

Smith denies interest in City job

ALAN Smith has said he is committed to Wycombe Wanderers after being linked with the vacant manager's job at Manchester City.

With the recent departure of Alan Ball from the recently relegated Division One club, Smith was being tipped by national newspapers last week as a possible successor.

Ray Wilkins, who appeared in Wanderers in their league match against Luton, was also in the list of possibles compiled by the national media.

But Smith said this week that his mind is only on matters at Wycombe Wanderers.

"At the moment I need to concentrate my efforts on doing what I am doing for Wycombe Wanderers.

"I've got a job to do here. My only priority is to win at Peterborough on Saturday.

"I've got to start to win a few games here. I'm not thinking of anything else apart from this football club at the moment."

Smith signed a two-year contract with Wycombe which runs out at the end of this season.

Blues chairman Ivor Becks recently backed Smith, saying he believed he had the right person for the job.

Blues back to reality

REPORT

By Sharon Walter

WYCOMBE Wanderers boss Alan Smith resumed the difficult task of finding a new striker for the Blues after their inability to put the ball away saw them go out of the Coca-Cola Cup to Premiership big guns Nottingham Forest on Tuesday night.

Smith and his men were brought back down to earth and the more immediate task of lifting themselves off the second-from-bottom spot in Division Two when their cup run came to an end in the second round of the competition.

Their exit was a bitter disappointment, though, with Wanderers always looking capable of causing an upset at Adams Park.

They very quickly reduced the first-leg advantage that Forest had gained with Bryan Roy's stunning goal at the City Ground last Wednesday.

Blues defender Paul McCarthy levelled matters after 38 minutes on Tuesday night when he headed over the reach of Forest's Mark Crossley from Jason Cousins' ball into the area.

But after David Farrell hit the post in the second half and Matt Lawrence's outside shot, heading for the top right hand corner, was athletically tipped around the target by Crossley, it was extra time that decided matters.

Transfer-listed Jason Lee's strike at the far post following Ian Woan's long diagonal ball 12 minutes into extra time eventually ended Wanderers' hopes of reaching the third round.

With the away goal in extra time counting as two in the competition it would have taken a near miracle for Blues to recover.

Afterwards Smith pinpointed Lawrence's strike as the moment the game turned for the Division Two club.

"I think that the turning point was the save their goalkeeper made up in the right-hand corner. Once the keeper made that save the whole tide really turned.

"I think that's the difference between us. In our division those are goals but in the Premier Division they save them.

"I thought we played well and deserved more. It's been a good night for this football club."

With little to choose between the two sides in the contest, which was later aired on ITV's Carlton Sports programme, Smith added that his players really should be asking themselves how they could play like they did against the Premiership club and still be where they are in the league.