

Kerr sets sights on Wembley May day

Ken Dyer

JOHN KERR has played international football in Costa Rica and El Salvador, but his enduring ambition is to be the first American to play in a cup final at Wembley.

The 23-year-old striker could move a step nearer that target on Saturday when he leads the Wycombe Wanderers attack in an FA Trophy third round tie at home to Merthyr Tydfil.

Kerr comes from good footballing stock. His father—also John—was born in Scotland and played for Partick, Ipswich and Charlton before emigrating to Canada.

He moved to the United States, where he was a New York Cosmos teammate of Pele and now manages the Washington Stars.

His son John was born in Toronto but grew up in Washington and has developed into a good enough player to win 11 caps for his country, including a match against England in Los Angeles, 1986, as part of Bobby Robson's build-up to the Mexico World Cup.

Kerr came to England the following year and was offered a contract by Portsmouth. He played six first team matches, but things didn't work out and he returned to the States.

Degree

"I would probably have stayed there," explained Kerr, "but my mother became terminally ill and wanted to return to her birthplace in Scotland. I came and stayed with her until she died last October."

Wycombe manager Jim Kelman had kept track of Kerr since watching him playing for Portsmouth's reserves and persuaded the striker to pick up the threads of his career.

Since joining Wycombe, Kerr, who has a law degree, has scored 16 goals in 26 matches. He won the Vauxhall Conference January Goalscorer Award and donated his £250 prize money to Cancer Research.

It is no coincidence that Wycombe have flourished since Kerr's arrival.

Apart from their Trophy success, the Buckinghamshire club have edged their way up the table and last Saturday's 1-0 victory over Kidderminster took them to fourth place.

Kerr hopes to be playing in 1994, when the World Cup is staged in the United States. In the meantime, a trip to Wembley in May would do nicely.