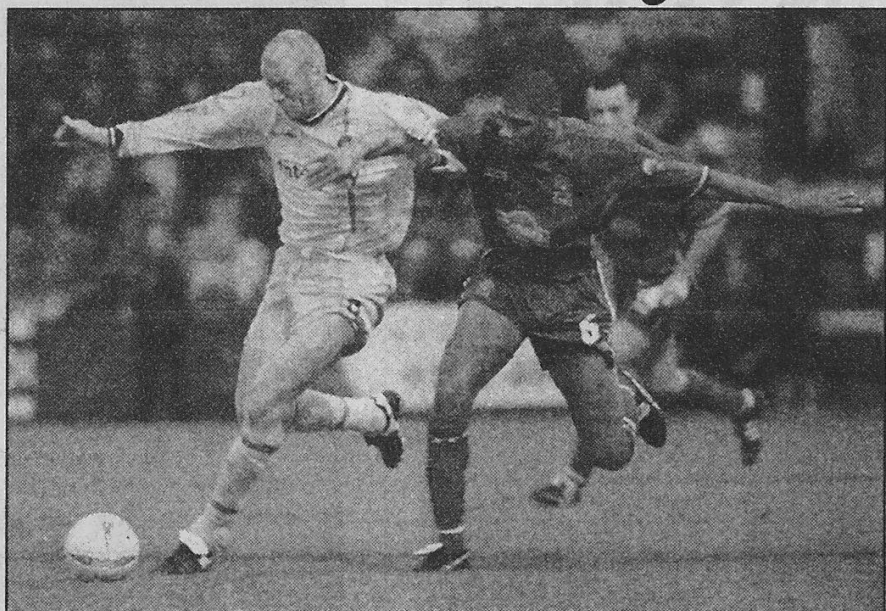


Rhino: Don't write us off yet



Veterans: Keith Ryan and Carlton Palmer at Stockport

WANDERERS' old guard have told boss Lawrie Sanchez they're not over the hill yet.

Veterans Keith Ryan and Steve Brown reacted to the manager's comments about it being time to blood the youngsters after Saturday's 2-1 defeat at Stockport, by coming out fighting.

Ryan, 32, said: "I know the club's got to move on but I'm not ready to make way just yet.

"If I thought I couldn't do it any more, I'd be first to hold my hand up and say so, but I've got a lot more to give."

Ryan, and Brown are among a rash of elder statesmen whose contracts expire in the summer but there will be no contract talks until the summer.

Ryan said: "A lot of us in limbo. I think I am still worthy of my place. I feel as a fresh and as fit as I have done for a number of years and I feel I could play for another couple of years."

It would be ironic if Ryan was forced out at the end of the season because of the club's cash shortage.

He was one of the leading supporters of the club's cost-saving pay-as-you play contracts introduced under

former boss John Gregory.

Meanwhile Brown, 36, has also insisted there is plenty of fuel left in his tank.

He said: "If I thought I couldn't cut it at this level I'd hang up my boots and walk away but I don't feel I'm at that stage."

Sanchez said after Saturday's defeat dropped Blues to 17th in the table: "The older players need to take responsibility and at this moment, I don't think they're doing it.

"We need some younger legs and people without the fear of losing. We're an old team.

"The older players have done excellently for this club, but when you field a team in its mid-thirties against a younger side, your legs can't quite get you to where you want to go.

"That has been our problem this year. We're dependent on our older players but it makes us one-paced and one-dimensional.

"I told the players before the game that the important thing was not to lose the game but we gave two goals away and I'm thinking perhaps if they don't listen and they're going to do that every week, we may as well play the younger kids."