

Former Wanderers skipper joins Orient

FORMER Wanderers captain Michael Simpson is looking forward to crossing swords with his old teammates next season after the midfielder joined Leyton Orient this week.

The 30-year-old was released by manager Tony Adams at the end of last season and he agreed a two-year deal with the Londoners on Wednesday.

With Wanderers relegated to what is now called the Coca Cola Football League Two, it means that Simpson's new side will be in direct competition with Adams' men.

Simpson said: "I was at Wycombe for six or seven years and it's nice to have a new challenge. It will be nice to start from scratch."

"The manager, Martin Ling, told me that he wants to be going for promotion. I spoke to him and the chairman and

WANDERERS

they both impressed me."

Simpson knows that both Orient and Wanderers could be in the hunt for promotion when the two teams are scheduled to meet in Wycombe for the penultimate game next season. But he is not worried about the reception he might get.

He said: "It won't be too bad going back.

"I know quite a lot of people there but obviously I'll be playing for Orient."

Simpson joined Wanderers in 1996 and became a virtual ever-present under previous manager Lawrie Sanchez. The season before last he was named player of the year but he was never in favour with Adams and was not surprised that the club let him go.

He said: "I sort of knew when Tony Adams took over that I wouldn't be staying."

Before taking the plunge, Ling checked Simpson's credentials with Sanchez as well as his assistant Terry Gibson and former caretaker manager John Gorman.

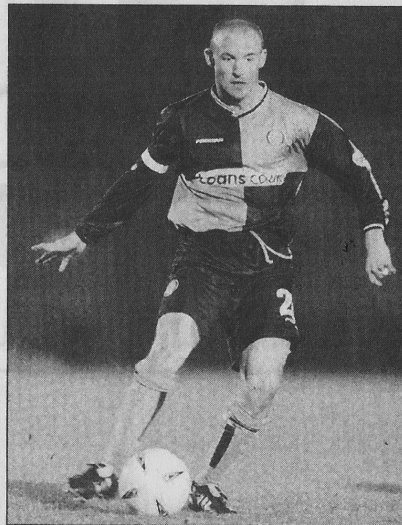
And all three gave glowing reports of the combative midfielder player.

Grimsby Town and Bristol Rovers both expressed an interest in the player before he opted for the Brisbane Road club.

Simpson isn't the only ex-Wycombe player to be on the move this week.

Former defender Ben Townsend has gone from Woking to Farnborough on a one-year deal.

And Matt Warner, who played in the midfield, has joined Team Bath.



Leyton bound: Former Blues captain Michael Simpson has signed a two-year deal with Football League Two side Leyton Orient