

FOCUS ON NATIONWIDE DIVISION TWO

Sorensen displaying big ideas

ONE of the biggest characters in the forthcoming Second Division campaign will be the former Danish international Jan Sorensen, captain of the Bruges team who were beaten by a Kenny Dalglish goal in the 1978 European Cup final at Wembley, writes **William Johnson**.

At 42, Sorensen is four years younger than Dalglish but has not looked after himself in the manner of the Newcastle manager. Various jobs, including managing a pub and a bowling alley, have seen him balloon to 16 stones but his physical appearance did not dissuade Walsall from naming him as successor to Chris Nicholl.

Sorensen, who won two Belgian championships with Bruges, also played for FC Twente and Feyenoord before serving under Johan Cruyff at Ajax a decade ago. Exuding confidence on his return to the game, he has promised to mark his first managerial appointment by securing a place in the First Division before his his two-year contract expires.

It will be a tall order because money has been flying round the lower leagues this summer to a greater degree than ever with last season's Third Division champions, Wigan, the biggest spenders.

Their philanthropic chairman, Dave Whelan, has sanctioned the spending of £1.3 million on six players, notably Pat McGibbon from Manchester United for £250,000.

Fulham, deprived of the title last May on goal difference, have the even greater riches of Mohamed Fayed to help them gain a foothold in a higher league and their most interesting acquisition is goalkeeper Andre Arendsi, who played for South Africa against England at Old Trafford.

Carlisle, the other promoted club, will make their first objective that of avoiding another swift relegation similar to the one they suffered two seasons ago which took the wind from the sails of ambitious chairman Michael Knighton.

Burnley prepare to win back their

First Division place with three former England internationals in their ranks. Manager Chris Waddle, coach Gordon Cowans and goalkeeping coach Chris Woods are all registered to play if required.

Waddle, who acquired his ex-international colleagues on free transfers, has also spent £400,000 in a transfer market which he yesterday described as "berserk". He is advocating a capping system, coming down from £10 million at Premiership level to about £500,000 in the Second Division.

"It might be something for people to think about before it's too late," said Waddle, whose call has been ignored by Burnley's traditional rivals Preston. They have spent nearly £1 million in the summer out of the £1.5 million realised by the sale of Kevin Kilbane to West Bromwich.

Favourites to win the division are Luton, who are strengthened by the arrival of Welsh international Simon Davies from Manchester United.

Duncan misses summer sales

WITH season ticket sales at Chesterfield up by 40 per cent to nearly 2,000 on the back of last season's magnificent run to the brink of the FA Cup final, it seemed reasonable to inquire why the Second Division club have operated at a profit rather than a loss in the summer transfer market.

Two lucrative Old Trafford semi-final meetings with Middlesbrough last April enabled the club, whose famous but decrepit stadium accommodates fewer than 9,000 spectators, to turn a perennial trading deficit into a healthy pre-tax profit of £1.2 million over the last financial year.

That figure takes into account the £750,000 sale of striker Kevin Davies to Southampton and the £275,000 transfer of influential team captain Sean Dyche to Bristol City — departures which are lamented by manager John Duncan, who is

By William Johnson

four years into a second spell at the club.

Duncan has striven to plug what he admits to be enormous gaps at the front and back of his team but has so far managed to recruit only three players — Steve Wilkinson from Preston, Roger Willis from Peterborough and Rotherham's Ian Breckin — for a combined outlay of £350,000.

"The Cup run of last season was the biggest achievement of my life and something I'll probably never surpass," said Duncan. "It was brilliant for everybody and convinced us that we are capable of competing at a higher level, so much so that the bookmakers are now not making us their usual tip for relegation."

"My optimism would be

greater had we been able to keep Davies and Dyche and then add to our squad with a couple more summer signings. The last thing any manager wants is disruption to a side that has been successful and it frustrates me that I haven't been able to bring in more players to help us through the transition."

Norton Lea, Chesterfield's owner since he acquired an 80 per cent holding in 1987, defended a cautious approach to financial matters.

"There had been continuous losses at this club for donkeys years," said Lea, 72, "and the money we earned last season was manna from heaven. Of course we'll use some of it to buy players but some of it

has to be used for structuring the club for the future."

That forward thinking focuses principally on the possibility of moving to a new home a mile or so away from the town's crooked spire on what was formerly a greyhound track.

Building an all-seat stadium which would initially accommodate 12,000 will cost in the region of £7 million, providing clearance is given by the local council at a meeting on Sept 4.

"We're desperate to get permission to go ahead with our plans," said the chairman, proud of the history that Saltergate possesses but embarrassed by its state of disrepair and the fact that there are only 16 car parking spaces on the premises.

Duncan would also welcome better facilities. "The last thing you want to do when you're trying to sign a player is show him round here," he said.

TOMORROW: DIVISION ONE