

WYCOMBE GET BOOST

MAMMOTH crowds for Wycombe's opening two matches have vindicated the club's decision to attract top opposition to their sumptuous new Adams Park stadium.

Nearly 5,000 fans witnessed the first ever match, a friendly against Nottingham Forest, at the 6,000 capacity ground on Thursday night.

And a crowd of more than 4,000 flocked to Adams Park to watch Wycombe's 1-0 defeat against Southampton on Saturday.

The Forest gate, 4,810, was the club's highest since 5,300 witnessed a testimonial for Tony Horseman and John Maskell, at Loakes Park in 1975.

Now Wycombe Secretary, Alan Hutchinson, anticipates another big gate to watch Third Division Reading at Adams Park tonight (Tuesday, 7.30).

Hutchinson explained the aim of attracting top opposition for the opening matches at Adams Park was three fold.

"One: to open the ground with some panache. Two: to get quality opposition to enhance the first team. Three: try and get ourselves on a financial footing."

Queens Park Rangers, boasting Ray Wilkins, Kenny Sansom, and Mark Falco, are due to play at Adams Park on August 21 and Hutchinson indicated friendlies against other top teams could be arranged during the season.

A board meeting was due to iron out teething problems encountered on Thursday evening.

Hutchinson confirmed the club hadn't received any complaints from fans who apparently were locked outside the ground but he said: "If there were any problems if people can produce their ticket stubs to the effect that they couldn't get in and were turned away, we will

Sports Editor
NICK GOODMAN reports

look to see if we can compensate them in some way, either with tickets for the Reading or QPR games."

Meanwhile, Wycombe boss Martin O'Neill confirmed after Saturday's match he is likely this week to decide the fate of the trialists who have been playing for the club.

Right-back Steve Whitby, who played against Forest and Southampton and shone in both games, has signed non-contract forms.

Whitby's cousin, forward Keith Ryan, has also signed non-contract forms, and looks a promising prospect.

O'Neill still has to make decisions on ex-Watford player Martin Gardiner, Jerry Gill (ex-Orient), Colin Smith (ex-Aldershot), Peter Rhoades-Brown, Matthew Hanlon, and Moroccan and ex-Wimbledon keeper, Chuck Moussadik.

Tonight's friendly against Reading at Adams Park will help O'Neill form a judgement on his trialists.

Reading are expected to field a strong side and O'Neill is treating them with some respect.

"I view Reading the same as I view the three First Division sides. They are no different. Reading are every bit as tough — how could it not be — we are only in the Vauxhall Conference.

O'Neill has been boosted by the intense competition for places in his first team and he said morale was good within the club.

Now Wycombe — and no doubt a large section of the town's public — are eagerly-awaiting tonight's match against Third Division opposition.