



W.W.F.C.

**OUT
OF
THE
BLUES**

DUNCAN FARMER reports on Wycombe Wanderers' first home league

"OUR first ever home game in the football league is something that we've all been dreaming of for many years and it's a great thrill now that it's finally arrived," wrote Wycombe Wanderers' director and ITV commentator Alan Parry in Saturday's programme.

With 108 years of non league emotion bottled up inside the fans' hearts Adams Park was all set for an explosion of pride and passion.

In the event impartial spectators with their eyes closed could have been forgiven for thinking they were, at best at a village cricket match, or, at worst, 200 miles away at Chester City's Deva Stadium.

Alan Parry's "great thrill" turned out to be just an ordinary Saturday afternoon at Adams Park.

The historical significance of the occasion, and a home win to take them sixth in the league, seemed lost on a full house crowd



□ **Scorer, Keith Scott**

whose presence on the terraces and stands was enough to spur their side on, but whose polite applause made their numbers seem that much smaller.

The roar from the two hundred or so visiting City fans, even after they went behind to a Keith Scott goal in the ninth minute, should surely have shamed the Blues fans into vocal action.

On the field Wycombe displayed perfect professionalism capped by an outstanding performance by Steve Guppy who, after 90 minutes, applauded the fans a little more than they deserved.

Manager Martin O'Neill was the only man in Wycombe on Saturday who was prepared to show some emotion and in between rubbing his knees and thighs in fits of nervous energy and grinding countless Opal Fruits to a pulp he was off his bench remonstrating with the referee, linesmen and each of his chosen 11.

At half time in the vice president's lounge where tea and shortcake biscuits were the order of the day for the Blues' most genteel supporters, talk was of Woosnam, Rocca and the English Open golf tournament being shown on television.

Where was the passion that twice took Wycombe to Wembley and brought them back FA Trophy winners and helped them win the GM Vauxhall Conference last season?

If the Wanderers are to pick up any honours this season they will need it.

We were greeted by lovely weather for last Saturday's trip to Wycombe Wanderers as City became the first visiting side to play in a football league game on the ground. Wanderers officials told us of their strong commercial activities, there's a full copy of the club shop catalogue in the programme and raffle ticket sellers everywhere, boom time in Buckinghamshire. Long queues for admission to the home enclosures 90 minutes before the game and a nice reminder for the fans of the club's previous home with the gates from Loaker Park incorporated in the car park. The view from the small away enclosure in the corner was rather restricted until we were allowed into the next enclosure as well - much better. The fourth official is well looked after he has his own covered seat in between the main benches! The new boys took the field in their famous blue quartered shirts but City were first to settle and Stuart Rimmer did appear to be upended by Andy Kerr on 8 minutes when right through but referee Mike Bailey waved play on and within a minute Wycombe were ahead. When Steve Guppy played a lofted ball Keith Scott looked a couple of yards offside, to all City fans! but took advantage to strike a crisp shot as Billy Stewart advanced and though the 'keeper parried the ball it bounced in. We had so much of the play but just couldn't find the equaliser, the closest being Mark Leonard's second half effort charged down when it looked goalbound. The digital clock on the floodlight pylon appeared to quicken (time flies when we're losing) and the Wycombe fans - a sporting crowd throughout greeted their heroes first Football League win with a standing ovation. Just one booking in the game - City's Mark Came. We took 2 supporters coaches but disappointingly 20 people failed to show and had denied a few others the chance to travel. It is common courtesy to advise the travel organisers before the day of the game if a booking is to be cancelled. Over 300 City fans in total including many of our friends from the Southern Branch, provided the side with encouraging support.

Wanderers praised by Rothmans



Alex Ferguson (left) and Alan Parry with their awards

WYCOMBE Wanderers director Alan Parry received a special award on the club's behalf from the publishers of the Rothmans Football Yearbook 1993/94.

The ITV sports commentator was presented with a cap at the recent ceremony at Selfridges Hotel. The award marks Wycombe's contribution to football by securing last season's promotion-seeking and FA Trophy-winning non-League double.

He was congratulated at the presentation by Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson, who also received a commemorative cap for his side's Premier League championship win.