

Injury heartbreak for Blues stalwart

Ryan has to decide to quit or play on

KEITH Ryan faces an agonising decision whether to end his playing career after being told he could be out for six months.

Ryan, Blues' only surviving player from the club's non-league days, saw a specialist on Wednesday after sustaining a knee injury in training.

He was given the bad news after undergoing an operation. The 35-year-old player is now deciding whether to continue or hang up his boots.

The joint assistant coach of the Blues only penned a one-year extension to his playing deal in the summer.

He said: "I am going to take my time making my decision. I don't want to put any deadlines on myself.

"It is a real killer for me because I was really excited about this season.

"I don't want to think that I've played my last game for the club.

"I feel as young as I ever have done but sometimes you've got to listen to your body and I don't want to do any permanent damage to myself."

Ryan, who has made 427 appearances for Wycombe, says he will talk to people inside and outside the game before making his decision.

Wanderers by Dave Peters

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He has bounced back from career-threatening knee injuries twice before and – although this one is nowhere near as serious – he has to weigh up whether he wants to go through six months of rehabilitation so that he can feature in the final few months of the season or whether it is time to concentrate solely on his assistant managerial duties.

Ryan, who scored Wanderers' goal in the FA Cup semi-final against Liverpool at Villa Park, is one of Wycombe's most popular players having been part of Martin O'Neill's team which was promoted from the non-league circuit.

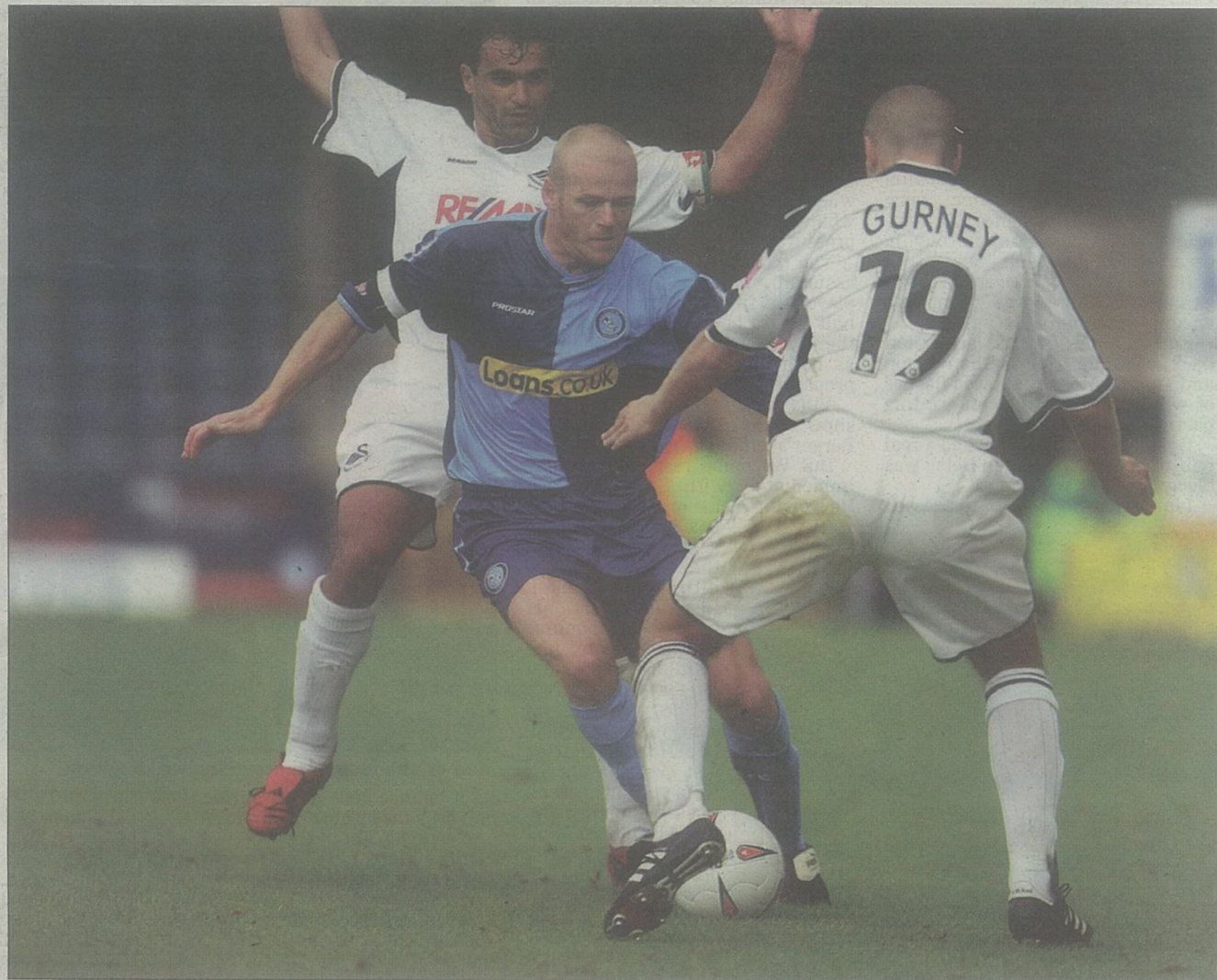
He picked up the cartilage injury changing direction in training.

Ryan said: "I have done the rehabilitation before. That doesn't worry me. But I have to decide what is best for me and what is best for the club."

Manager John Gorman said: "It's bad news.

"Keith will have to take as long as he wants to make his decision.

"It is his decision."



Wanderers hero: Keith Ryan faces one of the biggest decisions of his life after his injury-jinx struck again