

FOOTBALL

Wanderers snubbed by their second division rivals

RIVAL second division managers, journalists and fans have given Wycombe Wanderers the thumbs down as the new season approaches.

In a survey for Four Four Two magazine they failed to vote any Wanderers players into the second division's top 50 performers last season. The Professional Footballers Association also contributed to the poll.

Blues boss Lawrie Sanchez, who took part in the survey, but was not allowed to vote for any of his own players, was surprised that Wycombe's Sean Devine and

Jermaine McSporran didn't make the top 50 and says they were snubbed because Wycombe are not a big name club.

He said: "The fact that Sean Devine didn't get in there surprises me because he was the second highest scorer in the division and I would have thought that Jermaine McSporran might have been included as well.

"I'm surprised but so what. Most of the players seem to have come from the big clubs that people automatically think about."

But there was plenty to celebrate for ex-Wanderer Jason

Roberts, who left the club as a youngster. The Bristol Rovers striker came top of the pops.

Two other ex-Wanderers also finished in the top 30 with Bristol City defender Mickey Bell finishing 13th and Stoke's Nicky Mohan landing 30th.

Sanchez voted for Jason Roberts, Preston pair Sean Gregan and Graham Alexander, Millwall's Paul Cahill and Colchester's Lomana Lua Lua.

The full list is: (1) Jason Roberts, Bristol Rovers, (2) Sean Gregan, Preston, (3) Jon Macken, Preston, (4) Graham Kavanagh, Stoke, (5) Steve Davis, Burnley, (6) Jamie Cureton, Bristol Rovers, (7) Darren Caskey, Reading, (8) Roy

Carroll, Wigan, (9) Graham Alexander, Preston, (10) Gary Doherty, Luton, (11) Andy Hesselthaler, Gillingham, (12) Michael Jackson, Preston, (13) Mickey Bell, Bristol City, (14) Ian Cox, Burnley, (15) Andy Payton, Burnley, (16) Darren Ward, Notts, (17) Arjan De Zeeuw, Wigan, (18) Billy Mercer, Bristol City, (19) Paul Powell, Oxford, (20) Martin Butler, Reading, (21) Steve Robinson, Bouremouth, (22) Gavin Ward, Stoke, (23) Andy Liddell, Wigan, (24) John Sheridan, Oldham, (25) Mitchell Thomas, Burnley, (26) Rob Edwards, Preston, (27) Andy Tilson, Bristol Rovers, (28) Matthew Spring, Luton, (29) Neil Harris, Millwall, (30) Nicky Mohan, Stoke, (31) Tim Cahill, Millwall, (32) Shaun Murray, Notts, (33) Mark Walters, Bristol Rovers, (34) Lee Hodges, Scunthorpe, (35) Paul Evans, Brentford, (37) Stuart Barlow, Wigan, (38) James O'Connor, Stoke, (39) Paul Smith, Gillingham, (40) Phil Thompson, Blackpool, (41) Barry Ashby, Gillingham, (42) Neil Young, Bournemouth, (43) Jim Brennan, Bristol City, (44) Neil Redfearn, Wigan, (45) Trevor Benjamin, Cambridge, (46) Glen Little, Burnley, (47) Stuart Balmer, Wigan, (48) Mark Rankine, Preston, (49) Lomana Lua Lua, Colchester, (50) Brian Tinnion, Bristol City.

Star trio are absent as the rest return

WYCOMBE Wanderers returned to pre-season training yesterday with three of their stars missing.

Sean Devine, Dave Carroll and Paul Emblen all sat out the first day with injury problems which are a hangover from last season.

Last year's leading scorer Devine reported back a week early as he bids to overcome the nagging knee problem which caused him trouble at the back end of last season. But, despite his early start, he was still not ready to rejoin the lads at the start of the pre-season programme.

Playmaker Dave Carroll was another absentee during yesterday's first day back.

The 33-year-old midfielder, who was ruled out at the end of last season with an achilles problem, has now injured his abducta muscle during rehabilitation and will have to start full pre-season training behind the other players.

But injury-jinxed striker Paul Emblen is the biggest worry for manager Lawrie Sanchez.

He had a second ankle operation in the summer and is still some way short of returning to the fold and putting an end to his eight-month injury nightmare.

Wanderers are now hoping to book the former Charlton Athletic youngster into the national sports and injuries clinic at Lilleshall to speed up his recovery.

