

Parry bemoans armchair fans' loss of live soccer

By PETE LANSLEY

ITV COMMENTATOR Alan Parry was served a dish full of disappointment this week following the news that live Premier League soccer will be screened by BBC and Sky for the next five years.

The Wycombe Wanderers director, still smarting from Blues' failure to clinch a Football League place, quipped: "I need some good news this week!"

Parry is one of ITV's main two soccer commentators and worked on an increasing proportion of the live Sunday afternoon games last season.

He is working on the European Championships in Sweden this summer.

From next season, England's top domestic teams will only be seen live on television on satellite, as Sky broadcast entire matches on Sundays and Mondays. The return of Match of the Day will allow BBC to show highlights on Saturday nights.

The Premier Division clubs will each receive £1.5 million a season in the £304 million deal. BBC also have the rights to screen England's home matches and the FA Cup competition for a further year.



Alan Parry

the Football League and continue with the Rumbelows Cup.

"It's a bad news day for ITV," said Parry. "I can understand the clubs accepting the deal — financially, it's phenomenal. But it's bad news for supporters without a dish."

Parry, who has a satellite dish attached to his Maidenhead home, said: "It's nothing against BSkyB — I think they give a terrific service."

He added: "I just think it's a shame that live football will be taken away from the average fan."

Wanderers manager Martin O'Neill has been working as a co-commentator for the satellite television company this season.

Parry is contracted to commentate on ITV soccer until the end of this year, and has a further year of covering athletics after that. He will continue to work with Central Television as the ITV regions pick up coverage of