

Taylor keeps a clean slate

VIEW FROM THE STAND

By Ron Barnett

ANOTHER no score draw on Saturday, our tenth of the season and easily our most frequent result. It was also Martin Taylor's 15th clean sheet this season – which is a pretty good record considering our league position.

During the season Taylor has made a number of spectacular cock-ups including some dodgy kicking and punching. However, he has also made more than his fair share of superb saves and kept us in a lot of games which we would have lost without him.

With so many clean sheets to his name and being our only ever-present this campaign, our Kamikaze Keeper is bound to be in the running for the Laurent Perrier/Bucks Free Press Player of the Year award. No doubt Rhino and Brownie will also be front runners.

Whilst the point at Bourne-mouth was useful, we've now slipped back to 15th place and are only six points above Plymouth who occupy a relegation position. We certainly need to pick up three or four points over Easter or else we could get sucked back into the danger zone.

Providing we stay out of trouble, next season could prove even tougher to make it to the top. Although Bristol City, Watford and one other of the leading sides would have departed, we could find Portsmouth, Stoke, Manchester City, Norwich or QPR coming down to join us. They would all be attractive fixtures but, they are bound to have the resources to mount a strong challenge for the promotion places.

I wonder how many other Blues fans were encouraged to put a few bob on Diwali Dancer in the Grand National. Seeing his jockey would be wearing our Sky and Navy quarters, I couldn't resist betting on this lucky omen. Unfortunately it wasn't so lucky, he fell at the first – just like our promotion hopes!

Given their interest in kit sales, I'm sure Graham Peart and Mark Austin would have also backed him.

Talking of shirts, it's Mufti Day at Adams Park today and we are promised the dubious sight of seeing both Blues and Grimsby directors and officials wearing their team shirts. We will have to keep a close watch on the tabloids to see whether they have the same pulling power as David Mellor's Chelsea strip. One thing for sure, it's not an idea that will be taken up by Newcastle directors!