

BLUES' defensive lynchpin Andy Kerr met manager Martin O'Neill for an Adams Park showdown last night.

The star defender's contract expired last May but at least until yesterday his future remained unsettled.

And Barnet boss Barry Fry is hovering in the shadows awaiting developments with interest.

Kerr, Blues' player of the year in 1990 and an ever-present so far this season, is unhappy with the current offer.

Manager and player had not discussed the matter for almost a month before the Bucks Free Press prompted their meeting before training last night.

Kerr said: "I just want to get my future sorted out. There is the possibility of a compromise, but I know how strong-minded Martin can be."

The former Shrewsbury, Cardiff and Telford centre half added: "I'd always want to be able to negotiate. If I play badly in a season, I don't deserve to be held. If I do well, I deserve to renegotiate."

O'Neill countered: "He's been offered terms at least as good as last year. Ask him about last year's contract — now he wants

PETE LANSLEY reports

another one year, I'm prepared to offer two years. Don't talk to me about loyalty."

If a compromise is not reached, any transfer deal would require a fee as Wanderers hold the player's registration.

Kerr admitted he is not keen to leave Blues. "I don't want it to get to that point, but anything can happen in football."

O'Neill has re-emphasised he does not keep unhappy players.

But Fry said: "I spoke to Martin about Andy Kerr, and I did believe I had a very good chance of getting Kerry. But then when we met, Martin said Kerr and Creaser were not available at any price while Wycombe can win the league."

"Martin knows I'm interested. I'd be the one of the first he'd speak to if Andy's available."

Award-winner O'Neill has to make changes

MARTIN O'Neill, the Wycombe manager, has received his third Mail on Sunday Manager of the Month Award for his side's superb start to the season.

Despite two successive defeats at Adams Park, Wycombe have the highest points per game average.

And Blues travel to Runcorn tomorrow with a 100 per cent away record, hoping Paul Hyde recovers from Tuesday night's leg injury.

"It's black and blue, and very sore," Hyde said on Wednesday.

"I've been told to rest it, and I'll have a fitness test Saturday morning. If I can play, as long as I can't make it worse, I'll play."

Hyde has only conceded three goals in Wycombe's four league games away from Adams Park.

Chuck Moussaddik is on standby. Gavin Covington could come in for Jason Cousins at full back, although Covington was still suffering from his ankle injury in Tuesday night's game. Mickey Nuttall and Cousins both miss out tomorrow because of suspension.

There is some good news for O'Neill. Keith Scott should return after he scored the reserves' winner in their 1-0 at Colchester on Wednesday when he played the 90 minutes.

Last season, Blues shared two 1-1 draws with Runcorn, who finished eighth. Andy Kerr was sent off as Blues dropped their first home points of the season.

Anyone dismissed in the Conference tomorrow will see red as the disciplinary card system is re-introduced, at least until the end of the season.

Runcorn, yet to win at Canal Street, drew 2-2 at Altrincham last Saturday.

Other Conference fixtures: Boston v Farborough, Colchester v Altrincham, Kettering v Stafford, Northwich v Yeovil, Redbridge v Cheltenham, Slough v Barrow, Telford v Bath, Welling v Gateshead

Blues still top

GM Vauxhall Conference
(Up to and including Friday, Oct 4)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wyc Wand	9	7	0	2	17	9	21
Telford Utd	10	6	2	2	25	14	20
Farnbor	9	6	1	2	13	10	19
Colch Utd	9	5	3	1	23	10	18
Macclesfield	10	4	4	2	11	8	16
Altrincham	10	3	5	2	16	14	14
Welling Utd	11	3	5	3	18	21	14
Witton Alb	9	3	4	2	14	13	13
Boston Utd	7	3	3	1	15	11	12
Northwich V	9	3	2	4	17	13	11
Kettering	7	2	4	1	8	8	10
Merthyr Tyd	9	2	4	3	11	13	10
Slough Town	7	3	1	3	8	10	10
Barrow	10	2	4	4	13	16	10
Bath City	8	3	1	4	11	14	10
Kiddermin	10	3	1	6	15	21	10
Runcorn	9	1	5	3	9	13	8
Cheltenham T	9	1	5	3	10	17	8
Yeovil	8	2	1	5	6	12	7
Stafford Rgs	8	1	3	4	3	11	6
Redbridge F	5	1	2	2	7	5	5
Gateshead	7	0	2	5	6	13	2