

# Blues boosted for tough encounters

WANDERERS enter an enthralling ten-day period when they travel to Macclesfield tonight buoyed by the return of Andy Kerr and Gary Smith.

Both are back in the squad for tomorrow's vengeance-seeking mission at Moss Rose Ground and Monday night's home game with title rivals Farnborough Town, which helps ease Martin O'Neill's loss of Dave Carroll and Mark West through injury.

"Neither are in contention for the next two games," said Wycombe boss O'Neill. "Smith's available after suspension. Keith Ryan's done very well considering he was laying low for three months. And John Deakin

By PETE LANSLEY

comes into contention — he was unlucky to be out of the side."

Kerr has recovered from a cartilage injury which has sidelined him for 12 first team matches since early November. "He should be fit for selection. He's had two reserve games now, although what he might be lacking is Vauxhall Conference fitness."

Macclesfield were the first side to take points off Blues this season when they won 1-0 at Adams Park in controversial style back in September. John Timmons, who scored the winner that day with the acknowledged

assistance of his hand, was on target in the Silkmen's 5-1 victory at Boston United last weekend.

Sixth-placed Macclesfield are only four points and three places behind Farnborough, who are expected, freeze-permitting, at Adams Park on Monday night (ko 7.30pm).

Only promoted back into the Conference this season, Farnborough have enjoyed a marvellous campaign to date, holding First Division West Ham United for all but the last two minutes of two absorbing FA Cup third round ties.

"They are an excellent side, as good as anyone in the Conference," said O'Neill. "They like to play it, and their efforts against

West Ham were sensational. I think they've done the Vauxhall Conference proud.

"They're a team capable of winning the Trophy. They might think they're dropping too many silly points to put in a strong title fight, but they're capable of beating anyone — they've already beaten Colchester."

Robert Thorpe scored the game's only goal on the last occasion Farnborough played at Wycombe, at Loakes Park in April 1990 — this writer's first game reporting on the Blues. The sides drew 1-1 four days later, Carroll scoring.

Should next Saturday's Trophy date with Woking end decisively, Blues then visit Cheltenham on Tuesday, February 4.