



OUT OF THE BLUES

DEAN JONES reports on Wycombe Wanderers' league campaign

STRIKER Keith Scott says it was like a cup tie.

Wycombe Wanderers, newly promoted from the GM Vauxhall Conference, opened their account in the Endsleigh Football League with a 2-2 draw at Carlisle United on Saturday.

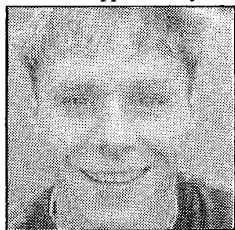
It was an historic occasion for the Blues and was watched by a crowd of 7,752, Division 3's biggest crowd of the day.

That was what Scott probably meant by a cup tie atmosphere. Perhaps he should have said a baptism of fire.

"It was a bit hectic," Scott told the Blues' club-call line. "It was more like a cup tie. I thought we played well. But we got a result which was the main thing."

It could arguably have been better. "I thought we could hold on at 2-1, but it was not to be."

But the 2,000 Blues' fans who made the 600-mile trip to Cumbria cannot be disappointed by the



● **Scorer, Steve Guppy**

outcome. Having fallen behind to a goal from former England youth international Rod Thomas, Wycombe equalised through an own goal from Chris Curran just before the break.

Wycombe looked on the way to an historic first victory when Steve Guppy put them ahead in the 76th minute, but Curran made amends for his earlier mistake when he levelled the scores six minutes later.

After the drama of securing their first point in the Football League, they were due to travel to Leyton Orient in the Coca-Cola Cup first round, first leg on Tuesday.

Attractive as the match was, it is unlikely to rival their first league match at home against Chester City at Adams Park this coming Saturday.

As one of the promotion favourites, Blues would be expected to win against a side that is struggling to find its form.

Chester, relegated from Division 2 last season, suffered their eighth successive defeat in the league (including last season) on Saturday when they were beaten 1-0 by Doncaster Rovers.

But Wycombe should not let complacency creep in. They should remember that Chester possess a goal poacher extraordinaire in Stuart Rimmer, the former Walsall striker. Wycombe should be on their guard.

Blues start learning curve

WHAT THEY SAID

Manager Martin O'Neill: "It was very hard professional football played at a higher pace.

However, it is the first game of the season. I was expecting people to be tired. But generally I think we carried ourselves OK."

Goalkeeper Paul Hyde: "The atmosphere was unbelievable. There was a lot of will to win on both sides. It must have looked very fast for the supporters.

"It is always disappointing to draw if you are in front with just 15 minutes to go. We should have been strong enough to win."

Striker Keith Scott: "It was fast, very hectic. But this is what we have got to expect.

"I thought we did well to draw 2-2, although I would have liked to have scored."

Midfielder Steve Guppy on his goal: "I went wide to Dave Carroll's cross. He drilled one in low. Tim almost got to it. But it came to me and I just buried it.

"We were right on top in the second half. Our goal was definitely on the cards.

"But we had put so much effort into getting the goal that we lost some of our defensive play when we took a breather, and then they got their goal."

Result:- Carlisle United (1) 2
Wycombe Wanderers (1) 2

Attendance:- 7,752
(the best of the day in Division 3)

Referee:- Mr. G. Cain

Weather Conditions:- Dry, cloudy, light wind, mild

Carlisle Line-Up:

M.Day, B.Burgess, T.Gallimore, S.Holden, C.Curran, D.Edmondson, R.Thomas, S.Reddish (I.Arnold 73 mins), G.Oghani, S.Davey (Captain), C.Fairweather.

Subs (not used) - T.Craig (GK), J.Joyce

Wycombe Line-Up:

P.Hyde, J.Cousins (Captain), D.Horton (T.Langford 51 mins), A.Kerr, M.Crossley, K.Ryan, D.Carroll, S.Stapleton, S.Thompson, K.Scott, S.Guppy (S.Hutchinson 89 mins).

Sub (not used) - C.Moussaddik (GK)

(Wycombe wore the Green and White Strip, with Green Shorts)

Bookings:

Carlisle - Reddish (37 mins) - foul, Oghani (45 mins) - dissent.

Wycombe - Horton (50 mins) - foul,

Kerr (90) - kicking the ball away.

Goals:- Carlisle 19 mins - a through ball from Gallimore to Oghani on the left flank, whose cross was converted from close range by Thomas. **82 mins** - a cross into the box by Arnold, a back heel by Thomas, and a first time finish by Curran low inside Hyde's right-hand post.

Wycombe 40 mins - a header by Scott from a left side Carroll corner bounced off the crossbar, and was turned over the line by the kneeling Curran (o.g.). **76 mins** - Carroll's inch perfect cross from the right was turned in by Guppy at the far post.

Match Summary

A splendid performance in our Football League baptism, full of character and determination, in front of a bumper crowd at Brunton Park. The Cumbrians put us under pressure from the outset - Oghani headed wide (3rd min), then Hyde saved splendidly from a Fairweather glancing header (14 mins). As the first half progressed we began to enjoy more possession and following a cleverly taken Cousins free kick (35 mins), Guppy was

only foiled by Day's legs. We did however enjoy a let-off just before the interval when, with Crossley wrong-footed, Reddish's effort agonizingly missed the target.

Our best period was the first 20 minutes of the second half. With Stapleton reverting to left back and Thompson to midfield, substitute Langford's pace caused problems for the home defence. We deserved the lead but Curran's equaliser (this time for his own side!) sparked off a late rally by the home side. Overall, a draw was probably the fair result.

Editor's Wycombe Player of the Day - Dave Carroll.

The players and officials of the club would like to thank the Wycombe Contingent of over 1,500 for their tremendous support last Saturday. Thanks also to Carlisle United for their hospitality on the day.