

Gareth: An intriguing battle awaits

Blues boss looking forward to pitting his wits against good friend Paul Tisdale.

Gareth Ainsworth says he's looking forward to the challenge of taking on MK Dons in Saturday's meeting at Adams Park (k.o. 3pm).

Wanderers come into the game on the back of an excellent display in Tuesday's cup tie against Reading, and now face a familiar face in Dons boss Tisdale, who's occupied the away dugout on a regular basis in recent years with former club Exeter City.

"Paul's a good friend of mine; we've had some fantastic games against each other in the past and he's a great guy, very calm, articulate and a real thinker. His teams are always well organised, they know their jobs, and Saturday will be no different I'm sure.

"We'll have a beer together after the game, but before that we'll both be doing everything we can to win the game. Paul knows what to expect from me as a manager and us as a team, and we're working hard on finding the right system and the right players that we feel will get the right result on the day.

"Me and Dobbo (assistant Richard Dobson) always prepare to set up against various formations and systems. We don't just put 11 players on the pitch and play one way, we have to look at how the opposition might work in different shapes. I felt we got it spot on against Reading; after the first 10 minutes, our lads took control of the game, they were tactically astute, and it's great when you put a plan in place and the boys go out and execute it. It bodes well for the future, and our immediate future is now looking at MK on Saturday and making sure we're up for the fight."

Another well-known face in the MK ranks is Russell Martin, a former Wycombe player who returns to Adams Park for the first time since featuring for Norwich City in 2010.

"I know Russell very well; we did our football diploma together and he played against us for Walsall last year and did very well. He's a gentleman, a very good footballer, and a great human being. I'm looking forward to seeing him, but sentiment comes second of course to the result and all I want is a Wycombe win."

Following the highest opening day attendance at Adams Park in a decade against Bolton, and the best League Cup crowd at home since 2007, Ainsworth now hopes for another bumper crowd and electric atmosphere to help his side build on their positive start to the season.

"I know the two towns are nearby but there isn't really a rivalry there and we're not approaching it as a derby; we just want to focus on our own game, our own fans, and doing everything we can to encourage supporters to come down to Adams Park, get behind us, and hopefully we can entertain them with a good performance and a win.

"The first two home games here have been great occasions with big crowds and positive performances, and that's something we should be proud of, but let's keep pushing this club to higher and higher levels. This is a great club, and I am so proud to be the manager."