

## Blues ready for the off

THE Blues will kick off the new season with an early derby game.

Wycombe Wanderers face first division Reading in the opening round of the Coca Cola Cup.

The first leg will be at Reading on August 20

with the return at Adams Park on September 3.

The Wanderers first game of the season is an away league match against Shrewsbury Town on August 17.

Fans who cannot wait that long to see their

team in action could try "Stand By the Blues" a video reviewing last season's efforts.

The video is available through the Wanderers In Town shop and includes interviews with Alan Smith and chairman Ivor Beeks.

## Mann on Friday

# Forget Gazza and Shearer, we've got Shrewsbury and

**E**VEN in our finest footballing hour, I couldn't help but feel a bit depressed about English soccer.

For there was a terrible irony afoot locally the day England thumped the Dutch 4-1.

On that very same day, the Bucks Free Press Midweek published Wycombe Wanderers' fixtures for 1996/97.

It was a sobering thought that, while I watched Shearer, Gazza and Bergkamp in action on TV, Wycombe were planning to start next season with an away game at Shrewsbury.

How depressing to think that the next knockout competition after Euro 96 will be the Coca-Cola Cup when Wycombe take on Reading.

England are now preparing for their next match on the sacred turf of Wembley

against the Spaniards. But that's nothing compared to Wycombe who are readying themselves for their next home game in Sands against Gillingham.

You see, my fear is that the fabulous international football this summer will lead to increased, and impossible to fulfil, expectations about our domestic game.

I have watched Wycombe in action too often to expect anything more than the hit-and-hope stuff that drove their fans to

distraction at the end of last season.

Will their loyal supporters be able to stomach any more of this mediocrity next campaign after watching the mesmerising talents of the cream of Europe?

I fear crowds may dwindle even further if the Blues do not get off to a rip-roaring start, unless of course their manager Alan Smith can sign Jurgen Klinsmann.

And if that's all not depressing enough, then do not forget to mark the date of

## Gillingham

Tuesday, December 3 in your diary. That is the night that will bring the charming and friendly supporters of Millwall FC to High Wycombe for the first-ever league meeting between the clubs.

What a shame that I am going to be away on holiday that evening. I haven't yet picked my location. But even Shrewsbury, Gillingham and Reading will appear exotic compared to Wycombe on that particular night.

— Charles Mann —