

O'Neill depressed by Wanderers' latest false dawn

WANDERERS boss Martin O'Neill revealed his disillusionment this week as the League pulled the plug on the second instalment of the Promote Wycombe Campaign.

Hopes had been high at last weekend's Conference Annual General Meeting that if troubled Maidstone folded Wycombe would gain entry into the League.

But this proved a false dawn on Monday as the grim truth emerged

— a second League club would also need to fold, by June 25, for Wycombe to clinch promotion.

Now Blues' promotion hopes are virtually extinct. A mystery backer has earned Maidstone a late reprieve while Northampton, another club hovering on the debt precipice, are in the hands of administrators who aim to ensure the club start their League programme next season.

O'Neill, who this week confirmed he will stay at Adams Park for

another year, was present at the Conference's AGM in Brighton and the uncertainty surrounding Wycombe's future has extracted its emotional toll.

“For the first time on Friday and Saturday I actually built my hopes up,” he said.

Conference chairman Bill King told the meeting he had been asked by the League the latest date by

which Wycombe could be promoted. This helped to fuel the idea that Wycombe were on standby to replace Maidstone.

“I am possibly more disappointed now,” said O'Neill. “I had my hopes built up over the weekend and was led to believe we would get into the League. It's more disappointing than it ever was before.”

The sequel to the Promote Wycombe Campaign has meant Blues' plans for next season are on hold.

“Probably, when we start back pre-season, I will be totally into it. At the moment, I'm in bit of a limbo,” continued O'Neill.

But O'Neill's decision to stay with Wycombe was a timely boost this week. “I have never had a contract. It is just an agreement to stay on for a year and see how we get on. I just hope it works out,” he told the Bucks Free Press.

Getting Wycombe promoted is O'Neill's main aim next season. “Obviously we want to go up, badly, very badly.”

By NICK GOODMAN