

Sanchez is up against the odds to protect his bet

WANDERERS take on an Oldham side tomorrow who are determined to ram the words of Blues boss Lawrie Sanchez back down his throat.

Sanchez offered Latics fans odds that they wouldn't get a result at Adams Park after Oldham scraped a 2-2 draw against ten-man Blues in November.

He said after that match, in which Blues played for 85 minutes with ten following Jason Cousins sending off, that Oldham wouldn't be able to match his team when they had 11 players.

He said then: "I guarantee Oldham won't draw with us when we've got 11 men at our place. If any Oldham fans want money on it, I'll lay odds on it."

And he said yesterday: "I haven't had any of

their fans take me up on my offer yet."

But Sanchez could be struggling to put 11 men out tomorrow and Oldham fans might fancy their chances after hearing 20-goal striker Sean Devine is a major doubt with a stiff groin and has joined Blues' long injury list.

Devine is rated 'very doubtful' for the clash and Danny Senda and Richard Thompson are

standing by to deputise.

Sanchez said: "They both scored in the reserves 4-2 defeat at Swindon on Wednesday and I wouldn't have any worries playing them."

Jason Cousins (calf strain) and Dave Carroll (achilles) are doubtful having had only trained once this week but Sanchez is hoping both will play. Alan Beeton also has a chance after returning to training this week following his twisted knee.

But Andy Baird (bruised ribs and back), Keith Ryan (knee), Paul McCarthy (thigh), Matt Lawrence (foot), Jamie Bates (ankle) and Paul Emblen (ankle) are all ruled out.

Sanchez said: "I'm having to give the youngsters a go but I'm confident that whoever we put out will be good enough to beat Oldham."

Tomorrow's opponents are ...

Oldham (h)

... and you can get 8-1 with Ladbrokes on a 2-0 Blues win

Wanderers show Man United and the other big boys just how it is done

BLUES have celebrated the news that they have got the second best junior supporters club in the country by freezing the cost of junior season tickets next season.

An independent survey by website Zoofootball.com put the Wycombe Racers Junior Supporters club second behind Premiership Southampton in a survey of junior supporters clubs.

They were amazed that the £23 Racers membership fee for under tens and £46 for under 16s includes a free season ticket, training ground trip, signed Christmas card, a scheme to have a player as your pen pal, a free magazine, discounts in the club shop and a toy vehicle from sponsors Hotwheels among its benefits.

Niki Pembroke who runs the scheme, which currently has 600 members, said: "It's been a brilliant success and the kids love it. It is such good value. To come ahead of Manchester United and teams like that with all their resources is a great achievement."

Skipper Keith Ryan underlined the club's commitment to young fans when he joined children at a school in Sands in a table football competition on Wednesday.

Winner Ben Rackstraw from

Millbrook School will now go onto represent Wanderers in the regional finals at Watford's Vicarage Road next Saturday.

● Wanderers will be introducing a new red and white quartered away shirt next season. The Avec kit which is accompanied by white shorts and red socks will go on sale in June. Because of this fans can buy the current yellow away shirt at the reduced price of £24.99 (adults) and £19.99 (kids).

● Bristol Rovers boss Ian

Holloway has tipped Lawrie Sanchez to follow former bosses Martin O'Neill and John Gregory into the Premiership.

He wrote in his programme notes on Tuesday: "I'm not surprised how well he's done, because I've known him for a long time and he's a very special person. He's had to overcome a tragedy in his life and I know he's coping with that. I wish him all the best for the future and I know he'll go right to the very top."



RHINO MEETS HIS MATCH: Blues skipper Keith Ryan lost 8-2 when he took on Wanderers young table football champion Ben Rackstraw on Wednesday.

Ref: 00-724F23

Unlucky Ryan hit by a new knee blow

BLUES skipper Keith Ryan's fears of a third major knee injury appear to have receded.

He was taken off at Cardiff last Friday night at half time with pain in his right knee but tests this week revealed no obvious major damage.

He missed the game at Bristol Rovers on Tuesday and will miss tomorrow's match against Oldham as he's ordered to rest.

He said: "It's still a bit sore and they're a bit concerned because I've had problems in the past with it. But I'm pleased to say there's no major cartilage damage which they thought there may be, so that's a right result."

"I'm still getting a little bit of pain and hopefully with a week or so more rest I'll turn the corner."

He added: "Whatever injury I picked up, it happened against Bury, and the following morning it was very sore and I had an unusual amount of fluid in the knee."

"We treated it as though it had just been shaken up and iced it to get the swelling down."

"Before the Cardiff game I didn't really train and it was ok but it got increasingly painful and by half time it was too sore to carry on."

Ryan has previously had long periods out with knee problems.