

Players' views

The disappointment was written on their faces

BLUES players spoke of their heartache after failing to win the Conference title.

Keith Ryan said: "I feel absolutely gutted. Ninety four points — to get second place is a bit of a nightmare," he groaned.

"I think it's sad two aren't going up — if that is the case — and I think they should make an exception because two teams have proved themselves to be so much better than the rest of the league."

Dave Carroll said: "Deep down the boys are very upset. We half expected it. It's asking a lot for Barrow to get a point up there, but you'd think we'd lost 4-0 in the chang-



Gutted: Keith Ryan

ing room after the game. It was that bad.

"We couldn't do much more really. We've done all we can. It's a terrible way to lose out but that's the way the rules are, so what can you do?"

Disappointment was on the face of Jason Cousins. "I'm totally gutted. I can't explain it. We did the best we could, and 94 points is brilliant. But we still haven't done enough to go up. I'm just choked. I shed a few tears earlier," he said.

Cousins' one-year contract is among those now expired. But the defender added: "It would be great to stay here. I've never been involved in a championship side. To come so close and lose on goal difference, it's just a choker.

"I never want to go through this again. I don't think anyone does, so we're going to be so determined next year. I think we'll have won it by April next year."

Players' views

"I'm very disappointed about the outcome. Any team that gets 94 points — I don't think there are any words to describe how you feel not winning the league. It's disgraceful really."

Gary Smith

"It's a marathon and the lads who didn't play at the end of the season, but who played at the start of the season, deserve as much credit as anyone."

Matt Crossley

Fans' view

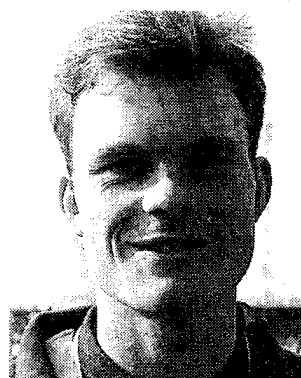
BOB Officer, 33, of Colville Road, High Wycombe, said: "I thought the season went very well. We played away well. Any other year we would have won it.

"I'm just sad it should be sorted out on goal difference. I don't think the rule should be changed. If it had been the other way round we would not have complained. I think we would have been better ambassadors for the sport than Colchester."

Jill Parnaby, 44, of Slough Lane, Saunderton, said: "I am just gutted they have not gone up. Martin spent a lot of money on good players. He has been a terrific manager. I hope we can keep him."

Players' view

Scorers have the last word



Keith Scott

WANDERERS' terrific run-in to the end of the season when they won 12 out of their final 14 games was boosted by a surge in goalscoring form from their front men.

Top scorer Keith Scott was left collecting his winnings after finishing the season with 20 goals, including 15 in his last 16 league games. He said he felt: "Very emotional at full time. We just hoped Barrow could do well but they didn't.

"In all honesty, the support this year has been superb but I would like to say this. Some bloke when we played Bath away wrote in to Dear Sport and gave me and Westy a lot of abuse. To that man I say 'oh ye of little faith'."

Dennis Greene, who came on as substitute against Witton to score his 11th Blues goal since signing less than three months ago said: "I'd like to thank all the supporters for making me player of the month — thank you."

Greene's injury allowed Casey to come in and score four goals in the last four matches. Casey said: "I always reckon I should be in the team — if any player doesn't, he shouldn't be in the squad."