

Blues youngster wins his immigration fight

ANDERERS youngster Rashid Kamara has won his battle with immigration officials to stay in this country.

The first year professional was facing a return to his native Sierra Leone after his permission to stay in England ran out in August.

The 17-year-old had not realised his paperwork had run out until Wanderers tried to register him as a first year professional in July and was facing being deported.

He had been staying in the country on a four-year permit but that ran out while the Football League and the Football Association were dealing with his registration.

Wanderers secretary Keith Allen said: "He came to the country as a 13-year-old in August 2001 and had not realised his paperwork had run out. As soon as he realised, he put the wheels in motion to get an extension."

During the three months that the Home Office were investigating his case the ball-playing midfielder was banned from featuring in any organised match at reserve or youth team level.

He continued to train with Wanderers but was only allowed to feature in behind-closed-doors friendlies while immigration officials decided his fate.

And last week he won his case and was given permission to stay in the country indefinitely -

Wanderers by Dave Peters

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leaving him free to concentrate on his dream of carving out a career with Wycombe Wanderers.

He has now put pen-to-paper on a shortened five-month version of the one-year professional contract he was originally offered by Wycombe.

And he was able to take his place on the substitute's bench for Saturday's youth team game against Rushden and Diamonds and is free to play against Tranmere Rovers in their match at home in the third round of the FA Youth Cup at Adams Park on Wednesday.

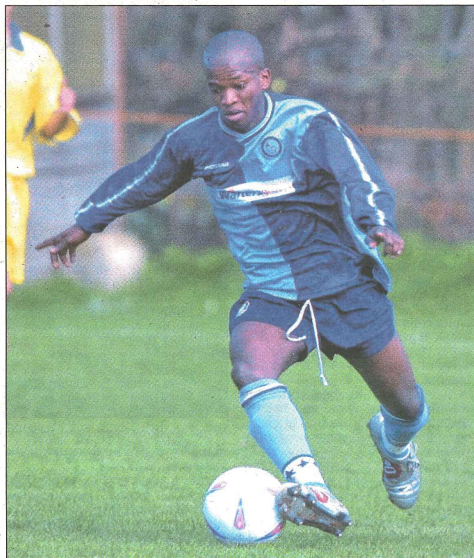
Allen said: "It's been a real test of character for him and he has passed it with flying colours.

"In 33 years as a secretary in senior football this is the first time at any level, I have ever experienced anything like this. It's very unusual."

Wanderers Head of Youth Colin Barnes is delighted at the outcome.

He said: "He's been really strong throughout this. He didn't let it affect him.

"We're delighted he's staying. He was at Arsenal originally and is a decent prospect. He's a hard working lad who wants to develop and hopefully he will do well."



Back in the Blues shirt: Rashid Kamara has won his right to stay