

Last respects to my former apprentice

PARK LIFE

By Steve Brown

UNFORTUNATELY it's been a really sad week for me.

On Wednesday, I attended the funeral of Blackpool's Martin Aldridge who died in a car crash. He was my apprentice at Northampton and used to clean my boots for me.

You couldn't wish to meet a nicer lad. Nothing used to get him down. He was one of those happy-go-lucky characters who always had a smile on his face which can be quite a hard thing to do in football.

He was a good player as well and it is such a waste.

If things had worked out differently he could have been a Wycombe player. He was given a free by Oxford and called me to see if there was anything going at Wycombe when Neil Smillie was manager. Neil was quite keen and told him to come in for training but Blackpool offered him something more concrete so he went there instead.

There were a lot of people at his funeral in Daventry. He was on loan at Rushden and Diamonds when he died and they were all there, along with everyone from Blackpool, which was really good as they had played the night before.

Our former centre forward Miquel Desouza was there with all the Rushden lads and Mickey Bell, who knew Martin from our Northampton days, made it along.

I also caught up with Blackpool's Brett Ormerod, whose leg I broke in a challenge at Adams Park earlier this season. He's back in light training now and doing some swimming which pleased me because it hit me really hard when I broke his leg.

That was an accident, but there were some really nasty challenges when I played in the Berks and Bucks Cup at Thatcham on Tuesday night. I got pulled off in the second half and I think it was just as well.

I think Gibbo was right to take me off because I might well have ended up in trouble because if the referee isn't protecting you, you have to protect yourself.

Mo Harkin got kicked all over the place but luckily we came through it all unscathed. We've got some good youngsters and they showed their character.

I see that the club are up for sale at £8 million. I think that's a real snip. There's bound to be a few people queuing up to take that. Everything is in place here and the club is just waiting to take off.

If I won the lottery I would put my girlfriend in the boardroom. There aren't enough women in boardrooms. Karen Brady set the trend and then Delia Smith at Norwich but that's it.

HOW THEY STAND

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Preston	28	10	2	2	25	14	7	6	1	27	11	59
Bristol R	29	10	3	1	21	8	8	2	5	25	15	59
Wigan	28	10	3	1	25	8	5	9	0	24	15	57
Millwall	30	9	5	1	23	11	6	4	5	21	20	54
Burnley	28	12	1	1	29	9	2	8	4	11	15	51
Stoke	29	6	6	3	20	15	7	3	4	20	14	48
Gillingham	27	9	2	3	29	15	4	5	4	18	18	46
Notts Co	29	6	3	5	21	16	7	4	4	20	14	46
Brentford	30	8	3	4	23	18	4	4	7	16	22	43
Luton	29	8	4	2	29	18	3	3	9	12	23	40
Wycombe	29	7	3	4	22	18	3	6	6	16	19	39
Bour'm'th	30	8	4	3	27	13	3	2	10	15	32	39
Bristol C	29	4	11	0	18	8	4	3	7	16	23	38
Oldham	29	6	3	5	18	13	4	4	7	13	20	37
Bury	27	5	6	3	26	23	3	5	5	15	13	35
Colchester	30	6	3	6	24	28	3	4	8	15	30	34
Wrexham	29	4	5	5	15	17	3	5	7	14	26	31
Scunth'rpe	29	4	3	8	11	21	3	5	6	16	24	29
Cardiff	29	3	7	4	14	19	2	4	9	13	21	26
Reading	28	4	8	3	16	14	1	3	9	17	34	26
Blackpool	29	2	6	6	16	24	3	4	8	15	24	25
Oxford	29	3	4	8	13	24	3	3	8	11	22	25
Chesterfd	29	3	5	6	9	12	1	5	9	8	22	22
Camb Utd	27	4	5	5	23	22	0	4	9	10	20	21