

WATFORD

NEW WATFORD boss Dave Bassett has snatched Weymouth's star striker Tony Agana from under Wycombe Wanderers' nose it was revealed this week.

Blues had made Agana their main pre-season target in a bid to bolster their strike force but Wanderers' spate of summer setbacks continued when Bassett made a last minute swoop for the talented forward.

Wycombe assistant manager John Reardon admitted that they almost had Agana on the Loakes Park books before Bassett whisked him off to Vicarage Road.

"We were sure we would get him," said Reardon. "But then Watford stepped in and offered £30,000 for him. When a club offers that sort of money there's nothing we can do about it," added a dejected Reardon.

It has been a frustrating close season for the Wanderers management who have made only one new signing — that of former Bath midfielder Brian O'Donnell.

O'Donnell was at the first pre-season training session held at Bisham Abbey Sports Centre last Thursday.

Reardon and manager Alan Gane had planned to bring in at least three or four experienced players before the start of their GM Vauxhall Conference campaign on August 22.

But they are still hopeful of adding one famous name to their squad next term.

Cut short

Ex-Watford and Wolves' midfielder Martin Patching is expected to turn up for training with the club at Bisham Abbey tonight (Tuesday) although at the moment there are no plans to bring the former league player to Loakes Park.

Patching was forced out of the game a couple of seasons ago with a knee injury just at the time when he was beginning to stake a claim with Watford.

The 28-year-old former England youth international cost Graham Taylor £100,000 when he bought him from Wolves.

Patching responded by scoring against Liverpool in the last game of the 1983 season to help Watford into second place in the First Division.



Dave Bassett... late swoop

But his career was cut short by the injury and since his time with Watford has been running a pub.

"It looks as if the injury has improved so Martin will hopefully train with us this week," said Reardon.

Apart from O'Donnell, Blues have had little success in luring other players to Loakes Park.

Deprived

Enfield central defender Nigel Gray is also expected to be at Bisham tonight. The Blues management are certainly interested in Gray but as yet no transfer has taken place.

Reardon was also hopeful of bringing prolific Weymouth striker Nick Docherty to Loakes Park but they may lose out again as Conference rivals Maidstone have stepped in with a bid.

Wycombe has also been deprived of the services of coach Richard Teale who has left to concentrate on his business.

"Richard said at the end of last season that he would find it difficult travelling the longer distances and he wants to concentrate on his decorating business," said Reardon.

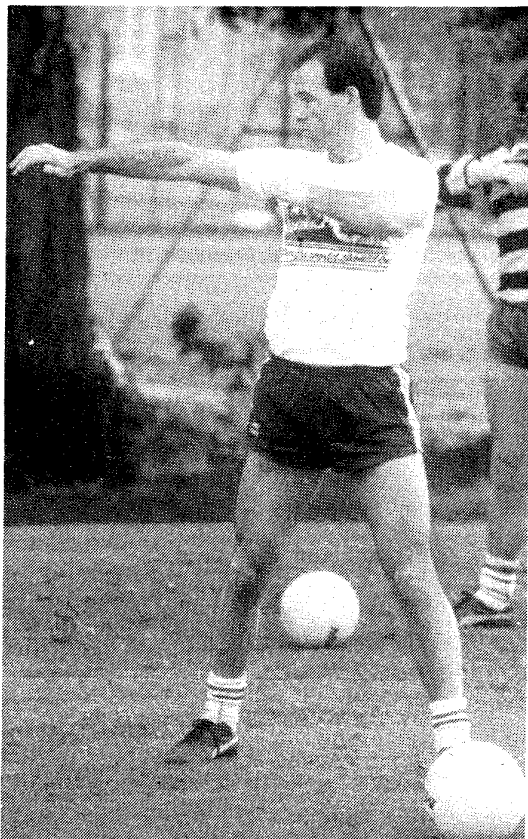
As a result Wycombe's rather dismal summer off the field has left Reardon pondering Blues' chances in the Conference.

"I'm not as confident as I was at the end of last season. I'm sick about the transfers that have fallen through."

One spot of good news for Blues fans is that Declan Link is expected to be back in the country after spending the summer in the States.

Link should report for training in three weeks time.

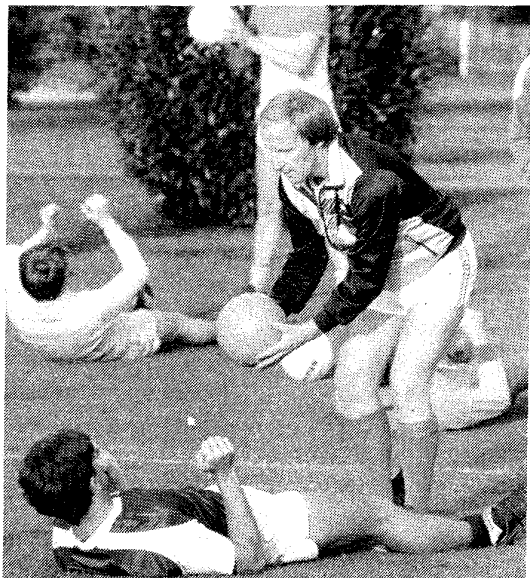
Bassett wins race for Agana



Wycombe's solitary new boy Brian O'Donnell.



Blues skipper Keith Barrett back in training and preparing for another season.



Alan Parry takes a break from the cameras to put Wanderers through their paces at Bisham Abbey.