



GARNER: Jail penalty

Banged-up Garner's gaol mad

MARK MCGUINNESS

SIMON GARNER always was a good inside-forward — now he's a good inside-forward inside.

The former Blackburn striker has been banging the goals in for his latest team, unfortunately it's the Kirkham Prison team.

And he has been taking no prisoners on the field, knocking home a superb six goals during the lags' 8-3 romp over luckless Lytham Leisure.

"We would have won it but for him. Garner was in a different league," said beaten manager Rob Green.

"He just ghosted into the penalty area. The pick of the bunch was when he just dropped his shoulder on the edge of the area, turned and let fly."

Bemused

Garner was banged up last week for contempt of court after the breach of a court order relating to his divorce.

He was handed a stiff nine-month sentence, but took his frustration out on a series of bemused Lytham defenders over the weekend.

Garner, who was with Woking at the time of his imprisonment, scored 176 goals during a 14-year career at Blackburn.

His finest hour at Ewood was when he scored against Liverpool in a 1-1 FA Cup third round draw in January 1991.

Kirkham Prison has had a host of top-class footballers on its books. Former Liverpool and Denmark midfielder Jan Molby spent some time there in the late 1980s, while former Manchester United and Wales striker Micky Thomas was an inmate a couple of years ago.

STEPHEN DEAL

CHIEF REPORTER

Ex-Blues star jailed in divorce dispute

sacked manager Alan Smith, in October.

This week, Wanderers players and staff were reeling from the news of his imprisonment.

Chairman Ivor Beeks said yesterday: "We were all pretty devastated."

"We knew and loved Simon from his time at Wycombe Wanderers and he was a tremendous chap to have around the place."

Terry Howard, who played with the striker during his days at Wycombe and his season at GM Vauxhall Conference side

Woking, said: "It seems very harsh indeed that you can end up in jail from a divorce."

"Garns is a smashing fella. It is a shame it has gone down this road."

His solicitor Paul Schofield, of Farleys in Blackburn, said yesterday: "We will be appealing against the sentence."

Garner was jailed at Blackburn, where his ex-wife still lives, and sent to a category C prison, near Preston, Lancs, that night, before being transferred to the Kirkham Open Prison the next day.

It was there that the player, who scored 199 Football League goals, made his stunning debut for the prison football team in the Blackpool and Fylde Combination.

The striker, dubbed 'Super Si' by Blues fans, scored six goals on his 37th birthday, on Saturday, in an 8-3 demolition of opponents Lytham Leisure.

Terry Howard joked: "He's proved he can score at all levels."

Lytham Leisure team manager Rob Green said: "Garner was in a different league. It was impossible to mark him."



Jailed: Simon Garner