

Fat lady has not finished yet for Blues

VIEW FROM THE STAND

By Ron Barnett

THE fat lady's still singing strongly and with a little bit of luck she'll keep on singing the Blues right to the end of the season.

What a difference from two weeks ago when the show looked well and truly over.

While trying in vain to find an escape route from the Madejski traffic jam, I was also trying to forgive Dave Carroll for missing the penalty that might have saved us at Reading.

By the time I had discovered some open road, I was already looking forward to weekends in Brighton, Torquay, Scarborough and Plymouth. You've got to admit, they sound more exotic than Walsall, Wigan, Luton and Oldham.

Now suddenly Carroll has started scoring again, Rhino is charging around in midfield and we've got a Devine new striker.

With nine games left to play, Lawrie Sanchez reckons we need 15 points to beat the drop. That's a pretty tall order with six of those matches away - mind you we're now on an unbeaten run away from home.

What's more, we've already thumped Macclesfield and Lincoln this season. A double over these two fellow strugglers would certainly go a long way to helping our cause.

Whatever happens from now on in, you've got to admit Lawrie Sanchez has made every effort to give the fans new hope. The style of play and commitment has dramatically improved despite a lack of both time and money.

He acted very quickly to off load the expensive underachieving trio of Mohan, Kavanagh and Stallard and I'm sure a few others will be packing their kitbags at the end of the season.

Signing the experienced Jamie Bates was an excellent move, giving greater stability to our back four and allowing Keith Ryan to play his preferred midfield role.

Selling Keith Scott to Reading was also a smart bit of business although, like most fans I was sad to see Scottie go. He has been a tremendous servant for the club and his 97 goals in just over 200 games is a superb strike rate.

Let's hope a win at Macclesfield on Saturday will set us up for another home win in front of a big crowd on Monday. I'm sure all Blues fans would willingly swop all their Easter eggs for six points.

HOW THEY STAND

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fulham	37	14	2	1	37	10	10	4	4	26	16	84
Preston	37	11	4	4	42	19	10	5	3	25	16	72
Walsall	36	10	6	3	29	20	10	2	5	22	20	68
Bourn'th	37	13	5	1	36	9	6	5	7	22	24	67
Man City	38	9	6	3	26	12	8	8	4	26	16	65
Gillingham	37	12	5	2	37	14	4	9	5	22	21	62
Wigan	35	10	3	4	30	12	7	4	7	25	23	58
Reading	38	9	6	5	27	24	6	6	6	19	25	57
Stoke	36	8	3	7	24	22	10	0	8	22	22	57
Millwall	38	7	7	5	28	21	8	3	8	17	24	55
Chest'field	36	13	2	4	32	15	2	7	8	9	19	54
Blackpool	37	5	8	5	19	17	6	5	8	16	25	46
Luton	37	8	4	7	21	22	4	5	9	22	29	45
Wrexham	36	6	6	6	17	21	5	5	8	20	30	44
Bristol R	37	7	7	6	29	25	2	7	8	19	20	41
Notts Co	36	6	3	7	23	22	5	5	10	20	31	41
York City	37	4	7	7	22	27	6	2	11	23	38	41
Colchester	37	5	7	6	18	25	3	8	8	22	30	39
Burnley	37	6	6	8	19	32	3	5	9	22	36	38
Oldham	37	5	2	10	18	24	5	5	10	18	30	36
Lincoln	36	8	3	7	24	22	2	3	13	10	37	36
Wycombe	37	7	4	9	27	21	1	6	10	11	27	34
Macc'field	36	5	4	8	13	17	3	5	11	15	28	33
North'pton	37	2	8	7	13	19	5	4	11	15	25	33