

'My boys are good enough for me'

'THEY are not good enough for England but they are certainly good enough for me'.

So says defiant Rebels boss David Kemp whose side prepares to do the Conference double over Northwich Victoria at home tomorrow and at Farnborough on Tuesday.

Kemp was expressing his contempt at the confirmation of an England semi-professional side to face Wales next month which did

● Slough soccer by Bryce Martin

not include a single player from second-placed Slough.

Leaders Wycombe and third-placed Dagenham have five each in the 16-strong England outfit.

And this includes former Slough midfielder Steve Thompson who was overlooked when he was a Rebel.

"It is as though we do not exist," scoffed Kemp who had another chance to have a good look at some of the candidates at Adams Park on Tuesday night.

He said: "If you offered me any of the Dagenham selections for nothing I would not swap them for my players."

Kemp was equally scathing about England manager Tony Jennings' choice when replacing Wycombe's sixth choice, Dave Carroll with a striker from the basement club.

He said: "When Jennings discovered Carroll was a Scot, he got David Moss from

Boston as a replacement.

"Does he owe us money or something? Why won't he show his face at Slough?"

Kemp took the matter as an insult, one that goes back to his days as a player at Slough in the mid 70s.

He could have become the first Rebel semi-pro to win a cap, though the likes of Roger Day, Alf Darcy, Ian Wolstenholme, Ray Hill, Tony Amos and Keith Mead won amateur caps in Tommy Lawrence's day in the early 70s.

You have to go back to 1921 and Alec Grant to find another.

He said: "I was good enough to go on to play professional football at Crystal Palace, but never got a look in for a place in the England side."

But Kemp wasn't alone.

Terry Reardon, John Delaney and Denis Edwards all followed the path before Tommo from Slough to Wycombe before being

deemed worthy of international honours. One thing is for sure, Jennings has only stoked up the fire under Slough which threatens to devour the Vics and the Boro' to make its point.

Kemp adds new signing Brian Lee to the squad while Steve Scott progressed through a full 90 minutes in the reserves on Tuesday night and could make the bench.

Otherwise Kemp is sticking with the side which won at Bromsgrove on Saturday.

It will be tough. New manager John Williams has introduced stability and discipline since replacing Sammy McIlroy in November.

Vics have a superb away record, despite sacrificing a 1-0 lead to lose at Kettering last Saturday.

They like to stretch defences so Darren Anderson's continued stewardship in the absence of skipper Les Briley will be paramount.

Kemp has been employing a 4-3-3 to great effect himself

recently, so with two attacking sides which like to show off footballing skills there should be some drama.

The Rebels face Farnborough on Tuesday provided Boro are not involved in an FA Trophy replay.

EVERY time someone wants to write Paul McKinnon off, the Rebel striker confounds the pundits with a purple patch.

He struck the winner at Bromsgrove on Saturday after scoring the third and making the equaliser at Dagenham four days earlier.

McKinnon also had a hand in the first goal against Stalybridge at Wexham Park two weeks ago and scored in the 1-1 draw with Bath four days before that.

That's an impressive spell from the 34-year-old sheet metal worker who had not been on the scoresheet in the previous seven outings.

This had some saying, again, that he was over the hill.

He admitted: "I know I haven't been scoring as many goals as when I was younger.

"That does knock the confidence a bit."

McKinnon may have lost some of the sharpness which made him a feared front-runner with Sutton, then in their Conference hey-day.

His reputation then earned him a four spells in Sweden between 1980 and 1988 playing with Malmo, Teg and Orebro.

And there was and a short flirtation in 1986-87 with Blackburn Rovers for whom he played six first team games under first Bobby Saxton and then Don Mackay.

But every striker knows that time does not stand still, and fears the time it begins to run out, sometimes at an alarming rate.

He said: "I told myself that every season after I was 30 would be a bonus.

"And I started this season not even knowing if there would be a place in

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the Slough side for me. That did not help.

"Then there was a danger that things might fall apart after we went out of the FA Trophy at Sutton."

That was a particular blow for McKinnon, not only going out to his old club, but scuppering possibly his last chance of a trip to Wembley.

He said: "I was really looking forward to a good run in that competition, but it was not to be."

But while the club followed with disappointing results against Bath and Stalybridge after controlling both games, McKinnon's own silver lining began to shine through.

He confided: "It always nice to be among the goals at any time, but its extra special to get a winner."

Now he believes that there could still be a sweet surprise at the end of the season, despite the more-or-less universal assumption that Wycombe will win the Conference title.

He said: "The first thing all the Slough players want to know is the Wycombe result."

"The media — maybe even Wycombe players — seem to believe the championship is all signed and sealed.

"Now we are really concentrating hard on the league. With us having to meet them twice, there is still everything to play for."

McKinnon, who spoke in the local lingo when interviewed on Scandinavian TV during his stays, refused to divulge the Swedish for "Up yours, Wycombe!"