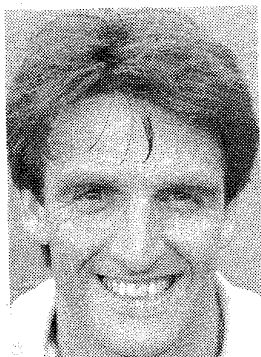
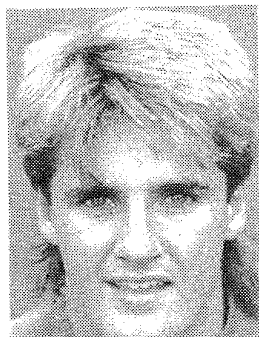


Kelman lightens load in dual sale



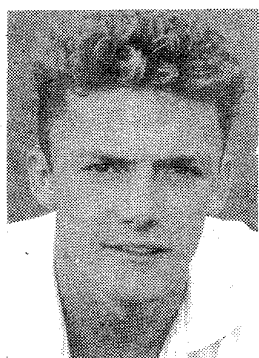
■ Steve Abbley: absent for Trophy game.



■ Matt Crossley: operation on Friday.



■ John Regan: set for £1,000 move to Hounslow.



■ Lawrence Osborne: fit again.

BLUES BOSS Jim Kelman looks set to off-load two members of his squad this week - leaving him free to search out fresh Conference talent.

He has agreed a £1,000 sale with Hounslow over striker John Regan and a £2,500 deal with Bishop's Stortford for forward Scott Young.

Both should be completed this week and with transfer-listed midfielder Martin Blacklock poised to join Bath City next week Kelman's wage bill should be sufficiently reduced to allow him to bolster the squad.

With Saturday's marvellous win at Runcorn keeping his side on the fringe of the promotion race, the Loakes Park manager is determined to bring in only top quality players.

"I should have room for manoeuvre if the deals come off," he commented this week. "I will be looking hard but will only sign players that are obviously better than I've already got."

Meanwhile United States international Mike Brady will be given a run-out in tomorrow's (Wednesday) Berks and Bucks Senior Cup second round clash with little Winslow United.

Although being drawn at home, Winslow have agreed to play at Loakes Park (kick-off 7.45pm), giving Blues fans the chance to view Brady - a former team-mate of striker John Kerr who has been training at Peterborough.

If he impresses there is a slim chance he could be drafted in for next Sunday's FA Trophy trip to Bath City.

One player who is almost certain to miss the Bath game is star right-back Steve Abbley. The Swindon-based financial consultant has flown to Florida on business and is not due to arrive back until the day of the game.

Troublesome

"Obviously it would be great if he could catch an early flight back on the Saturday but it is down to the player," said manager Jim Kelman.

Matt Crossley goes into Wycombe General hospital on Friday for another operation on his troublesome knee.

"We are hoping it is just a piece of floating cartilage in which case he could be fit again within a month. If not he may miss the rest of the season."

Better news on the injury front is that both Lawrence Osborne and Andy Robinson will be given run-outs in tomorrow's County Cup game.

Gary Lester or Steve Crompton are likely to replace in-form John Granville, who is to be rested, while Kelman hopes to name youth team players as substitutes.

The Blues chief is grateful for a break in League action which has seen his team collect maximum 12 points from their last four games.

"What is encouraging is that we have beaten two of the top sides - Maidstone and Runcorn whereas in the past we were found wanting against the likes of Kidderminster and Kettering.

"I think we are growing up in the Conference and the nice thing is we are winning in style," added Kelman who refuses to speculate on the chances of Blues mounting a serious championship challenge.

Fittest

Although still seventh, Wycombe are a mere two points behind both Maidstone and Runcorn and just seven points adrift of second-placed Macclesfield.

"It is just over half-way in the season and we just intend to keep rolling along. We are perhaps one of the fittest sides in the league which has stood us in good stead.

"John Granville was our hero if you like. He made some blinding saves which were particularly pleasing for him after his mistake gave Runcorn a point down at our place.

"John Kerr is fitting in well - his runs behind the defence were particularly good and he unsettled them with his pace. Andy Kerr was actually unconscious for a while but got up and carried on."

● Defender John Ray has joined Dagenham for a period while Aylesbury and Wycombe are still in discussion over Blues' injured central defender Kevin Day.