

Mark joins Smillie happy people

Goalie Westhead is latest signing for Blues boss



Happy to be here: Mark Westhead

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NEIL Smillie has solved his reserve goalkeeper crisis by signing Mark Westhead on a one year contract.

The 23-year-old former Bolton reserve and Telford keeper clinched a contract with a confident performance in Blues' 6-2 win at Chesham last Saturday after two weeks on trial.

Smillie said: "I liked what I saw. He's a very solid boy and he could be just the ticket."

As well as his handling, Westhead showed good distribution skills with his hands as well as feet and showed no lack of confidence, even bawling out Paul McCarthy after the hardman defender failed to move up for an offside.

But Westhead who has been signed as deputy to first choice Martin Taylor is not content with just a seat on the bench and playing for the reserves in the Avon Insurance Football Combination.

He said: "I know I've been signed as a number two but I'm hoping to dislodge Martin Taylor."

"It is a good chance for me to get back into professional football and it is a big relief."

"I have liked everything I have seen of Wycombe, the ground is fantastic and the people are friendly."

● Triallist John Butler has been told 'thanks but no thanks' by manager Neil Smillie after failing to impress during Blues' friendly at Chesham last week.

The former Leeds United youngster arrived at Adams Park with a reputation for being good at running with the ball - but in the Chesham match he looked intimidated by the stage and preferred to play the short simple ball all the time.

Smillie said: "I played him a little bit deeper than he would have liked. He did OK but didn't do too much to really excite me and I don't think he is any better than what we've already got here."

Butler has now gone back to his home in Ireland.

● Former Glasgow Rangers wing-back Chris Vinnicombe has passed his medical and will sign a two-year deal with the Blues as soon as he has recovered from the virus which forced him out of Blues' friendly against Aston Villa.

● Smillie wants to take a longer

look at serial triallist Mark Rogers.

The Canadian midfielder is desperate to break into the game and has used his holidays to book in trials at Portsmouth and St Johnstone as well.

He has been training with Wanderers and impressed Smillie in the 20 minutes he was given against Chesham last week, even laying on

one of Dannic Bulman's goals.

Smillie said: "He did well and I'd like to have another look at him. He was recommended to me by someone whose opinion I value highly."

● Defender Jason Cousins has come off the transfer list. The 28-year-old, who married during the summer, went on the list at his own

request last season after losing his place in the team when John Gregory was boss.

● Fans got their first look at new mascot 'Bodger' before Wanderers' friendly against Aston Villa.

Bodger is based on Loakes Park scoring legend Tony 'Bodger' Horseman who hammered in a record 525 goals in 17 seasons and 525 appearances for the Blues.

The mascot replaces Blucy the Swan.

● Brian Lara was at Adams Park on Tuesday to see his great friend Dwight Yorke.

The record-breaking West Indian batsman signed autographs and chatted with supporters.

● The 'will he or won't he go to Manchester United' Dwight Yorke saga attracted a total of 44 media-men to Adams Park.

But while Yorke is big news at the moment, it would appear that he is small-fry compared to Wycombe Wanderers' match against West Ham in 1995. That FA Cup match brought a record 75 reporters and photographers to Adams Park hoping to see a shock.

● A slight groin strain robbed striker Keith Scott of the chance to try and put one passed Aston Villa keeper Mark Bosnich.

Scott picked up the injury in last week's defeat against Kingstonian and it kept him out of both Blues' friendlies last week.

Scottie is doubtful for Charlton's visit tomorrow but Smillie is confident he will be back in full working order when the Nationwide League season gets underway with Luton's visit on August 8.

● Gary Goodchild's youth team get the chance to test themselves against Tottenham on Monday when they visit Spurs' Chase Lodge training ground for a friendly before opening their South East Counties League campaign against Southend on August 8.

● Derek Vere, managing director of Blues' sponsors Verco, will be presented with the trophy he won in the Flora London Marathon Football Club Challenge before tomorrow's match. Mr Vere, who represented Wanderers, won after raising £11,000 for Bucks youth clubs from his 26 mile run.

● Blues take on Premiership new-boys Charlton Athletic at Adams Park tomorrow (ko 3pm).