

Cast-offs bounce back to make their point

LAWRIE Sanchez's cast-offs bounced back from being told they weren't wanted at Adams Park any more by helping Wanderers to a 1-1 draw against arch rivals Colchester.

Clearout victims Guy Whittingham and Roy Essandoh both started the match while fellow cast-offs Matt Brady, George Clegg and Mo Harkin had roles on the bench.

While Harkin admitted he found it difficult to pick himself up from the hammer blow, Essandoh was grateful for the last chance to show visiting scouts what he could do.

He said: "I wanted to play. It gave me another chance to show people what I can do in this division."

And Blues FA Cup hero almost signed off with a winner on an emotional day in front of Blues' biggest league crowd of the season of 7,516.

The teletext kid was sent clear by Dannie Bulman late on but, just as he was about to pull the trigger, United defender Ross Johnson came from nowhere with a tremendous sliding tackle to deny Esso his first League goal.

It was also an emotional



Guy's off: Guy Whittingham during Saturday's last match of the season Ref: 01-1161AF27

day for retiring defender Jamie Bates who wore the captain's armband to mark his farewell.

Bates almost snatched a fairytale winner but his injury time free-kick was touched

around the post by keeper Andy Woodman leaving Wanderers 13th in the table, just one place and two points worse off than last year.

But for much of the match it looked as though Wycombe

were heading for a ninth home league defeat as the game showed up many of the problems which have held them back this season.

They lacked firepower and not for the first time this

season they were only bailed out by the free kick routines they have worked on at their training ground.

Sanchez promised when he joined the club that he would turn them into set piece demons and he has.

Blues' levelled from a set piece as Chris Vinnicombe's long hanging cross was forced in by a combination of Keith Ryan's head and shoulder.

Sanchez said: "The game showed up the problems we've had all season. We can't score. You wonder where goals are coming from. It's lucky we're good at free kicks."

The game also highlighted another of their deficiencies as Steve Brown's enthusiasm again got the better of him and Sanchez ended up substituting him to stop him being sent off.

But, on the plus side, the game also highlighted the tremendous team spirit that has underpinned Wanderers success this season.

Even though they were playing their 63rd game, they refused to lie down even after Scott McGleish breached their defences to score first and Blues looked the most likely winners after their equaliser.