

Cousins looks on the mend

A LEAN-LOOKING Jason Cousins was at Northwich on Saturday to give Blues extra reason to celebrate — the highly-rated full back could be playing again within a week.

Fears that the full back could be out of action for eight weeks have been dispelled following tests. Cousins spent last week in Hillingdon Hospital, and lost half a stone in weight but his infection is not appendicitis.

"They think it might be a urinal infection," said Cousins. "The lads have done great today, especially on a kazi of a pitch like that. I thought Stapes was man of the match."

"This result has picked me up. I'm looking to get fit for the Bath game."

Sunday's visit to Bath for the third round of the FA Trophy marks the beginning of Andy Kerr's two-match suspension, as the big defender has passed 21 disciplinary points. Martin O'Neill has borrowed centre half Jon Muttock from Oxford United on a month's loan. The 20-year-old defender, who has tasted League action, was substitute at Northwich.

Tonight Blues aim to complete the job of reaching the Bob Lord Trophy Final by beating Yeovil in the second leg of the semi final at Adams Park (ko 7.45pm). The sides drew 0-0 last Tuesday night.

Kim Casey (cup tied) and Simon Hutchinson, starting his three-match suspension, are unavailable.

The game provides Wycombe with the chance to obliterate the memory of two years ago when late goals in both legs of the Bob Lord semi final enabled Yeovil to go on and win the trophy.

Wallace and Robbie Carroll scored in the last five minutes at Huish Park to manage a first-leg lead, and then Yeovil recovered from two Dave Carroll goals at Loakes Park to take the game into extra time with a last-minute goal by Mickey Spencer. Wycombe's 3-2 win on the night saw Yeovil progress on the away-goal ruling as Martin Lambert was sent off. Tonight's game will be decided by extra time or penalties if necessary.

Blues should certainly be in a positive frame of mind after Saturday's battling win at Northwich. Goalscorer Kim Casey said: "This could be the bit of luck for the club and hopefully we'll get into the final on Tuesday which would set us up for the most important cup game of the season at Bath."

Casey's provider was Mark West, who said: "It was mainly a case of working hard to get the result. We mucked up for two weeks, but now we're still in it. If we win three of our four games in hand, we're top."

Playing with three strikers meant extra hard work for some of the Blues players, and Steve Guppy said: "This is the first time I've done a job for the team for a while. This is a great result this afternoon. You couldn't run with the ball on that surface, so we just had to stick in there and grind out a result."

Called up for the England semi-professional squad last week, Guppy said: "I haven't been playing well at the moment. It was a nice surprise to get the call-up. I'm just glad to be involved — it's the best news I've had for a while. But I'm not thinking any further than that — I just want to get playing well again."

IN THE BLUE CORNER

IF anyone has seen John Reardon's track-suit top, could they put the assistant manager out of his misery. JR was left chasing cryptic messages at the team's hotel on Friday night, promised his coat would be returned to him if he met an 11pm rendezvous at the phone box. The promise was, cruelly, not fulfilled.

A message pinned to the dressing-room wall before tonight's game with Yeovil may or may not lead Reardon to his missing clothing.

● **MARK West and Kim Casey shrugged off the title of 'daddy' to team up and create Saturday's winning goal.**

With the team obliged to travel to Northwich on Friday and stay overnight, the fatherly duo enjoyed their first good night's sleep for some time away from their young ones. West junior is 14 months old, Casey the younger just five months.

"I didn't know what was going on when I woke up and it was light," said West.

● **BIG Alex Norman** was given a taste of what it's like to be a star with Wycombe Wanderers when he joined the squad for the trip to Northwich.

The youth team centre forward, 17 last Friday, received a Saturday morning phone call, supposedly from this newspaper's Wanderers reporter, wanting the full expose on his career to date.

You know the sort of thing: favourite colour, parents' names, pets. When Alex replied his cat was called Smartie, however, the fake reporter, a certain Glyn Creaser, misheard. He thought Alex had named his pet after Martin, the team manager, and had to cover the phone to silence his laughter.

Ever been wound up?

● **VICTORY last Saturday presumably means Pete Lansley will be allowed to cover the FA Trophy game at Bath. Up until the Northwich game, his away record reporting on Blues read four defeats, one draw for this season. If Sunday's game is drawn the replay will be at Adams Park next Tuesday.**

● **THE reserves are at home to Brentford tomorrow night (ko 7.30pm).**

Straight

by
**Chris
Cowley**

talking



Soccer bosses do sweet FA

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Martin O'Neill faces a charge issued by the Football Association over an after-match run-in with a referee.

What could Mr O'Neill have done to warrant such action by the FA?

It must have been really really serious. After all, the FA would not take any action when Brentford's John Uzzell had his face pulverised by a Torquay United player, in what was a truly horrific incident.

Let's face it, the FA is such a petty-minded, pathetic organisation that all it would take is a few choice words by a manager against one of its officials, and some blonde bimbo is told to type up the disciplinary action letter.

At the end of the day, the FA will bend over backwards to help one of its own, but players can end up disfigured for life — and gets Sweet FA in support.