

Wycombe resist West loan proposal

WYCOMBE have rebuffed a move by Kidderminster Harriers to take striker Mark West on loan.

West's potency is indelibly stamped in the memory of Harriers manager Graham Allner after the striker's winning goal deprived the Midlands side of the FA Trophy in the final two years ago.

But with West back in contention for a place in Wycombe's starting line-up for tomorrow's Trophy First-Round game with Cheltenham, Wycombe manager Martin O'Neill said: "We need Westy."

O'Neill, who has been without the services of regular centre forward Kim Casey, out with a dislocated shoulder, for five weeks, said that West had asked to go on loan last month.

"He thought that he had not been getting a look-in and that he would need sharpening up if he was going to be used here at some stage."

But O'Neill, with his squad reduced by Paul Buckle's return to Brentford, rejected Allner's inquiry for West.

"We may need West more than we think we do," said O'Neill. "He's got a chance of playing in the game on Saturday."

O'Neill hoped to speak to Brentford manager Phil Holder this week about midfielder Buckle, who spent December with Wycombe on loan.

The Second Division club want Wanderers to pay an unspecified sum of money for Buckle, who played in the Blues' FA Cup replay at West Bromwich Albion.

O'Neill is considering asking to take Buckle on another month's loan, although he has not yet dis-

**Report by
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cussed it with the left back.

Buckle's full-time terms could hinder a more permanent deal. "I was paying his full wages here at the time. With the possibility of our games being off, I don't want to abuse my playing budget. Thompson being sent off might affect my thinking a bit."

Wanderers survived the dismissal of Steve Thompson last Saturday to earn a point at Welling.

"People tend to forget that five of our last six league games have been away from home," said O'Neill.

"I would class Alan Parry as a realist in terms of football matches. Even he was saying that his expectation of us now is incredibly high. Whereas he might have thought at ten to five last Saturday that we had dropped two points, at a quarter to six, he'd come round to thinking a point was not too bad at Welling, who raised their own game by 40 per cent on the previous week at Redbridge — and I know because I was there."

"That's what we're up against. People will attempt to pull out more against us and that's why 52 points from 23 games is simply fantastic. We've scored 60 goals, and easily missed another 60. There's not another team in the Conference who continually make so many chances."

Thompson's three-match suspension starts with the match at home to Northwich a week on Saturday, and also includes the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup tie at Flackwell Heath on January 19.

West Brom police did us proud

IN OFF THE POST

Dear Sport,

I COULD not help but comment after reading Claire Nash's report, in the BFP dated December 24, concerning the charge likely to be made by Thames Valley Police compared with West Midlands Police charges, for the policing of the two recent Wycombe Wanderers FA Cup ties.

In the case of the latter constabulary, I think their handling of the traffic problems in The Hawthorns area was exemplary.

As our coach arrived at the ground from the Walsall area, our driver halted to inquire from one of the many motor cycle patrol policemen on duty of the best way to the stand where we were to sit.

He was immediately told we were at the wrong end of the ground for entrance. Without hesitation, the policeman got us to turn round, despite the congested traffic in the area, and led us over two miles around the roads circling the ground, in the meantime getting his colleagues at all junctions to halt their traffic streams to give us an uninterrupted passage to Dartmouth Road, where we parked right opposite a little-used entry to the ground in time for kick off.

To our surprise, we were escorted to join a Wycombe convoy with 16 other coaches at the end of the match to give us an unhindered passage to the M40 lead roads.

However can Thames Valley Police justify a higher charge for their duties at Adams Park, as only one road leads away from the ground. West Midlands Force had surely more policing to deal with and so we bid a very fond goodbye to West Bromwich in view of this courtesy granted to us.

**Ernest A Rivett
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