

Bell boy chimes in tune for Blues

Martin O'Neill's latest recruit Mickey Bell put in a stirring debut performance for Wycombe Wanderers in their 3-1 win at Peterborough on Saturday. DAVID CLOUGH caught up with the Geordie lad

NORTHAMPTON Town's loss is very much Wycombe's gain, if Mickey Bell's first outing for Martin O'Neill is any yardstick of the 22-year-old's potential.

Bell is intent on proving first impressions are accurate too.

The ambitious youngster spelled out his hopes as a Wycombe player, stressing how much he enjoyed Saturday's game.

"It was really good. I wanted to play for Wycombe, and it lived up to my expectations," he said this week.

"I was really excited all through the game. I was hoping to play well and get a result. I didn't want to start off on a loser, and there was no chance of that, the way we played."

"It was a big day. I was nervous and excited at the same time," he remembered, adding he thought he played reasonably well for his first game, but still wants to do better in future.

Bell, who came south to Northampton straight from school, has spent six seasons at the unfashionable Midlands club - O'Neill's hunting ground for another Wycombe regular Steve Brown.

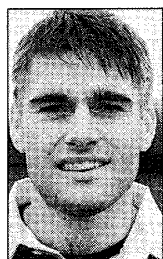
The two players forged a good friendship at the County Ground,

and Bell is pleased to be back with his old mate in new surroundings.

Bell, due to get married to girlfriend Jane next year, sees Wycombe as an important new stage to his life and career.

"I want to establish myself in the side. Hopefully I will get a few good performances behind me. I wouldn't mind a few goals and getting some good crosses in too."

There shouldn't be too many distractions for him during the football season, although the only child from the north east has always enjoyed all sports.



Mickey Bell

He was especially keen on playing a bit of cricket during his school days when he spear-headed the attack as a fast bowler.

There's only one attack he is bothered about now, though.

It wears blue, not white, and he has an important job making sure it scores a few goals between now and the start of the cricket season.

Passing of a 'giant' player

FOOTBALL: Ronald "Dick" Cox, one of the last surviving members of Wycombe's 1931 Amateur Cup winning team, died last week.

Cox, 84, helped Blues beat Hayes at Highbury, in one of the most momentous successes in their non-League history.

His funeral was held yesterday at Amersham Crematorium.

Former Wanderers' goalkeeper Reg Williams, who played with left back Cox from 1936, paid tribute to his team-mate, remembering: "He was five feet nothing, but he was a giant. He had a great character and determination. A terrier who would give anything for Wycombe Wanderers - a wonderful bloke."

Bluey for a pound

FOOTBALL: Wycombe Wanderers' mascot Bluey has the team's next home fixture, against York City on October 29, as his Bonanza Day.

The 7ft swan will don his Blues shirt and give away 50 official Wycombe Wanderers footballs as well as other gifts to mark the day when a place on the terraces will cost only £1 for anyone under 16.

■ Tickets for this year's Leagueline debate featuring Martin O'Neill and Terry Evans will go sale on October 29. They cost £3. Admission is free for members.