

Blues' strikeforce will be deadly duo

PLYMOUTH Argyle fans are tipping Ian Stonebridge to fire Wanderers into the promotion race by forming a deadly partnership with Nathan Tyson.

The former England U18 international arrived on a three-year deal from last season's second division champions for a nominal fee last week and Argyle fans reckon Wanderers have got a bargain.

Mark Havard chairman of the Plymouth Supporters Club said: "It wasn't long ago he was being tipped to break Argyle's all-time transfer record.

"He was banging in goals left, right and centre when he first arrived and was tipped for a big money move to the Premiership.

"Then he got injured and dropped down the pecking order.

"We all thought he would be joining a team in the Premiership, not Wycombe."

Stonebridge will link up with Tyson in a potentially lethal combination of pace intelligence and strength.

Ironically Argyle's ex-boss Paul Sturrock tried to put the pair together at Plymouth before he was headhunted by Southampton.

And Havard reckons Stoney and Tyson could be the dream ticket.

He said: "Tyson scored against us last season. I remember his pace gave us a lot of trouble and with Stonebridge alongside him holding the ball up he'll be even better."

Wycombe have agreed to pay a nominal fee for the 22-year-old, who was Argyle's second-longest-serving player.

Stonebridge made 201 appearances for The Pilgrims, scoring 45 goals,

after being released by Tottenham Hotspur, where he had been a YTS trainee.

Within a month, he won the first of four England under-18 caps, making his debut in a 1-0 defeat by Switzerland at Peterborough United's London Road.

Blues boss Tony Adams is confident he can re-ignite Stoney's career.

He said: "Plymouth ended up playing him on the left side and took him out of his natural position. He did a job for him then, but I don't think Plymouth have seen the best of him there so I've nipped in.

"He was always very high up on my list and I'm pleased to get him.

"Him and Nathan are different players and putting them together excites me.

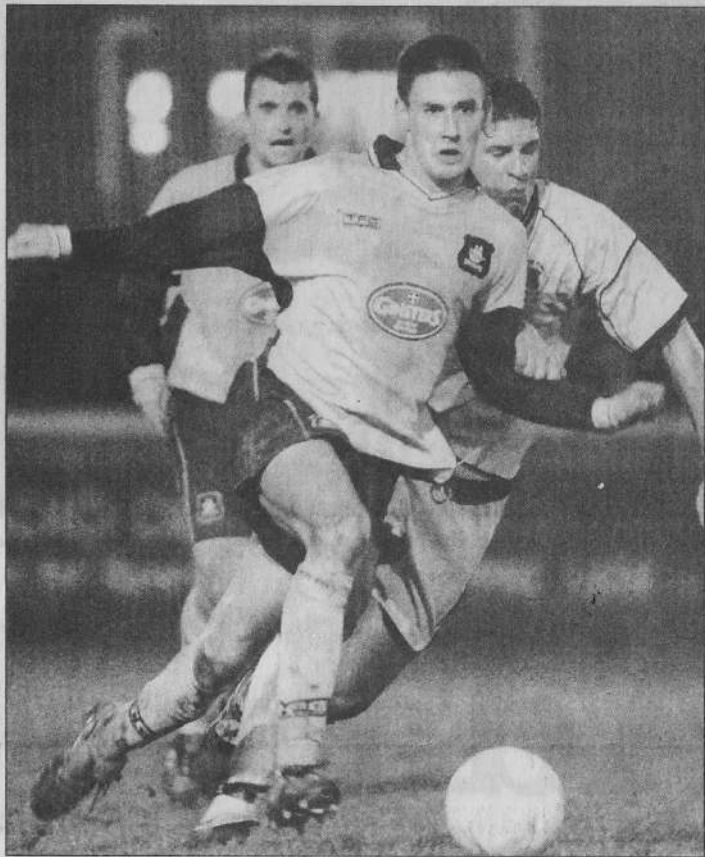
"He [Stonebridge] is going to be very valuable to us. He is not a shed, he's mobile and I like that in a centre forward. I played with a very good one called Alan Smith and this kid reminds me a lot about him."

Stonebridge, who was kept under wraps for Saturday's friendly against Millwall and wasn't risked in the mid-week defeat at Berkhamsted either, can't wait to get going.

He said: "I had a great time at Plymouth but the new manager has brought in players that he knows and it was the right time to move on.

"As soon as I heard that Tony Adams was interested I wanted to come. They had the disappointment of going down last season but overall they are moving in the right direction.

"It's a shame I didn't get the chance to play in the Championship with Argyle but I'm still young and I feel I've got a lot to offer and I hope to get the chance to do that again."



Going forward: New striker Keith Stonebridge in action for Plymouth