

Harriers man recommended

By Rolf Niven

KIDDERMINSTER Harriers midfielder Adrian O'Dowd could be the first of Jim Kelman's close-season captures.

O'Dowd was expected to don a Blues shirt in Monday's charity clash with Chelsea. An impressive display at Loakes Park would put him in line for a move to the Bucks club.

He was highly recommended by Martin Woodall, the midfielder who left Wycombe in February to seek a new career in Australia. Woodall was a former team-mate of O'Dowd and rates him as one of the best in the GM Vauxhall Conference.

"The lad has just moved to the London area and is a free agent," said Kelman. "I have invited him to play against Chelsea but we will have to wait and see if he wants to play for us."

Kelman is aware that O'Dowd has a history of knee trouble and added: "We would have to take that into consideration."

Definitely in Monday's line-up was Ruislip Manor man David Carroll.

Carroll played in the friendly against Karlstad and in a Capital League match against Welling but Kelman wants another chance to look at the midfielder.

The Wycombe chief faces stiff competition from Vauxhall-Opel premier side Farnborough Town who have already made Carroll a very tempting offer.

Meanwhile the Wanderers chief confirmed he has made approaches over former Loakes Park favourites Graham Bressington and Noel Ashford.

"I have approached the Lincoln manager Colin Murphy and Barry Fry at Barnet and I hope to hear within the week," he revealed. "Graham's future at Lincoln is very uncertain. There was a verbal agreement when he left Wycombe that we would have first choice. It seems logical that he would want to return here because he is a local lad.

"Barnet are keeping their situation under wraps for the time being. It is a difficult time for Barry Fry because he doesn't know if Stan Flashman is going to remain as chairman. A lot depends on whether the price is right and whether Noel wants to come back.

"He is obviously a quality player and if everything was satisfactory then there would be a chance of him returning. I should know by Tuesday what the position is."

Kelman dismissed reports that Anton Vircavs could be returning to Wycombe but revealed he is talking to Vircavs' Cheltenham skipper Steve Abbley.

"He has been told he is now a free agent and I am waiting until he comes back from business in Ireland before talking to him," commented the Wycombe manager.

Player-of-the-season Mark West, skipper Keith Barrett and long-serving Gary Lester were pencilled in for Monday's clash with Chelsea, although injuries will deprive Kelman of many of his first teamers.

Chelsea were also expected to field a weakened side following their slide into the relegation and promotion play-offs.

The game will raise cash for the Steve King Memorial Fund, set up to help the family of the Chalfont St Peter goalkeeper who died so tragically earlier this year.

Both Chalfont and Steve King's former club Flackwell Heath contributed three players towards Kelman's squad. Chalfont's trio were John Regan, Colin Davies and Hugh Richardson while Flackwell offered Steve Toll, David Crook and Gary Stanners.

Wanderers will know by this morning (Tuesday) who they are due to face in the President's Cup final and when exactly it will be staged at Loakes Park.

If Gillingham won Monday's semi-final then the final will be on Wednesday, but if Brentford succeeded the final will be on Thursday.

Kelman will be without Brian Greenaway who broke a finger at Lincoln City last week, Laurence Osborne who is still recovering from a pulled hamstring, Kirk Corbin, who has a groin strain, John Granville and Andy Graham, who both have ankle trouble.

Midfield men Nigel Taylor and Kevin Durham would also be unavailable for a Wednesday final although Durham could possibly play if required on Thursday night.