

FIVE pre-season friendlies, just two goals, no wins and three defeats is hardly the sort of statistics to worry Wycombe manager Martin O'Neill with.

He said after the Wanderers lost 2-1 to Chelsea on Wednesday: "I've spent 100 years as a player and five minutes as a manager and I hate pre-season friendlies. I'm glad they're over. Saturday against Cambridge is when the real business starts."

The Blues boss looked far more relaxed than after the Leicester defeat, when news of Steve Guppy's departure was still fresh in the mind.

Looking ahead to tomorrow's opener against a Cambridge side unlucky not

to beat English champions Manchester United on Tuesday, O'Neill declared: "I think we are just about ready. You may not have seen that from the way we played tonight, and certainly not by the way we played against Leicester, but I think we are just about ready."

"I have got in mind the 14 or 15 players I have great confidence in and they will all play. The players I do not have great confidence in - well, there are still a few question marks hanging over them."

O'Neill believes opponents will not be too worried about playing Wycombe at the start of the season, feeling there is not too much to fear.

He hopes to have changed that philosophy by the end of September.

Wycombe's chances of being promoted for the third season in succession are hampered by the league structure more than anything else.

Only the champions are automatically promoted and the next four teams play off for just one extra promotion place. At the opposite end of the table, five teams are relegated.

It is a year when Wycombe will need their supporters. Martin said: "We might need the fans here more than even they think this season, especially during touchy periods."

So to 3pm tomorrow (Saturday). Let the battle commence...