
**VIEW FROM
THE STAND**

By Ron
Barnett



NOT for the first time, the Blues have been mugged by the transfer system. Bristol City, aided and abetted by the Football League tribunal, have stolen Mickey Bell.

Whilst I agree that the gulf between City's offer and Wanderers' valuation was too wide to bridge amicably, the final figure of £150,000 was a real steal.

No wonder Bristol were delighted with their smash and grab raid.

With City bidding £70,000 and Wanderers asking for £650,000 surely a figure of around £215,000 would have been fairer to both parties.

This would have given Wycombe just under a third of their valuation, and cost City just over three times their bid. Even at that price he would have been a bargain.

As it is, Bristol have paid around twice what they offered whilst the Blues have been awarded less than a quarter of their asking price.

I'm sure that a number of Premier or First Division clubs would have been interested in Belly if they had known he would only cost £150,000. After all, he was our Player of the Year and one of the best wing backs in the lower divisions.

Graham Le Saux, who is probably the best in that position in the country, is up for sale at £7.5 million.

Now, whilst I realise Bell isn't in the same class I equally don't believe Le Saux is worth 50 times more!

Looking on the bright side, Bell may one day be sold for an inflated fee to a Premiership club and the Blues will pick up 20 per cent of any profit Bristol make. That would be a nice little windfall. After all, lowly Hayes pocketed £600,000 when Les Ferdinand moved to Newcastle.

We also lost out when Martin O'Neill was powerless as Steve Guppy went to Newcastle for just £75,000. Kevin Keegan quickly sold him to Port Vale for a healthy profit. Guppy has now gone full circle and rejoined Martin at Leicester for more than £1 million and unfortunately, Wanderers have not made a penny out of these transactions.

Still, this is no time to look back on our losses. We've also had some winners. Martin Taylor on a free and Scottie at a knock down price certainly went in our favour.

The trip to Bristol City in November will certainly have some extra spice – Jesus coming up against Bell should be a ding-dong battle!