

Triumph and tragedy in the same season



VIEW FROM THE STAND

WITH
RON BARNETT

JUST like love and hate, the feelings of triumph and tragedy are very often close bedfellows.

Early in this new year, that will hopefully bring triumph to Wycombe Wanderers, the club have been hit by tragedy. Mark Philo was a talent just waiting to blossom and his sudden and sad loss has been deeply felt by everyone involved with the club.

Unfortunately, due to a couple of serious injuries Wanderers fans only caught fleeting glimpses of Mark's obvious talents. However, they were there for all to see, albeit all too briefly.

John Gorman, the directors and everyone involved with the club have acted with great compassion and dignity over the last two weeks. The response from the fans has also been tremendous, as witnessed by the numbers who made the emotional trip to Barnet last Saturday.

The official attendance for Wanderers fans was given as 1,423 but, this seemed to be a very 'conservative' figure to me. Judging by the long queues at the turnstiles, the full seated area and the tightly packed terraces.

Top marks to Steve Hayes and other directors for joining the fans on the terraces rather than enjoying the comfort of the directors' box, if such a thing exists at Underhill.

At one stage during the match there was a pleasing exchange between the two sets of fans in the terrace section. In response to the Blues fans singing 'There's only one Mark Philo', the Barnet fans began chanting 'There's only one Kevin Durham'.

Kevin, of course, played for both clubs and sadly died of a heart attack in 1991 just before beginning a new season at Barnet.

On the pitch, Wanderers gave another bright attacking performance but, the lack of a second natural striker cost us two vital points.

Whilst the draw kept us on top of the table, we had more than enough chances to have won the game comfortably and put some daylight between us and the chasing pack.

With Charlie Griffin out for several weeks, we urgently need another striker to support the tireless Tommy Mooney.

Coincidentally the man John Gorman has his eyes on is Jermaine Easter of Stockport, who are our visitors on Saturday. Hopefully before then or very shortly afterwards Easter will have arrived early for Blues fans.

Thankfully Grimsby lost at Stockport in midweek whilst Northampton could only get a draw at Notts County.

If we can beat County tomorrow and then come away from our visit to the Cobblers with all three points on Tuesday, we should have strengthened our position as long-term league leaders.