

UNITED IN GRIEF

Sporting programme put on hold as players join national mourning

SATURDAY'S sporting programme looks set to be wiped out as sport pays its respects to Princess Diana whose funeral takes place on the same day.

Wycombe Wanderers' eagerly awaited derby at Watford on Saturday looks likely to be postponed – but tonight's match at home to Southend does go ahead. Both teams will wear black armbands and a minute's silence will be observed.

Blues boss John Gregory who lives in Windsor and went to see the floral tributes in his home town on the day of the Princess' death, thinks it is right to play on tonight.

He said: "The whole country is in mourning. But life must go on and I would imagine that we all need something to cheer us up."

But Saturday's fixtures look set to be called off to give players and supporters a chance to pay their respects.

High Wycombe's rugby match at Berry Hill has been called off along with the entire opening-day programme in the High Wycombe and District Football League.

Wycs Rugby Club manager Liz Wooddisse said: "It is the right decision."

Gordon Anning, spokesman for the Wycombe and District Football League, said: "The chairman Tom Hooker felt it was a mark of respect for Diana, Princess of

Wales. We thought it was the best thing to do as we expect a lot of players will want to watch the funeral."

The FA are meeting this afternoon to decide whether to cancel this weekend's programme as a mark of respect. The Icis League is expected to follow the league's lead.

Football League spokesman Chris Hull said: "Whatever decision they come to I am sure it will be the right one."

One option is to postpone all the matches until Sunday.

One fixture to survive is next Tuesday's England Under-21 international between England and Moldova which gets the go-ahead along with the full international at Wembley on the following day.

Players from the High Wycombe Sunday Combination, who begin their campaign on Sunday, are being asked to observe a silence before their games.

Two friendly fixtures went ahead last Sunday, despite the day's tragic events but silences were held at both as a mark of respect.

All Thames Valley Cricket League fixtures are likely to go ahead as planned this coming Saturday.

Division One fixtures secretary Joe Dawson said: "At the moment the position is we will be carrying on as usual."



STEAMING IN: Blues' assistant manager Richard Hill was restrained as tempers flared during Saturday's match against Fulham at Adams Park. The free-for-all occurred after boss John Gregory clashed with Fulham's Neil Smith as both went to retrieve the ball for a throw in. Report: page 35