

Ryan proves an adequate £150,000 substitute

JOHN Gregory sung the praises of makeshift centre-half Keith Ryan, after Wanderers drew 1-1 at Brentford in front of the live television cameras on Friday.

Gregory chuckled Ryan in as the Blues' third central defender after

being put off signing Bradford's Nicky Mohan by the £150,000 fee.

And although Ryan was at fault for Brentford's equaliser, Gregory was delighted with the way he fitted into his new position.

He said: "I wouldn't say he is the ultimate answer but I thought he had a tremendous game and came out of it with his head held high. He's got a good turn of pace which can get him out of trouble and he's brave. He broke the game up quite well.

"I'm pleased for him after the problems he's had. To be involved at first team level was a distant dream at times for him with all the injuries he's had.

"I thought Stallard was our best player, but Ryan wasn't far behind. You always get total commitment from him. He wants to learn and he wants to be a first team player."

Wanderers got off to a dream start when Stallard put them ahead in the third minute with his sixth of the season after Steve Brown brought the ball out of defence.

But Ryan's error brought Brentford back in it on the half hour. He

lost striker Bob Taylor in the area, giving the Brentford man time and space to control Marcus Bent's cross and slam it home.

Gregory said: "I was very disappointed with their goal. We had to work very hard to score ours' and were then very generous to gift them theirs'. It wasn't even bad marking, there was no marking.

"Keith got a little bit lost and let Taylor go. But in his defence it's a little bit new to him playing in that position."

Wycombe almost regained the lead immediately as Steve McGavin's shot smacked the bar.

But after that flurry of activity the game died, giving Sky who paid Brentford £20,000 and Wycombe £10,000 to screen the clash, poor value for money.

Gregory recognised the point saying: "Coming off the back of two defeats we had to go home with something and we did.

"Too often in the past we've come away and entertained but got nothing out of the match, we can't afford to do that this season.

"It was a resilient performance.

We coped with them quite comfortably but we were lacking a bit of spark throughout the team and we kept the front two isolated. Too often we gave away possession even when we weren't under pressure."

Wing-backs Jason Cousins and on-loan Paul Bodin struggled to join the attack as they were pressed back into defensive service by Brentford's two wingers.

Wanderers could have won had Paul Read not missed two chances.

In a one-on-one with the keeper, he waited for a high ball to come down instead of trying to head the ball over the goalkeeper, and in the second he failed to get enough of his head to McGavin's cross.

Gregory is convinced the goals will come for Read.

He said: "Readie will score goals. I've got no worries about that. Him and Stallard are a good pairing and they do work very hard."

Brentford: Dearden, Hurdle, Anderson, Hutchings, Bates, Townley, Denys (McGhee 85), Oatway, Bent, Rapley, Taylor. Subs not used: Benstead, Canham.

Wycombe: Taylor, Cousins, Bodin, Kavanagh, McCarthy, Ryan, Cornforth (Carroll 66), Read, Stallard, McGavin, Brown. Subs not used: Harkin, Simpson.

Attendance: 3,695

HOW THEY STAND

	HOME					AWAY						
Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Ps
Watford	8	4	0	0	8	3	2	1	1	5	4	19
North'ton	8	3	0	1	4	3	2	2	0	6	2	17
Chest'field	8	3	1	0	7	3	1	2	1	3	3	15
Oldham	8	3	1	0	8	4	0	3	1	4	6	13
Bristol R	8	2	1	1	7	4	1	3	0	2	1	13
Millwall	6	2	0	1	8	4	2	0	1	4	2	12
Bournm'th	8	2	2	0	5	2	1	1	2	5	5	12
Preston	8	3	1	0	6	1	0	2	2	3	5	12
Gillingham	8	2	2	0	6	4	1	1	2	3	5	12
Wycombe	8	2	1	1	7	5	1	1	2	8	10	11
Fulham	8	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	11
Wrexham	7	2	0	1	8	6	1	1	2	7	6	10
Wigan	8	3	1	0	12	5	0	0	4	0	6	10
Blackpool	8	2	1	1	7	7	1	0	3	4	10	10
York	8	2	0	2	5	4	1	1	2	4	7	10
Southend	8	3	1	0	6	2	0	0	4	3	11	10
Brentford	8	2	2	0	6	2	0	1	3	2	9	9
Carlisle	8	1	1	2	3	6	1	1	2	7	7	8
Bristol C	7	2	1	1	6	3	0	1	2	3	5	8
Walsall	8	2	1	1	6	4	0	1	3	2	7	8
Grimsby	8	0	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	5	7	7
Plymouth	8	0	3	1	3	4	0	3	1	4	6	6
Luton	8	1	1	2	4	8	0	2	2	1	3	6
Burnley	8	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	4	1	6	4