

This Italian job — a successful venture

Chelmsford 2, Wycombe 2

(Wycombe won on pens.)

IN the magnificent setting of Cosenza's Marco Lorenze Stadium below the snow capped peaks of the Calabrian Mountains, Wycombe Wanderers staged a strong recovery to force an exciting finale to their Italian trip on Monday.

Encountering a full-strength and determined Chelmsford side in the play-off for third and fourth position in the Gigi Peronace Memorial Cup, Wycombe were at one stage 2-0 down, but came back to draw 2-2 and win the match after penalties.

During the first half Chelmsford were the better side, but Wycombe came

**Wycombe player
HOWARD KENNEDY
(right) reports on the
second game of their
short and enjoyable
trip to Italy.**



closest to scoring when Steve Long headed powerfully against the upright.

Although the score was 0-0 at half-time the 10,000 crowd were becoming more and more excited by the style of play of the two foreign teams in the tournament.

Soon after the restart Stott scored for Chelmsford following some poor marking at a corner and 10 minutes later Baker made the score 2-0 after confusion in the defence between Chris Way and Andy Harman.

Tiring

As the game was being played in mid-afternoon with the temperature in the high eighties, one would not have given Wycombe much chance of overcoming Chelmsford's lead.

But, with Dell and yours truly setting a fine example in midfield the Wanderers gradually overcame the tiring Southern League side.

Following a defensive clearance the writer volleyed at goal. However, Steve Thorne neatly controlled the

shot and turned sharply to hook the ball into the net for a fine individual goal.

With the score at 2-1 and only 15 minutes remaining, tour manager Alan Davies substituted West and Thorne with Joe Kotvics and himself.

The noisy Italian crowd immediately took to the bustling play of Kotvics and showed their immense delight when he scored the equaliser with only five minutes left.

The score remained at 2-2 until the end and then the match was decided by penalties, each side taking five.

The stage was set for Way to become the Wycombe hero and this he did by making two spectacular saves.

With all the Wycombe players scoring their respective penalties the Wanderers deservedly ended the tournament in third place and were awarded two magnificent trophies by the Italian Football Association for this performance.

In the final Cosenza, who had previously beaten

Wycombe 4-0, again played very well and easily defeated Padua 2-0 to win the Gigi Peronace Cup.

Despite the disappointment of losing their first game this venture into the Peronace Cup must be viewed as a success by Wycombe, who, through the endeavour and enthusiasm displayed by all the players, endeared themselves to the Italian locals and especially the host club Cosenza.

Worthwhile

The only regrettable fact is that such a worthwhile venture is not reciprocal as it would be interesting for Wycombe supporters to see the high level of skill displayed by the Italians.

It would also be interesting to see how they would cope with our cold weather, heavy pitches and the notorious slope!

This was a most enjoyable trip enjoyed by all and Wycombe have certainly gained many new friends and supporters in Southern Italy.

Finally, while it would be unfair to nominate a 'Player of the Tour' award, Mark Hill was definitely the 'model' player sporting a dazzling array of clothes much admired on his appearance on Italian television!

WYCOMBE: C. Way, T. Lee, A. Harman, K. Stone, M. Hill, H. Kennedy, R. Dell, P. West (sub. A. Davies 75mins), K. Wilson, S. Long, S. Thorne (sub. J. Kotvics 75mins).