

You know, it's not all doom and gloom

VIEW FROM THE STAND
By Ron Barnett

JUST when I was getting prepared to write a doom and gloom column, the Blues came up with an excellent team performance to beat high flying Gillingham.

After a run of three draws and three defeats, it was great to get back to winning ways with a peach of a goal from Andy Baird.

The evening kicked-off when we spotted John Gregory arriving at TGI Fridays for a pre-match meal. He said he was going to watch a couple of Gillingham players but, given his need for a proven goalscorer, it seems a bit of a coincidence that Sean Devine was making his return after injury.

What's more no Gillingham striker has reached double figures in the league this season. Am I being paranoid about losing Deadly Devine?

In any event, Gregory must have been impressed with almost all the Wycombe team as they gave their best performance for many weeks.

Mind you, it's the nearest we've got to fielding a full strength side for a long time - only two or three first choices missing. The two young Dannies, Bulman and Senda, both looked very good when they came on and seem to be improving week by week.

Over the last few weeks, the Wanderers bandwagon has been running on empty before the wheels finally fell off at Bournemouth. Thank heavens we didn't have this run of injuries to key players and loss of form this time last season, otherwise we would have certainly dropped into Division Three.

Apart from the Big Chief having a bust up with the fourth official and being sent off by referee Steve Dunn, there was very little for Blues fans to cheer about at Dean Court. We were lucky to escape with a two-goal defeat and I was ready to wave the white flag well before the end, some of the team looked like they felt the same way too.

Apart from the touchline argy-bargy, the highlight of the afternoon was the excellent meat pies in the Kings Park Cafe just outside the ground. It was also good to see fellow Blues fans enjoying a cliff top walk at Lulworth Cove on Sunday morning, we all looked a lot happier than the previous day.

Our three points on Tuesday evening means we are no longer second to bottom of the form guide, based on the results of the last six matches. We've moved up a couple of places and left Brentford rock bottom. So much for Ron Noades boasting about the quality of his Bees Babes.

Tomorrow, we can look forward to Bristol City, Mickey Bell and a possible three points to pass the Big Chief's safety target.

Emblen and Bates return to a thrashing

A BLUES reserve side including Jamie Bates and Paul Emblen were hammered 7-0 at Ipswich on Wednesday.

The Blues, who lost 7-1 at QPR in their previous outing, were 5-0 down at the break and also had Emblen booked on his first game back since breaking an ankle.

Emblen went off at half time after suffering a slight twinge to the ankle but Bates came through his hour without any reaction.

Reserve boss Terry Gibson admitted the score would have reached double figures if it had not been for keeper Mark Westhead.

Gibbo said: "He had a blinder and kept the score down. It was an onslaught from the first minute."

He is worried about the benefits of playing in such a strong league after successive hammerings at the hands of first division clubs.

He said: "Ipswich and QPR's reserves would have given our first team a real game and we were playing youngsters."

"I do worry what the benefits are of being in such a strong league because it can't be doing the young boys confidence much good and it might be something we've got to think about."

● Bournemouth boss Mel Machin wishes his Cherries were more like the Blues off the field.

He wrote in Saturday's programme: "Wycombe came from the non league built a new stadium and since they have joined the league the stadium has grown with them."

"When we look at what we have compared to Wycombe it is embarrassing. We have stood still here for a number of years and our facilities are now some of the worst in the league."

"If we had facilities like Wycombe can offer, then I'm sure that many more people would attend, and that this football club could progress."

● If Blues beat Bristol City tomorrow or win at bottom placed Chesterfield the following week manager Lawrie Sanchez has promised to play the first team in the Berks and Bucks semi-final at home to Reading on April 11.

That clash will be free to season ticket holders of both clubs. Blues season ticket holders must produce voucher C at the turnstile. All other fans will be charged £6 adults and £3 concessions.

Aylesbury and Slough contest the other semi-final.

● Jason Cousins is facing ten days out after bruising his knee in a challenge with Gillingham's Brian McGlinchey. He was stretchered off and it was feared he'd broken his ankle.

But the Blues hardman said: "It's a lot of fuss about nothing. It was an honest tackle and I came off worst. Hopefully it'll settle down in a couple of weeks."

● The Tales of a Chairboy fanzine returns tomorrow priced at £1 and will be on sale outside the ground.

HOW THEY STAND

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Preston	38	13	3	4	33	21	10	6	2	32	12	78
Bristol R	38	12	5	1	27	11	10	3	7	33	22	74
Wigan	37	13	3	3	34	12	6	12	0	28	17	72
Millwall	39	12	6	2	35	16	8	5	6	26	23	71
Burnley	38	13	3	3	34	16	5	10	4	18	19	67
Gillingham	37	11	3	4	35	19	8	5	6	26	22	65