

Pond pitch puts off game

THE decision to cancel Wycombe's Division Three home game against Rochdale on Tuesday due to a waterlogged pitch may have benefited the Blues.

Having faced a hard, physical battle at Torquay just 24 hours earlier may have meant some tired legs turning out in blue shirts.

But as Martin O'Neill pointed out, Rochdale may have benefited too.

"They had players suspended, but they would have been fresher than us, particularly with their game on Sunday having been called off, too."

FIXTURES

Kick off 3pm unless stated
NEW YEAR'S DAY

Division Three

● Walsall v Wycombe Wanderers
Diadora League Premier

● Aylesbury United v Marlow
(11.30am)

● Hitchin Town v Chesham United

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY

Division Three

● Wycombe Wanderers v Hereford United

Diadora League Premier

● Chesham United v St Albans City (noon)

TUESDAY

Diadora League Premier

● Marlow v Basingstoke (7.30pm)

Injured groundsman toils in vain



Seven-hour effort: Jim Gardner

WYCOMBE Wanderers groundsman Jim Gardner spent seven hours trying to make a frozen pitch playable – with two broken wrists in plaster.

But his labours were in vain when the referee decided two hours before kick-off that Tuesday's Division Three game against Rochdale at Adams Park could not go ahead as the pitch was waterlogged.

Jim, who started work at 5.45am, said: "We did not go through the motions just for the sake of it. We did what we could to ensure the game went ahead. After the referee called it off, there was nothing we could do."

The avid Blues fan broke his wrists when he fell up a flight of steps leading to the stands the week before Christmas.

Jim's sons Steven and Barry and other volunteers cleared snow off covers on a third of the pitch. They then dug fork holes for the melting snow to sink in on the remainder. But moisture came up to make it even wetter.



Around 6,000 people were due to attend the match. It has cost the club £4,000-£5,000 in lost revenue.

Wanderers secretary John Goldsworthy said: "Jim takes it as a hazard of his job. He did what he could within the limitations."

"Everyone worked very hard."

● Full story: Sport Fourth Section, Page 24