

Away days could be key for Blues

Players look for consistent form



Tough task: Neil Smillie and Wayne Turner are now preparing for another tough test in Division Two

Ref: 98-1232AF18a

WYCOMBE'S away form could be the difference between success and failure this season, according to Steve McGavin.

The air was filled with optimism at Adams Park this week as the squad returned to prepare for the new season, but McGavin was quick to point out what he considers could be the key to Wycombe's campaign.

"There's going to be no easy games. I think we have to really get on top at the start," he said.

"We've got to match everyone home and away. The thing that will make us a better side is our away form."

Despite the small squad, and little prospect of much cash for new boss Neil Smillie to splash out on players, some believe this could be Wycombe's year.

McGavin added: "As a team we have started to come of age. We been together for a few years now."

Striker Paul Read echoed the sentiment.

He said: "We have got confidence this year. We want to prove we are a good side. The new signings have had a year to bed in. It does take time. But this could be our year."

Midfielder Steve Brown is itching to get going.

He said: "There's no reason we cannot get off to a good start, which would set us up for the tougher games."

Blues last got an opening day win under their belts in 1994, when they started their Division Two campaign with a 3-0 home win over Cambridge.

Since then they have had

two opening day draws and one defeat, which came last year at Wigan, where they lost 5-2.

● Steve Brown's trip to the FA's national training centre Lilleshall did not quite work out as hoped.

The Wanderers man spent a week at the famous centre hoping to rehabilitate his injured ankle.

But he worked so hard for the first few days he ended up inflaming his ankle and was forced to rest for several days.

Brown admitted: "I spoke to Dave Jones [Wycombe physio] about it and it may have been better if I'd worked on it here."

● Steve McGavin is looking forward to the prospect of the Division Two tussles with newly-promoted Colchester, his former club.

McGavin spent just over a season there before moving to Birmingham City.

He joked: "I'll get a warm welcome like I've always done. They will be good games for both clubs."

And he added: "All credit to them, they did well to get up."

● All 1998/99 season ticket holders have first refusal to purchase seats for each of Wanderers three pre-season friendlies until 5.15pm on Saturday, July 11.

Unsold seats for Crystal Palace on July 15 (7.45pm), Aston Villa on July 28, (7.45pm) and Charlton on August 1 (3pm) will go on general sale from 9.15am on July 13.

● The special projector used by Wanderers bosses to screen World Cup matches at Adams Park will be used by the club on matchdays and for other sporting events once the World Cup is over.

LAST week we incorrectly stated that last season's ticket holders will receive Wanderers' new magazine The Quarterman free. It is in fact the 1998/99 ticket holders who will get the magazine free of charge.