

Simmo tells boss: 'It's your move'

MAN-OF-THE-MOMENT Michael Simpson says he will stay on the transfer list until boss Neil Smillie offers him a new contract.

The midfielder asked for a move when he was dropped from the first team and made substitute for the reserves.

But the 24-year-old has turned the situation around and is now one of the most important players in Smillie's team, winning the supporters player of the month award for October.

He said: "Since I've come back into the side I've played well and scored a few goals so everything is going well at the minute."

"I'm still on the list and I'll see how things go. My contract is up at the end of the season, so for me to come off I would need to be offered a new contract. I would like to think I'm playing well enough to earn a new contract."

Contract talks seemed a million miles away earlier this season when Smillie was prepared to let him go on a free transfer.

Simpson said: "I didn't seem to have a future here. I was sub for the reserves and training with the youth team. I just got my head down and worked hard and now it's coming back but I'm not getting carried away."

Smillie said: "I'm very happy with Simmo. He's doing exceptionally well at the moment. If he wants to come off the list my door is open to discuss it."

● Reserve keeper Mark Westhead has turned down Wanderers' offer of a three year contract - but is still hoping to reach an agreement within the next few weeks.

Westhead wants to stay but is seeking assurances that he will be competing on a level playing field for the number one spot with Martin Taylor next season.

Westhead won two man of the match awards when Taylor was out injured earlier this season but was dropped for the next game as soon as Taylor recovered from his back injury and has not played since.

He said: "I want Martin's shirt and with him playing as well as he is, it's difficult to get a game. I want to know that I will be competing on equal terms with him next season."

There is also more talking to be done on the terms of the deal but Westhead says they are not a million miles apart.

● Financial director Graham Peart's warning that players will have to be sold unless attendances improve (see back page) will come

Star is staying on the list for the moment



Happy days: Simpson celebrates a goal with team-mates

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as a big worry to the 14 players who are out of contract this summer. They know that unless the crowds return some of them will be cast aside next year to balance the books.

● Keith Scott picked up the fastest booking in the country last Saturday just nine seconds into Blues' FA Cup clash against Chesterfield for an accidental elbow on Jamie Hewitt.

But he did not let it affect him and he led the line in his usual aggressive manner and scored the only goal of the game after 73 minutes to earn glowing praise from manager Neil Smillie.

Smillie said: "Scottie's come back from his injury and worked very hard to get fit. He looks fresh and when he's working hard like he is, he will cause teams problems."

● Mark Robson will be in Blues' squad tomorrow but it is likely to be his last outing with Wanderers. His loan expires after the match and Smillie is intending to send him back to Notts County.

Smillie said: "Mark's been unlucky. He's been a victim of our success. He signed when we got our

first win of the season against Macclesfield and I couldn't really change the team after that."

● Neil Smillie intends to travel to the Midlands on Tuesday to watch Kidderminster Harriers and Plymouth Argyle replay in the FA Cup.

Wanderers will entertain the winners at Adams Park on Saturday, December 5.

● Wanderers mascot Bodger made his television chat show debut last Friday when he appeared on Ian Wright's Friday Night is All Wright programme and received a kiss from the host.

Bodger was invited onto the show which highlighted the fight involving the mascots of Bristol City and Wolves. Bodger was invited to join Wright on his sofa which was also shared by Tony Adams and Caprice.

● Jermaine McSparran scored his first goal for Wanderers reserves as they drew 1-1 at bitter rivals Colchester United on Wednesday. McSparran's 12th minute goal, from a Gary Wraith assist, cancelled out the home side's sixth minute opener.

● Neil Smillie says it will be like making three new signings when Keith Ryan, Michael Forsyth and Steve McGavin come back into first team contention.

All three are now back in training after their long term injuries, but as a precaution they are not doing as many days on the training ground as the rest of the players.

Smillie has warned they'll have to fight to win their shirts back.

He said: "No-one will walk back into the team."

But physio David Jones has still got a full treatment room with John Cornforth (achilles) Jason Kavanagh (ankle) Mo Harkin who is taking one step forward and two steps back and Mark Stallard (knee ligaments).

● Smillie issued a swipe at some of Blues' more demanding fans this week when talking about tomorrow's opponents Wigan's £1 million strike force.

He said: "If we spent £1 million on two players everyone would be expecting us to get instant promotion."

Wigan are currently sitting mid-table in the second division.