TALKING SOCCER

ALAN PARRY

Advance held up by council obstruction

LONG before my commentating career began, as a scruffy kid in the back streets of Liverpool, I fell in love with football. The first "proper" game I saw was at my local club, South Liverpool, and I used to climb through a hole in the roof of the stand to avoid paying.

My affection for non-League football has continued to this day and, though there are no holes in the roof of my new local club, I still get in without paying — this time through the directors' entrance!

Back in the Seventies, I became involved with Wycombe Wanderers, a famous name in the days of amateur football, when crowds of 10,000 would regularly pack their old Loakes Park ground with its sloping pitch.

outside the game. Many of them would not be interested in risking a professional contract with a hard-up club in the Fourth Division.

Conference clubs have enjoyed outstanding success in the FA Cup — Altrincham, Telford, Yeovil, Sutton and, more recently, Farnborough. Those promoted to the League — Scarborough, Maidstone and Barnet, have all done well, and when Lincoln and Darlington were relegated from the Fourth Division to the Conference, they bounced back stronger than ever.

When the Football League is restructured after the formation of the Premier League, more Conference clubs should be invited to join the set-up. Wycombe Wanderers would be a won-

JIMMY WHITE'S miserable season teetered on the brink of collapse last night, but he clawed his way back from 4-2 down to defeat a determined Doug Mountjoy 5-4 and reach the quarter-finals of the Benson and Hedges Masters at Wembley.

Much to the delight of his adoring London faithful, White escaped from a 43-0 deficit in the seventh, but had a wayward pink to the middle by his Welsh opponent to thank for his salvation.

White, a 1-8 favourite, responded with a fighting 67 and, as Mountjoy's resolve finally began to crack, at last began to justify his World No 3 ranking.

Mountjoy, whose own campaign had been so improverished that he had threatened to quit snooker after winning only two matches, had rattled in breaks of 89, 66 and 82 to leave White reeling.

But White, who had been rueing his decision to cut almost an inch of his cue, rediscovered his fighting spirit and produced a match-winning 54 in the decider.

Ken Doherty, who survived six rounds of a satellite event to reach Wembley, continued to do it the hard way when he [illegible] Mountjoy 5-4. 37-68, 67-

Championship in Glasgow Doherty rediscovered the touch that makes him one o the game's most precociou talents.

A break of 87 in the seventh frame brought the forme world amateur champior from Dublin back into the match and he duly kept hi head to earn a joust wit world champion John Parot tomorrow night.

Doherty compiled seve runs of more than 30 to illumi nate a scrappy encounter.

"I thought 'Oh, no, here w go again'," sighed the relieved Irishman after wards. "But that break gav me the confidence to win the match."

Alain Robidoux, Canada' leading player, "stole" tw frames as he inflicted a 5- defeat on world No 5 Gar Wilkinson, who can fee aggrieved that he did not hol a 3-1 interval lead.

Robidoux took the fourt frame after trailing 69-0 an then added to Wilkinson' woe by claiming the fifth fro a 49-5 deficit.

BENSON AND HEDGES MASTE
(Wembley) — **2nd rd: K Doherty** (Ireland) bt A Jones 5-4: 73-65, 37-71, 46-62, 67-2 39-58, 38-54, 87-11, 78-32, 65-43; **A Robidoux** (Canada) bt G Wilkinson 5-2: 76-33, 134, 36-62, 71-69, 68-49, 93-5, 78-35, Whyte bt D Mountjoy 5-4: 37-68, 67-