

Record start is up for grabs

BLUES hope the scent of a record start to a Conference season will erase their Marston Road memories as they travel to **Stafford Rangers** (ko 3pm) tomorrow.

Victory at Welling on Wednesday night means **Wycombe Wanderers** have now equalled Weymouth's opening run of five victories, achieved in 1987.

Manager Martin O'Neill cares little for records at this stage of a season, preferring to start considering how to cover for the loss of the suspended Simon Stapleton.

Keith Ryan was a regular for

the latter half of last season. A pre-season virus has left him on the sidelines to date.

"Ryan played well against Barnet on Monday night (Blues' reserves won 3-2) and will be the likely replacement," said O'Neill.

Whoever it is though will have a great advantage of coming into what O'Neill calls a good dressing room atmosphere and of joining a proven winning team.

But Blues have come unstuck at Stafford in the last two seasons, a 2-1 defeat last February ending an eight-match unbeaten run.

COLIN HAZELDEN and PETE LANSLEY report

Mickey Nuttall was the goalscorer that night, and his five-goal return in August means he leads the Mail On Sunday's Conference Goalscorer of the Month competition. Unfortunately for Nuttall, the first award is only given at the end of September.

Mark West's brace at Welling means he is level second off the blocks.

West's old goal partner Nicky

Evans scored again for **Barnet** in their sensational 6-0 victory at Lincoln City on Wednesday. The Fourth Division's new boys have climbed to third with that result, and they visit Adams Park for the Championship Shield match next Tuesday night.

Receipts for what promises to be a record crowd for this annual prestigious fixture will be donated to the benefit fund for Kevin Durham, the Barnet and former Blues star who died this summer.

Outside the top two non-league

divisions, **Chalfont St Peter** start a run of three home matches with tomorrow's visit of **Tooting and Mitcham** in the Diadora League Division One (ko 3pm).

In Division Three, **Flackwell Heath** entertain **Eastbourne United**, while **Thame United** visit **Feltham and Hounslow**.

Tomorrow's Conference fixtures: **Barrow v Bath**, **Boston v Cheltenham**, **Gateshead v Farnborough**, **Merthyr v Northwich**, **Runcorn v Kettering**, **Slough v Telford**, **Stafford v Wycombe**, **Welling v Altrincham**, **Witton v Colchester**, **Yeovil v Macclesfield**.