

Blues' blood needs refuelling

CHOPPY waters have heightened Wycombe Wanderers manager Martin O'Neill's quest for new blood to bolster his side for the rigours of Division Two football.

The Blues boss is well aware of what weaknesses he needs to iron out in his side in order to support the stalwart contributions of players such as Simon Garner, Cyrille Regis and skipper Terry Evans.

O'Neill was given a reminder during Tuesday's 2-1 defeat at the hands of Hull City at Adams Park. He was reminded again afterwards, when some fans' shouted 'rubbish, rubbish' and 'get some players' as he walked off the pitch.

"We definitely need some players," O'Neill said afterwards. "We need first team players from other clubs who will be willing to maybe give up clubs even better than Wycombe to come here and give us a hand. Hopefully we will do that very, very shortly."

Garner and Regis, 34 and 36 respectively, were almost carrying a lone standard between them during Tuesday's game. Their sharp-shooting double act secured last Saturday's 4-3 victory over Brentford – a win which was not assured until the latter stages.

The Hull defeat was Blues' first at home this term, but it highlighted the gremlins that continually threaten to undermine

them, even in games they win.

Blues' central midfield is where their weak link lies. Simon Stapleton was dropped on Tuesday. On-loan Andy Turner restored some width on the left wing.

Keith Ryan, one of Wycombe's most consistent stars last season, was substituted for the first time in more than a year. The latter's endeavour is not in doubt but he has been struggling under immense pressure.

O'Neill has not decided whether he wants to sign Turner from Spurs. But he said the Premiership club has asked for an inflated fee. It has been rumoured to be £300,000. The Wycombe manager would not deny the figure, but said that such a price would be out of his buying range.

There is an outside chance that O'Neill may have a new player by Saturday's match at high-flying Crewe. Blues' opponents suffered their second successive defeat this week which knocked them off the top of the table after a run of five wins.

"They, like us, are not finding it plain sailing," said O'Neill.

■ Leagueline winners: £400, Mr M Moss, 352, Maidenhead; £25, Mr D Foster, 591, High Wycombe, and £25, Mrs M Stanmore, 1008, High Wycombe. The 50/50 Matchday Draw winners were: Jason Avis, from Windsor, £502.25, and Geoff Collins, from Thame, £441.50.