

It's back to basics for young Baird

WANDERERS boss Neil Smillie believes his young prodigy Andy Baird should get his head down and concentrate on football, fearing his head has been turned by transfer talk.

Smillie thinks Baird's head has been turned by all the recent transfer talk about the former youth team player.

Several clubs have expressed interest in the Wanderers front man, but Smillie insists it is just par for the course.

"Andrew is going to be a good player but he's very young and Saturday was only his third start of the professional game.

"There's a lot going on around him and he needs to get his head down and concentrate on what has got him here, his football.

"The same thing happened to Mo Harkin. It happens to all young

Transfer talk has put him in a spin

players," he added.

Last Saturday, Baird was being watched by Blues' former assistant manager Richard Hill, who is now scouting for Derby County.

● Wanderers director Alan Parry expressed concern over Blues' early kick off at Gillingham last Saturday.

The game was moved forward so's not to clash with England's Euro 2000 qualifying game against Bulgaria at Wembley later that day.

Speaking during his commentary for local radio station Eleven Seventy Parry said: "It's a worrying trend. I don't think this is England's

only Saturday game."

● Blues bad boy Paul Emblen, sent off in last Saturday's clash with the Gills, believed his red card was a fair cop.

Emblen said afterwards: "I was very disappointed, but I deserved to go."

● Wanderers' appalling start to the season has earned them some unwanted national press attention in recent weeks.

Last weekend, the Observer focused on Wycombe's record as the only side in the Nationwide League not to have got a win this season.

That came after Tranmere, also previously without a win, got a 2-1 result last Saturday away at Oxford.

Meanwhile, Monday's Daily Mail ran a feature on Smillie's distressing start to management, while his predecessors John Gregory and Martin O'Neill now revel in the

Premiership big time.

And last week the Guardian got in on the act, focusing on Gregory's meteoric rise and Wanderers dramatic slump.

● Wycombe take on Wrexham on Tuesday in a Nationwide Division Two clash at Adams Park (ko 7.45pm).

It's Wanderers' penultimate evening league fixture of the season.

Blues' last scheduled evening kick off is on Tuesday, November 10 when they take on Manchester City.

● Wanderers are producing replica shirts of those worn during their FA Amateur Cup Final victory against Hayes at Highbury in 1931.

The original badge on the shirts has been re-created from old photographs.

The shirts will be available from mid November.

LETTER

Where do we put the blame?

HAVING followed Wycombe Wanderers FC since 1957 when my father took me to see them play Bishop Auckland in the FA Amateur Cup Final at Wembley, I cannot remember a worst start to any

Blues season.

Of course we've had injuries but I'm afraid that's little excuse because opposing teams are not immune. So to excuse Neil Smillie, the manager is the easy way out.

Is it a coincidence since Wayne Turner the assistant manager left in the close season the team's performances have deteriorated?

My main concern is the manager's lack of foresight in reading the game. Against Notts County was a good example.

During the middle of the second period even when the Magpies were pressuring The Blues' defence, Sam Allardyce the county manager thought fit to bring on two fresh pairs of legs while Neil Smillie

thought fit to leave our three subs sitting on the bench fresh and rearing to go.

Perhaps a case of inexperience over experience, and the second time in three games we've given points away in the last minute.

Of course Alan Parry blames all comment outside the club especially the Bucks Free Press who have

given stalwart support to The Wanderers over the years, including the most informative Blues News, sorely missed.

I understand Alan Parry was the main reason we signed John Williams from Coventry City for £100,000, enough said.

David Johnson
Humber Drive, Aylesbury