

Bad luck haunts Blues hero Ryan

KEITH Ryan's injury hell has begun all over again with the Wycombe Wanderers midfielder ruled out of action for a minimum of six months.

Ryan survived just seven minutes of last Friday's friendly against Queens Park Rangers at Adams Park before being stretchered off with the same injury, but to his other knee, that put him out of action for a year, two seasons ago.

The midfielder's left cruciate knee ligament ripped in an otherwise inconsequential clash with QPR's Rufus Brevett.

QPR's player-manager Ray Wilkins was one of the first to comfort the stricken player but it quickly became clear Ryan was in serious trouble.

He was stretchered off with the applause of both home and away fans ringing in his ears. He will not now reappear on the Adams Park stage this side of Christmas.

Afterwards, Blues boss Alan Smith said: "I am gutted for him. That was the biggest disappointment of the night."



Down: Ray Wilkins tends to stricken Ryan

By Sharon Walter

That the injury is a setback to Smith's plans is an understatement. The Wycombe manager had just weeks earlier persuaded the midfielder to agree a new two-year contract with Wanderers. Ryan had turned down a chance to play with Martin O'Neill's Leicester City in the Premiership, believing he had a better chance of first-team football with Wycombe.

The disappointed midfielder is almost lost for words at his unbelievable bad luck.

He said: "I am very disappointed and gutted. I just don't know what to say."

"I was pleased to sign again. I was looking forward to a good season, playing a lot of games and getting Wycombe in the promotion hunt. I'm bitterly disappointed."

Ryan saw the surgeon on Tuesday to determine the damage to his knee. He is now expected to undergo an operation in three weeks' time after the fluid around his knee has settled.

"At the moment all I can do is keep my muscles as strong as I can. After the operation it's six days rest and then I carry on with the rehabilitation. I know what it's all about."

Sadly for Ryan he does. The injury is a bitter blow for Smith who had plans for the midfielder after he had appeared to have made a full recovery from his previous injury, returning towards the end of last season.

Smith is clearly despondent about the situation.

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Out: Keith Ryan is set to miss the first half of Wycombe's season