

Those five six-pointers hold the key

VIEW FROM THE STAND

By Ron Barnett

AT least Tuesday evening's wash-out will have given Lawrie Sanchez some more valuable time to get the Blues playing to the standards he demands. Judging by the poor defending and wayward finishing at Bournemouth, he needs all the time and help he can get.

Thankfully, Northampton lost at home again and we now have a game in hand on them. With Burnley and Oldham slipping into the relegation pack, it now looks like it could be any four from seven facing the big drop.

However, Lincoln, long term relegation favourites, have managed to hit a rich vein of form and could be on their way out of trouble — hopefully this is just a flash in the pan.

Sanchez reckons we need 24 points from our remaining 14 games if we are to survive. That sort of performance, over a season, would be good enough to win a promotion play-off place. Considering how the side has struggled all season, he will have pulled off a minor miracle if he can achieve this target.

I'm sure I would be just one of a long line of fans wanting to buy him a pint if he completes the great escape.

At least our remaining fixtures give us the opportunity to pick up some valuable points whilst kicking our fellow strugglers where it hurts at the same time.

Our run-in includes five six-point games against Notts County, Northampton, Oldham, Macclesfield and Lincoln. A series of must-win games.

If we can get maximum points from these matches then we certainly have a very good chance of staying up.

Unfortunately three of these are away and we don't need to be reminded about our travel disasters so far this season.

Whatever happens from now on in, at least we know Lawrie Sanchez and his management team are going to encourage the team to attack and fight all the way.

Beating Colchester in any match is always one of the highlights of the season, but if we can win this Saturday it would be even sweeter than usual.

Let's hope those "good old Essex boys" have a long and dismal drive back round the M25.

● Read the independent's view in next Friday's BFP.

HOW THEY STAND

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Ps
Fulham	32	13	2	1	32	10	8	4	4	18	14	69
Preston	33	10	4	3	39	18	9	4	3	24	15	65
Walsall	33	9	5	3	25	17	9	2	5	20	19	61
Gillingham	32	11	4	2	32	12	4	9	2	21	15	58
Bournemouth	31	11	5	0	33	8	4	4	7	18	22	54
Man City	32	8	5	2	23	9	5	8	4	16	15	52
Chesterfield	32	12	2	3	28	12	2	6	7	9	17	50
Wigan	31	8	3	3	23	8	6	4	7	22	22	49
Millwall	34	6	7	3	23	16	7	3	8	16	24	49
Stoke	30	8	3	4	22	14	7	0	8	16	19	48
Reading	32	7	6	4	23	20	4	5	6	15	24	44
Luton	31	7	3	5	18	15	4	5	7	21	25	41
Wrexham	32	6	4	6	16	20	5	4	7	19	26	41
Blackpool	32	5	6	4	18	15	5	5	7	14	20	41
Colchester	32	5	6	5	16	22	3	7	6	19	24	37
Bristol R	30	6	6	4	24	19	2	6	6	16	15	36
York City	33	4	7	6	21	24	5	2	9	19	31	36
Burnley	33	5	6	6	15	22	3	4	9	21	35	34
Oldham	32	5	2	8	16	20	4	4	9	15	23	33
Lincoln	32	7	3	6	21	20	2	3	11	10	32	33
Notts Co	31	5	3	7	19	20	3	4	9	12	25	31
North'pton	33	2	8	6	13	18	4	3	10	13	21	29
Wycombe	32	6	3	8	21	17	0	6	9	8	25	27
Macc'field	31	3	4	8	10	17	2	5	9	11	23	24

Victory could drag rivals Colchester into the scrap

WANDERERS entertain fiercest rivals Colchester United tomorrow with boss Lawrie Sanchez insisting the Essex boys can still be dragged into the relegation scrap.

And for the first time in his command Sanchez picks from a squad which is free from suspension as he plots Wanderers' escape route.

Speaking from his bunker beneath the stand, Sanchez said: "Colchester have done well under their new manager Mick Wadsworth but they're still in a pull-downable position."

Colchester have 37 points, ten more than

Wycombe, but the form book goes out of the window in matches between these two, whose rivalry is a legacy of their Conference days.

Sanchez says Wycombe must win tomorrow to set them up for Tuesday's vital six-pointer at Notts County, and a reunion with Mark Stallard.

Sanchez said: "I would rather play teams down at the bottom because it's in our own hands then."

Keith Scott should return in place of the sold Stallard and Dave Carroll is also pushing for a starting place after his impressive appearance as

substitute at Bournemouth. Paul McCarthy starred for the reserves in midweek and could replace Stoke-bound Nicky Mohan.

Colchester have doubts over on-loan Charlton striker Bradley Allen who has got a bug and Richard Wilkins (hamstring). But Stefan Pounewatchy and David Gregory could return for the U's who are unbeaten in six.

Sources in Colchester say United are expected to bring a larger than usual following with them for a match which means as much to their fans as it does to Blues followers.