

Howard looks forward to meeting old friends

FORMER Adams Park favourite Terry Howard gets the chance to say hello and wave goodbye to Blues fans when Wycombe visit his new club Woking for a pre-season friendly tomorrow.

Howard arrived at Kingfield last month after being released by Wycombe at the end of last season. He was swiftly joined by Simon Garner, one of Wanderers' most treasured characters, who was also given a free transfer by Alan Smith. Blues midfielder

By Claire Nash

Steve Thompson, who joined Woking at the start of last season, is also set to be involved.

Howard is looking forward to the clash after his unhappy departure from Adams Park. "It will be nice to see the fans and some of the players to say hello and goodbye.

"The match will be poignant

for me because I got on well with them but obviously I didn't get on well enough with the manager," said the central defender in reference to his lack of popularity with Smith.

Howard, however, is enjoying pre-season preparations with the Vauxhall Conference outfit who invariably gave Wycombe a few problems before Blues joined the Football League three years ago.

"I'm getting on with a new chapter in my life now. I would

obviously rather have stayed at Wycombe but I always try to look for the best in every situation.

"They're a good bunch of lads at Woking and it reminds me of what it was like at Wycombe when I first joined the club."

■ Blues' next friendly is against Premiership survivors Southampton at Adams Park on Tuesday (ko 7.45pm). The Saints, who Wycombe beat 2-1 in a friendly last year, are now managed by Graham Souness.

O'Neill drops in

FOOTBALL: Former Wycombe Wanderers boss Martin O'Neill visited Adams Park for the first time since his departure more than a year ago when he was in the crowd for last Friday's match against Queens Park Rangers.

The Leicester City manager's appearance and generosity pleasantly surprised Bob Officer, chairman of the Wycombe Wanderers Independent Supporters Club.

O'Neill stopped his car beside Officer who was selling copies of the supporters club magazine outside the Adams Park gates.

Officer said: "I didn't realise who it was until he rolled down the window and asked for a copy of our magazine.

"I told him there was no charge, he's done enough for us already, but he insisted on paying for it."

■ Wycombe are holding an open day at Adams Park on Sunday, starting at noon.

It is a free event with attractions that include a chance to meet the players and management. There will be a football exhibition by Blues' youth team, a fashion show and a chance to look around the venue.

Visitors will also be able to view work on the £2 million new Woodlands stand.

■ Chesham United entertain near neighbours Watford at Meadow Park tonight (ko 7.15pm).

Fate plays cruel hand for Ryan

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He said: "It's happened and we have to make sure he's looked after.

"We have done everything here to try and get him right. It's just fate."

With Ryan insisting that he does not have any particular problem with his knees that would make him susceptible to this type of injury, fate has really played a cruel hand.

The 26-year-old said: "If that was the case I would have been injured years back. Before the last injury I played for two years without missing any football. It's just bad luck."

The injury certainly has not helped Smith with his team selections.

Already on the look out for another striker to give Miquel Desouza and John Williams a little more competition up front, he now faces six months without Ryan's strengths in midfield.

■ Defender Terry Evans missed Friday's game with a groin strain injury. He is expected to make tomorrow's line-up at Woking.