

BAKER'S BLUES

WITH IAN BAKER

We're back after that win at Rushden

Wycombe's second half performance at Rushden was emphatic to say the least. As soon as Tommy Mooney's first went in, you could see the confidence return to the players.

A team devoid of any energy over the last few weeks played as if they had just sealed a multi-million pound sponsorship deal with Iron Bru. We looked like the Wycombe of earlier this season.

The two youngest players in the side, Matt Bloomfield and Russell Martin, can justifiably be singled out for praise. They maintained their drive and commitment throughout Wycombe's recent decline and no-one deserved the victory at Rushden more.

Bloomfield is my player of the season. I tipped him to be Wycombe's key man back in August and he has not disappointed. Martin seems a player in a similar mould. They are hard working midfield players who want to do well for the club.

Ian Stonebridge is another who stood up and was counted. He has had an unfortunate career at Wycombe but if he can put together a consistent run of impressive performances, like the one at Rushden, he could be a permanent fixture in the side.

It now seems likely that it will be a Wycombe vs Cheltenham play-off semi-final (touch wood we actually make it!). We will not relish a tie with the Robins, a team we have yet to beat in the Football League. And with a possible allocation for the away game of just 1060 tickets, many Blues' fans will miss out.

I met Wycombe legend Dave Carroll the other week. He seemed in good form, enjoying his role as manager of Windsor & Eton, despite their recent relegation. We reminisced about the good times and in particular the 1994 play-off Final against Preston North End. Wycombe were terrific that day, and the passing style of our current side reminds you, just a bit, of the football we played in 1994.

Carroll also pointed out that Wycombe went into those play-off matches with their worst form of the season. We had won just once in eight games but then proceeded to hammer Carlisle twice and North End. Form is temporary, class is permanent. After six straight defeats, six straight wins would be nice!

Finally I cannot let this column pass without expressing sincerest wishes to John Gorman. He needs this break and he should be allowed as long as he needs. If that is next season, then it is next season.

Ian Baker is on the Board of Wycombe Wanderers Supporters Trust. For further details about the Trust and how to join please see www.wwst.org.



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