

Age is no barrier as Blues look forward

WANDERERS boss Tony Adams has told the club's new Youth team scholars that if they are good enough they will be thrust into the first team.

The former Arsenal and England captain, who began his Highbury career as a raw 17-year-old, says he will have no hesitation chucking the youngsters in if they come up to scratch.

He said: "I want them coming straight from the youth team into the first team. They're going to progress really quickly."

Adams has already blooded youth teamers Andy Reilly and Mark Philo in the first team this season and Reilly was rewarded with a Scottish U21 cap – and Adams says that is just the start.

He also gave professional debuts to on-loan teenagers Steven Taylor and Luke Moore, who have since gone on this season to play in the first team for their Premiership clubs, Newcastle and Aston Villa.

He said: "I'm saying to kids, 'Don't

join Arsenal, come and play for Wycombe's first team at 17.

"If you're good enough, you'll get picked. I want players up and down the country to know that with Tony Adams, if you're good enough, you can forget about playing for Arsenal reserves for four years and play for Wycombe when you're 17 instead."

Adams showed his commitment to youth in Tuesday's reserve game at Brentford when he blooded new youth team scholars Tom Cadmore and Wesley Douglas, who was snapped up from Charlton, in the side which earned a 0-0 draw at Griffin Park.

And he was delighted with what he saw.

He said: "These boys have got to come through. They're exciting prospects."

But Adams also paid tribute to veteran midfielder Steve Brown, who retires at the end of this season.

Adams played Brown alongside the

kids in the Griffin Park clash and he says it was like having his own youth team coach on the pitch.

He said: "It was brilliant for me to have him playing alongside the kids. He is a credit to his profession. He's technically a very good player, he gives the kids so much encouragement and advice and you can see why he has

played the game for so long."

● Wanderers will officially sign a new four-year contract with youth team sponsors the Walters Group before the kick off against Tranmere on Monday.

The Walters Group have sponsored the youth team for the previous eight seasons and director Chris Walters will sign the new deal on the pitch.

Adams shows his commitment

WORKAHOLIC Tony Adams underlined his commitment to his second division basement dwellers on Tuesday when he chose to watch their reserves rather than watch his old club Arsenal's biggest ever European night.

The gaffer could have left it to reserve team boss Pete Cawley and new youth team chief Gary Smith at Griffin Park and gone to see the Gunners take

on Chelsea instead, but he says there was never a choice.

He said: "I'm not at Arsenal any more. I had plenty of good years there but I'm the manager of Wycombe now and that is all I'm focusing on.

"I've got a big job to do here. I've got to build a club and that's why the Brentford game was the biggest match of the night for me."