	36
Nuneaton	42	13	5	24	58	73	36
Dagenham	42	10	12	20	48	66	36
Wycombe	42	10	13	19	55	84	36
Dartford	42	8	9	25	51	82	26
Barrow	42	7	8	27	41	86	24

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