

Leytonstone next stop for veteran defender



■ Keith Barrett in happier days at Wycombe.

Barrett on the move

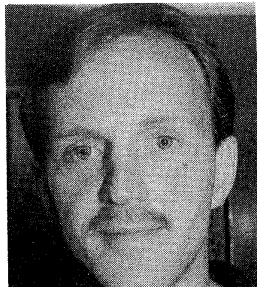
FORMER Wycombe Wanderers skipper Keith Barrett is set to join last year's Vauxhall-Opel League champions Leytonstone-Ilford in a move which could see him link up with Loakes Park old-boy, Noel Ashford.

The 32-year-old defender is on holiday with his family at the moment but is expected to make a decision on the move when he returns later this week. The fee involved would be nominal.

Barrett, with 16 England semi-pro caps to his name, has proved a great servant to Wycombe since he joined them from Enfield in the summer of 1986. But his appearances last season were restricted after he sustained an achilles tendon injury in January.

After playing 32 of the first 35 matches, he managed a full 90 minutes only once in the last 16 games.

The team captaincy, taken over by Barrett shortly after his arrival, was handed to Glyn Creaser in December, with the former Arsenal, Tottenham and Barking man being appointed club captain.



■ Noel Ashford

Leytonstone's old Green Pond Road ground is in Walthamstow, Barrett's birthplace, just down the road from his Hainault home. His brother-in-law is coach at the club.

The club have now changed their name to Redbridge Forest and relocated at Dagenham.

The possibility of a link-up with Ashford follows the news that the one-time Wycombe midfielder's current club, Conference champions Maidstone United, are planning a major reshuffle to celebrate their promotion to the Football League.

There is also news of possible arrivals at Loakes Park, top of the list is an unnamed Bristol Rovers

midfielder who could well be on the move this week.

With boss Jim Kelman on holiday in the Greek Islands, Blues' assistant manager John Reardon has been in touch with the player and Rovers manager Gerry Francis and was hoping to clinch the deal when Francis returned from the United States yesterday (Monday).

Wycombe's bid to sign Newport County's Paul Sanderson came to an end when the exciting winger decided to stay with the debt-ridden Welsh outfit to play Vauxhall-Opel Division Two football next season.

Sanderson's wages have reportedly been frozen since January and he is thought to be owed a considerable amount by the club. But irrepressible County chairman Jerry Sherman spoke to him on Friday, told him he was confident of clearing all debts and persuaded him that his future still lies with Newport.

A disappointed Reardon said: "We were banking on getting a quick wide-player like Paul and I was very hopeful we would get him. He came to Loakes Park last season for the Cup game with Kettering and liked what he saw. But I spoke to him on Friday night and he said he had decided not to move.

"At one stage he told me that he would not be prepared to drop down to Vauxhall-Opel Division Two, but he has obviously changed his mind."