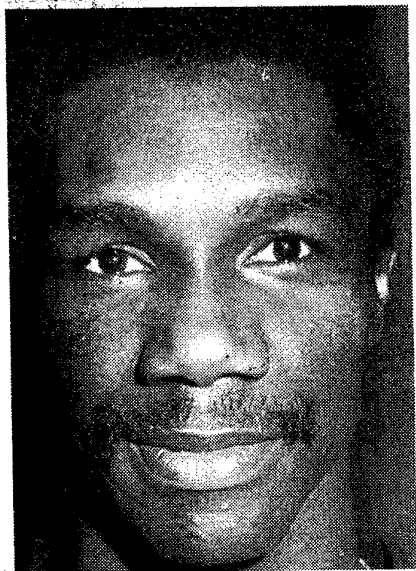




■ Kirk Corbin.

Closed doors clash

THE FIGHT for first team places begins in earnest on Saturday when Wanderers play their opening two pre-season friendlies.

With the start of the new Conference campaign barely three weeks away, now is the time for claims to be staked and manager Jim Kelman will be giving everyone a chance to show their worth.

The day's action will begin at 11am at Bisham Abbey when Blues face a behind-closed-doors clash with Staines Town - the side now managed, of course, by ex-Loakes Park supremo Alan Gane.

That will be followed at 3pm by a meeting with Brackley Town at the United Counties League side's Churchill Way ground.

Brackley finished half way up the Premier Division last year with 16 wins from 40 games.

Kelman plans to blood the best of Blues' new youth team on Saturday, with his Wycombe-based players making up the side against Staines and those based further afield being called up for the afternoon.

He remains pleased with the way preparations have been going: "Everyone has trained well and everyone will play. The hard work has been done and now I am looking to get people settled into the team.

Decision

"Positions will resolve themselves over the next few weeks, during which time we will also have definite news of various transfer possibilities.

"Steve Claridge will be returning from holiday and we will soon know whether he is coming here or going to a league club. Striker John Kerr will be back from the United States and will also be reaching a decision."

One man who will not be in the reckoning for a place is full-back Kirk Corbin, who has left Loakes Park to join Wealdstone in the Southern League.

The 33-year-old former Wokingham Town and Cambridge United defender was brought to Wycombe in December 1986 by Gane and, despite injury problems, played 35 league and cup games for the club last year.

He clearly felt he could not afford to turn down an attractive offer from last year's Conference drop-outs at this stage of his career.