

The postie who is knocking twice

POSTMAN Carl Bartley is bidding to make it second time lucky as he attempts to return to the game after being dumped by Fulham as a teenager.

The 22-year-old 6ft 3in Walton and Hershham target man sent a message to boss Lawrie Sanchez with a first class performance on trial for Blues' reserves in Wednesday's 2-0 defeat at home to Peterborough.

The striker, who has averaged a goal every two games for the Ryman Premier Division club, won all the flick-ons as he stamped his authority.

He chucked a sickie to get the day of work and now he needs to get a week off to take up Sanchez's offer of a week's trial.

He said: "I'll get the time off. When I left Fulham it was a big bombshell. I'd played three times for the first team and thought I was making it there."

"I hate being a postman. I'd give my right arm to get back into football. Hopefully this is my year. I grew up playing with Wimbledon's Jason Euell and knocked about with Rio Ferdinand as well. I'd love to catch them up."

● Comeback king Alan Beeton dumbfounded doctors when he played a full 90 minutes at Gillingham last Saturday just five weeks after he was struck down by meningitis.

Beeton said: "It's unbelievable to be playing again so soon. I didn't think I would get a sniff of the action until November. It's brilliant to be back."

"My biggest problem was blisters, apart from that I felt fine."

It was the 20-year-old's first full outing since he was rushed into an isolation ward at Watford Hospital convinced he was dying from a viral strain of the bug.

Beeton's return has surprised the National Meningitis Trust. Viral meningitis is less serious than the bacterial form, but in cases as severe as Beeton's it's extremely debilitating.

Justin Hopwood of the Trust said: "Most people normally make a full recovery, but sometimes it can take a long time and they can suffer from constant headaches, tiredness and depression. Alan Beeton has done terrifically well to make such a quick recovery."

● Sanchez tore into his reserves after they kicked off their Avon Insurance Combination season with



Back to how he was: Alan Beeton in full flow last season and now he's back again

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a lacklustre 2-0 defeat at home to Peterborough.

Sanchez said: "You watch these games looking for people to impress you and that didn't happen. They were strolling around as though they were established first team players and they cannot afford too many performances like that."

Reserve boss Terry Gibson added: "We have the enthusiasm for shooting and crossing in training but when it came to a game no-one wanted to have a go."

The match highlighted the paucity of talent below the club's first choice 15 and there was another blackspot when Jason Cousins

picked up a booking.

● Striker Sean Devine remains a huge doubt as Wanderers renew their local rivalry with neighbours Oxford at the Manor Ground tomorrow (kick off 1pm).

Devine had not been considered to resume full training until yesterday and Sanchez is concerned that rushing him back too early after his groin strain could backfire.

He said: "That happened with Andy Baird last year, we kept bringing him back before he was ready and he was never 100 per cent fit last season."

Defender Chris Vinnicombe comes back into contention after completing 90 minutes in the reserves and it is between him and Beeton for the left back spot.

Former Wycombe transfer target Steve Anthrobus is suspended for Oxford whose boss Malcolm Shotton was also a target of Wycombe before they unearthed Sanchez.

● West Brom have slashed prices for their Worthington Cup second round first leg tie at home to Blues

on Tuesday, September 14 to £10 for adults and £5 for concessions but kids under 16, who buy their tickets in advance from Wanderers, can get in for just a pound.

The second leg is at Adams Park on Tuesday, September 21.

HOW THEY STAND

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wigan	5	2	1	0	6	2	1	1	0	7	4	11
Luton	5	2	0	0	4	2	1	1	1	2	2	10
Wrexham	5	2	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	3	3	10
Burnley	5	2	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	10
Bristol R	5	2	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	2	2	10
Barnet	5	3	0	0	7	1	0	0	2	2	6	9
Notts Co	4	1	1	0	3	0	1	1	0	4	1	8
Brentford	4	2	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	2	2	8
Bury	5	2	1	0	9	5	0	1	1	1	2	8
Oxford	5	1	0	1	3	3	1	1	1	3	3	7
Preston	4	1	0	1	3	5	1	1	0	2	1	7
Cardiff	5	0	3	0	3	3	1	0	1	3	3	6
Wycombe	5	0	2	1	2	3	1	1	0	3	2	6
Colchester	5	1	0	1	3	5	1	0	1	1	4	6
Camb Utd	5	1	1	0	4	2	0	1	2	4	7	5
Blackpool	5	1	2	0	4	3	0	0	2	2	5	5
Bristol C	4	1	1	0	4	2	0	0	2	2	4	4
Chesterfield	4	1	0	1	4	3	0	1	1	2	3	4
Stoke	5	1	1	1	5	4	0	0	2	1	3	4
Scunthorpe	5	1	0	1	3	2	0	1	2	1	7	4
Millwall	4	0	2	0	4	4	0	1	1	2	4	3
Gillingham	5	0	1	1	2	3	0	2	1	3	4	3
Reading	4	1	0	1	3	3	0	0	2	3	6	3
Oldham	4	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

**Tomorrow's match
(ko 1pm)**

Oxford (a)

**Odds: You can get 7-1
from Ladbrokes on a
1-0 Wycombe win**