

By MARK RACE

BIG-hearted Wycombe Wanderers have rewarded fan Thomas Morrison for cheering them on at Wembley the day after he was diagnosed as having cancer.

Club chairman Ivor Beeks rallied his troops after hearing of Thomas's plight and arranged for every player to sign a souvenir programme which was presented to him by his family.

And to cap off the get-well-soon treatment, Thomas, of Shelley Road, High Wycombe, is

recovering in a room in Wycombe General Hospital which overlooks the club's old home at Loakes Park.

Thomas was determined to make the trip to Wembley, which he had not visited since the 1948 Olympics, despite being told he would have to go into hospital the following Monday.

His son, Paul, asked Mr Beeks to arrange the surprise after bumping into him at Adams Park.

Mr Beeks had bought a strip of land from Thomas years before and still remembered him. He asked the players to sign the programme before they jetted off to Greece for a team holiday.

Paul said: "He went to the Olympics in 1948 and this was his first visit to the stadium since then and, despite his obvious pain, there was nothing going to stop him seeing Wycombe Wanderers win the cup.

"He was really chuffed with the programme. He couldn't believe the players would do this."

He added that his father has responded well to treatment and is now back on his feet.



Road to recovery:
Thomas Morrison

West set for contract discussions

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Mark West is uncertain whether to accept his club's offer to extend his stay for a further season.

The 27-year-old who has just completed his testimonial season, is awaiting talks with his manager Martin O'Neill over the terms of his new contract.

"I have not signed anything yet. I am waiting to talk to Martin. Until then I do not what I will be doing," he said this week.

But West, who struggled to find a regular place in Wanderers' line-up last season, believes it is unlikely he will be asked to go full time.

His testimonial match is Wycombe's pre-season friendly against Portsmouth. Wanderers secretary John Goldsworthy said fixture congestion robbed West of his tribute game last season.

"I'm just glad they have got one for me," said West. "Portsmouth are a good club, it should be a good game."

Blues boss O'Neill, meanwhile, spent Friday discussing new contracts with some of his players.

Forward Ty Gooden, who has also struggled to breakthrough to the first team, has not had his contract renewed. He joined the club following a blazing performance in a pre-season friendly against West Ham two years ago.

● WANDERERS' fixture list for their first season in Division Three is not due to be released until the beginning of July.

● BLUES' match-day programme will be 25 per cent larger next season, but its price will stay at £1.20.

Northern Ireland view 'was racist'

I APPRECIATE that Chris Cowley's column is meant to be Straight Talking but I thought that his May 18 remark that "Mr O'Neill's relations ... are off their rockers - for staying put in Northern Ireland" was insensitive to say the least.

Not everyone can afford, or wishes, to leave the country of his or her birth. To suggest that Martin O'Neill's relatives are mad betrays a racist little Englander view of a suffering people.

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