

Sanchez's fury at reunion with ref

WANDERERS boss Lawrie Sanchez is spitting feathers after learning that in only the second week of the season he will come face to face with the referee who sent him off at Preston last year *writes Dave Peters*.

Sanchez, who starts a six-match touchline ban tomorrow after admitting swearing at David Laws, wrote to the Football League saying he never wanted to see him put in charge of a Wycombe match again.

But League officials rejected his plea and have handed Laws the whistle for Blues' first away match at Scunthorpe next week.

Sanchez, who swore at Laws for his decision not to send off a Preston player, was hammered by the FA for his angry reaction even though Laws' handling of that match has since been included in a refereeing video as an example of how not to do it.

Sanchez said: "I can't believe we've got him again after writing to the League saying we didn't want him. Premiership clubs have got referees changed in the past but it's a different rule for us."

League spokesman Chris Hull said: "We're not the Premier League and we'll never allow clubs to decide who they want to referee their matches."

"From time to time clubs won't agree with refereeing decisions and that's part of the game. It would be ridiculous to allow clubs to choose their officials and we never will. You'd end up with referees doing the same team each week."

Sanchez said: "I'm not happy about it but I'll just have to get on with it and work within those rules. The one thing that I've learned from all this is that arguing with referees gets you nowhere."

But he plans to turn his ban to his advantage.

He said: "It will give me the chance to step back from the team and see it from a different perspective which is no bad thing. I'll get an overall view and perhaps see areas where I think we can improve."

Wanderers are currently on the authorities' bad boy list and are being treated accordingly.

They will play the entire season with a £30,000 suspended fine hanging above their heads.

That was imposed this summer after Wanderers topped the Division Two discipline table last season with 109 bookings and seven sendings off.

And the Blues came close to adding to their troubles last Friday when captain Jason Cousins was



Banned: Lawrie Sanchez set for a meeting with the referee who sent him off

Ref: 99-533BF2

spared a red card as he continued his comeback from last season's injury in the reserves 3-0 defeat at Hayes last Friday.

He let his frustrations boil over as Blues were outplayed by the side which finished third in the Conference last year and the referee

ordered him to be substituted before he was sent off.

That defeat followed hard on the heels of the reserves previous defeat at Ryman League Thame.

But Sanchez refutes allegations that there isn't enough adequate quality in his reserves to cover first

team suspensions or injuries.

He said: "We've played a few triallists in the reserves and then we've had Cousins and Mo Harkin returning from injuries and we lost Alan Beeton [meningitis] as well. I'm happy with the squad but I'd have liked a big striker."