

Beeks: 'I want to be in Premiership'

BIG-TIME TEST FOR NEW BOSS

WYCOMBE Wanderers' new manager will be made of the right stuff to take the club into the Premiership, vows chairman Ivor Beeks.

"There are enough candidates who have the ability to get us where we want to be. Where I want to be is in the Premiership as soon as possible," said Beeks, who began interviewing candidates when he returned from his holiday three days earlier than expected last Wednesday.

Former Crystal Palace manager Alan Smith has emerged as the people's favourite for the Adams Park hotseat. Beeks and his fellow directors remain tightlipped in revealing their shortlist, although the national press have jumped on the Smith bandwagon.

By CLAIRE NASH

Beeks has dismissed rumours that the club have already got their man and are just going through the motions of shortlisting candidates and holding interviews. "I dispute that totally. I have not yet made a decision," said the Blues chairman.

Confident

Interviews are due to be completed by Wednesday night, with Wycombe confident of being able to announce Martin O'Neill's successor on Thursday.

"It's basically a matter of tying up loose ends. And I cannot predict whether the person we offer the job to accepts or does not accept," said Beeks.

He underlined the optimism at Wycombe.

"It's a very exciting period. The person we pick, I believe, will be the right person for the club."

Beeks is eager to have the new manager installed soon in order to settle in before pre-season training starts on Wednesday, July 5.

"I would like him to have as long a period as possible to be here before our first pre-season friendly," he said.

Wycombe's friendlies start on July 20 at Poole.

Martin O'Neill, meanwhile, cleared his desk at Adams Park on Friday to complete an amicable split from Wycombe.

"Martin was excellent. We couldn't have picked anyone better," said Beeks in farewell.