

ABOUT TURN!

Blackler given reprieve

WYCOMBE Wanderers made a surprise U-turn at the weekend when they pulled midfielder Martin Blackler off the transfer-list and scuppered a £10,000 deal with Bath City.

The 25-year-old, listed because of his poor disciplinary record, looked set for a move to Twerton Park last week following lengthy negotiations between the clubs.

But Blues chief Jim Kelman and chairman Ivor Beeks decided to back down on the sale at a meeting hastily arranged after Saturday's 3-0 victory over Fisher Athletic.

With his squad down a minimum and club captain Keith Barrett struggling with an achilles tendon injury, Kelman does not want to stretch his resources any further.

"We have taken Martin off the transfer-list because it would be foolish to sell a player for £10,000 just to go out and buy one at the same price," commented Kelman.

The about-turn will disappoint those who applauded the club's stand against Blackler's lack of self control which has led to him being dismissed twice this season. But the move will delight the majority of the other players and many fans who regard the former Cheltenham man as a valuable member of the squad.

"The decision has been taken by the chairman and myself. We have talked at length with Martin and we have resolved our differences. He has played a lot of valuable games for us and I have always admired him as a player. He is extremely popular with the rest of the squad but he is going to have to fight for his place."

Blackler is likely to be given a run-out in tomorrow's (Wednesday) Capital League game at Aylesbury along with Lawrence Osborne who is virtually back to full fitness.

Meanwhile unsettled defender Kevin Day has put in a written transfer request.

Day, currently the subject of great interest from Aylesbury, has not played at Conference level since October.

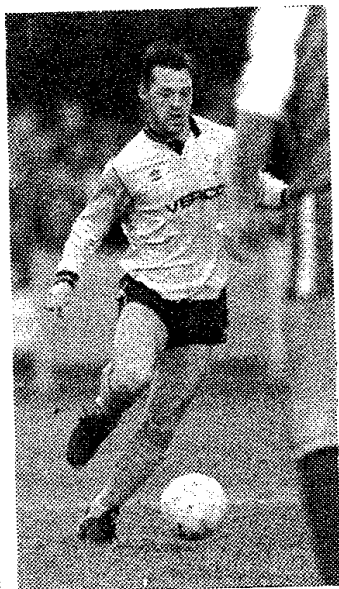
Unsettled

"Kevin feels he is not going to get back into the first team and has asked to be listed," confirmed the manager. "But nothing will happen until he is over his groin injury."

Meanwhile Kelman praised the efforts of his two attacking full-backs Sean Norman and Steve Abley for their contribution to the win over Fisher.

"We played a lot of football despite the conditions and once again Steve and Sean were tremendous. Fisher came to us with two or three players missing and, as we have learnt in the past, you get found out in the Conference.

● Winslow United left-back Graham Freshwater, who impressed in the recent Berks and Bucks Senior Cup match, is to be given a trial in tomorrow's Capital clash at Buckingham Road.



■ Martin Blackler.