

CHRISTMAS festivities have almost been forsaken completely by Wycombe's players as they focus firmly on a crucial programme of four League games in eight days.

Martin O'Neill's training preparations were upset yesterday when a reserve team Capital League fixture against Colchester was postponed due to a water-logged pitch at Layer Road.

He had hoped to see Simon Stapleton in his first competitive match for more than three months since rupturing ankle ligaments.

The Wycombe boss also wanted to watch trialist Paul Shepstone, on-loan Darren Rogers and Andy Kerr as he tries to get his whole squad up to scratch for their assault on the 12 points up for grabs.

"Obviously this match was vital. We are training today and will continue training right up until we leave for Torquay on Sunday," said O'Neill, who added that he did not plan on training on Christmas Day itself.

Wycombe's yuletide campaign

starts at Torquay on Monday (ko 3pm), followed by Tuesday's match against Rochdale at Adams Park (ko 3pm).

The New Year matches are at Walsall on January 1 and at home to Hereford on Monday, January 3 (ko 3pm).

O'Neill meets up with former Notts County team-mate Don O'Riordan at Torquay.

Player/manager

O'Riordan's young side has been inconsistent after a strong start to the season and

● MARTIN O'Neill has confirmed that he is discussing a potential £100,000 deal with Watford for Roger Willis, a 6ft 1in tall 26-year-old striker.

"The value I have been given is not a million miles away from that," said O'Neill, who has kept tabs on Willis since the player was on-loan at Boston three seasons ago.

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By CLAIRE NASH

currently sit mid-table.

They only narrowly escaped relegation last term. Former Notts County manager Neil Warnock steered them to safety and later brought in O'Riordan.

Torquay have stronger away form, but remained unbeaten at home until Saturday's 1-0 defeat by Walsall.

Goals have dried up lately

with strikers Mark Sale, at 6ft 5in a fair match for Blues' Terry Evans, and leading scorer Adrian Foster struggling to find the net.

Their greatest humiliation was being knocked out of the FA Cup second round by Sutton earlier this month.

Blues midfielder Hakan Hayrettin spent a month on-loan at Torquay before joining Wycombe from Barnet.

"We have had them watched a number of times and do

know how they play. It will be basically down to us," said O'Neill.

The match against Rochdale will also pose a stern test. The Dale stormed to the top of Division Three early on but slipped up.

"They are still in a very good position. They fancy themselves very strongly," said O'Neill. "They very wisely moved a match to the Sunday so they have a day's rest."