

Hopeful Blues lose bid for league place

THE door into the Football League has shut on Wycombe Wanderers after Colchester United's ground proposals were accepted.

Colchester will compete in the new Football League Division Three next season, after they proved on Friday they could afford to upgrade their ground.

Now the League clubs, meeting for their annual general meeting in London this Friday, will rubber-stamp the decision to promote Colchester.

The Promote Wycombe Campaign, championed by Midweek and the Bucks Free Press, fell short of persuading league officials to grant Wanderers the place vacated by Aldershot, who went bust during last season.

A Football League spokesman said: "Colchester United have met fully all the criteria for membership and will be accepted into the Football League at the annual general meeting in London on June 5."

Wanderers' director Alan Parry pointed out how strong Blues' hopes had been in filling the vacancy left by Aldershot's demise. "At least we now know the picture. It's been a difficult few weeks — it's felt like a lifetime."

Midweek editor Tim Blott said he did not consider the campaign wasted, adding: "I'm very grateful to all the people who took part. I'm very sorry the Football League didn't take that into account when they made their decision. Time will tell who was right."

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COMMENT

We shall overcome

WELL, it has finally happened. The Football League in its infinite wisdom has turned its back on Wycombe Wanderers.

To be fair, it was an extremely thin chance that the league would reject Colchester, although how the league can say that it is fully satisfied with Colchester's financial commitment remains to be seen.

We didn't want to admit defeat until the last minute and although we have failed, at least we tried to get the league to change its mind.

The Promote Wycombe Campaign showed Wycombe in its best spirit. Thousands wrote in to us expressing support. The Post Office even sent off one of its men at a minute's warning to Lytham St Anne's to deliver some of the cards and letters.

There was a marvellous feeling of togetherness as we tried to overcome the indifference and obstinacy of the Football League.

Looking back, it is clear that the league never had any intention of changing its decision of not replacing Aldershot.

It seems the league is content to stick to the tried and trusted path that has forced so many of its clubs into bankruptcy and pushed the First Division into a league of its own.

Well, so be it. Wycombe Wanderers are big enough to rise above the petty wrangles of officialdom and next season will get into the Football League on its own merits.

You can't keep a good team down. Wycombe will come bouncing back and, hopefully, manager Martin O'Neill will be at the helm.

Come on you Blues.