

Stapleton signs for the Rebels

McDermott beats off rivals

SLOUGH Town manager Brian McDermott has managed to fight off a host of other interested parties to capture Wycombe Wanderers midfielder star Simon Stapleton.

EXCLUSIVE by Bryce Martin

Stapleton, who was given a free transfer after eight seasons in which he made some 280 appearances with the Blues and scored 27 goals, signed for the Rebels on Tuesday.

McDermott was close to nailing the deal two weeks ago, but Northampton Town appeared to have scotched that with a late bid.

Other parties interested in the 27-year-old who started out with Portsmouth and Bristol Rovers include League sides Barnet, Fulham, Lincoln City and Conference outfits Woking and Kidderminster.

But to McDermott's pleasant surprise, Stapleton this week came down in favour of Slough Town.

McDermott admitted: "I thought I had lost him. Simon's decision can only reflect well on the club. I saw him play six times last season and spoke to David Kemp at Wycombe about him. He said he thought a lot of clubs would be after him and he was right.

"Simon's decision to come to Slough speaks for itself. The number of other clubs interested in him make him a player in demand.

"But I think our other signings have persuaded him that Slough Town is a club where he has a future."

CONTINUED from the back

"The most pleasing about all this is that, in common with the other players we have signed, other clubs wanted him, but we got him."

Stapleton's arrival brings the industrious McDermott close to completing his squad.

He has addressed all areas – attack, midfield and defence – but is continuing his search.

"We are not quite finished yet," said McDermott who is soon hoping to be able to confirm the signing of ex-Derby County midfielder Gary Micklewhite.

With Gary Abbott, Gary Blackford, Danny Bolt and Paul Wilkerson already in the can, the Rebels line-up looks, on paper at least, the strongest ever since they joined the Conference.

McDermott will put his theories to the test at Chertsey on Tuesday evening when the Rebels undertake their first pre-season friendly.

"We will go out and play a general shape and use the game as a fitness exercise," said McDermott. "We will use a few players, swap around

and see how we blend."

■ SLOUGH Town will not be running a youth side next season following the decision of the Allied Counties League to add six more teams.

"The club feels that the extra burden on the pitch would be damaging," said first team manager Brian McDermott. "I am quite happy for the players in last season's side to play reserve team football in the Suburban League."

Around half of last year's U18 side did in fact make regular appearances for Slough Reserves last year and McDermott named four – among his potential first team squad.

McDermott also confirmed this week the appointment of former Burnham boss Kevin Hill as Reserve team manager with Brian Burke returning to Slough as his assistant.