

Spurs buy Blues babe

WYCOMBE Wanderers have sold a 14-year-old schoolboy to Tottenham in a deal which could eventually net the Blues £500,000.

Michael Malcolm has gone to the London club for an initial payment of £10,000 but the fee could rise to half-a-million pounds if he plays 40 games for Spurs and wins a full England cap.

The pacey striker was discovered by Blues talent spotter Adrian Cole playing for Middlessex-based Sunday side Belmont three years ago, and has been on Wycombe's books ever since.

Cole rates the youngster as his best find alongside Sheffield United's £3 million-rated striker Marcus Bent, who he uncovered when he worked for Brentford several years ago.

Wanderers have received a £10,000 down payment for Malcolm and will receive another identical instalment when he turns 16.

More money will be due to Wanderers if he turns professional and other payments will follow if he represents England at youth team level and makes his first team appearance for Spurs.

Wycombe will then receive further top-ups, rising in amount each time, when he notches up ten, 20 and 40 games for Tottenham.

Further cash will be due if he ever plays for England, and Wycombe have also negotiated a sell-on clause should he be transferred in future.

Cole said: "If he does well we do well. It's a good deal for the club. He's got lots of raw talent and Spurs have invested in potential.

"If the boy makes a mess of it we get very little but if he is successful we get a fair amount of money, but it could be ten years before the final payment is made."

Chelsea, Arsenal and West Ham were also chasing the talented teenager who is represented by the

... and deal could net Wycombe £500,000

REPORT

By Dave Peters

same agent as England's Sol Campbell.

Cole said: "I would have been happy if no-one wanted him. We would have loved to keep him but you have to be realistic and if a boy can better himself you can't stop him.

"We don't want to lose our best

young prospects but we could not stand in Michael's way."

If Blues had not let him go they would have risked receiving less money in the lottery of a tribunal.

Wanderers secretary Keith Allen said: "We've got the best deal we could possibly have got for him."

But Blues assistant boss Terry Gibson admits he is slightly concerned about the trend of young players with agents.

He said: "I find it a bit disturbing that there are these transfer fees for young boys. I wonder where it's going to stop."

But he added: "The money is peanuts to Tottenham they can afford to do it and hope that he does become the next Sol Campbell, but a lot of youngsters will fall by the wayside.

"But it's a good deal for Wycombe."

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Malcolm: On his way to Spurs