Sanchez said: "Embers will be

longer term. I don't expect him to be back before September."

Of the other two missing from his first training session, he said Devine is closer to being ready to start training than Carroll is.

But there is better news on mid-field pair Keith Ryan and Steve Brown.

They spent their summer holidays at Adams Park recovering from the knee injuries, which forced them to miss games in the

final two months of last season, and are now raring to go.

They joined the rest of the squad, which included new signing Stewart Castledine, in returning to work yesterday.

The squad were welcomed back by chairman Ivor Beeks before being weighed and fat-tested. Players who failed to hit their targets were fined.

The players will spend today training in Wycombe before

spending the next two weeks at RAF Halton where they will not see a football for the first fortnight.

Their mornings will be spent running with track, hill, sprint and stamina work.

Then in the afternoons they will continue to build up their fitness with sessions in the gym and the pools as Sanchez prepares for the first friendly at Borehamwood on July 22.



Dave Carroll: A summer in the treatment room and still not fit

Sanchez still in the hunt for Bristol City ace Jones

BLUES boss Lawrie Sanchez will speak to Bristol City manager Danny Wilson next week hoping to thrash out a deal to buy Robins' striker Steve Jones.

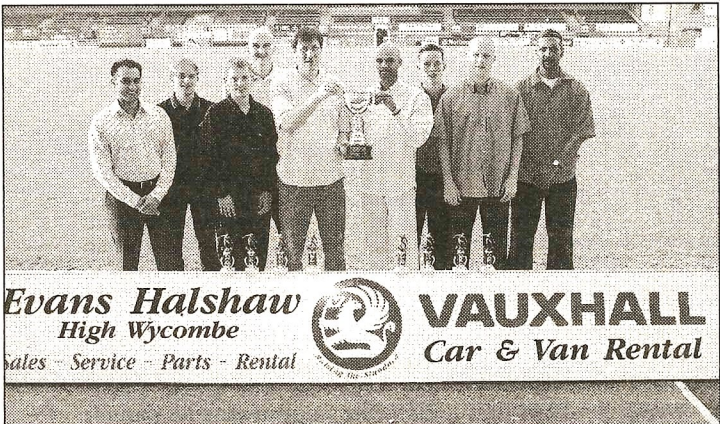
Sanchez met the former West Ham and Charlton hitman last week but the deal looked doomed because City wanted Sean Devine in exchange.

Sanchez won't entertain that, but is still interested in signing Jones if he can negotiate a cash deal with Wilson on Monday.

But it would appear to be a long shot. City paid £450,00 for Jones and are looking to recoup more than the £100,000 Sanchez has got to spend.

● Thames Fiat will be able to defend the Vauxhall Car and Van Trophy they won in the first-ever corporate six-a-side challenge at Adams Park now Vauxhall Car and Van Rental have stepped in to save the event after previous sponsors Evans Halshaw pulled out. The tournament, on May 7, will also be enlarged to include 32 teams.

● Blues have confirmed that their match against Notts County, scheduled for October 7, has now been brought forward to Friday, October 6 at 7.45pm to avoid clashing with England's World Cup qualifier against Germany.



Thames Fiat: Receiving their trophy from Lawrie Sanchez

Wanderers to stage World Cup Final

WYCOMBE Wanderers' Adams Park ground has been chosen to stage the Women's World Lacrosse Final in 2001.

The stadium will be the venue for the final itself and the third and fourth place play-off.

The earlier rounds of the competition will be held at Wycombe Abbey School.

Blues commercial chief Mark Austin said: "The club are privileged that Adams Park will be the centre-piece of the Women's World Lacrosse Finals. It is great for the town to have been chosen for this prestigious event and the club is proud to play its part in this spectacle which will attract the attention and the imagination of the world's media."

Wanderers are refusing to disclose how much they are being paid to stage the matches but it emphasises the further diversification of Adams Park as the directors bid to raise money from sources outside of football.

Last week the cash-strapped club hired out its stadium to 3,500 Catholic schoolchildren for a church service.

Saints set to groundshare

CHALFONT St Peter are close to agreeing a groundshare deal with Southall.

Neither side will say how much is at stake from the one-year deal which will see the West London club playing their matches in Bucks but Saints chairman Nigel Payne confirmed it's thousands not hundreds.

He said: "We are hoping it all goes through. The money would be a big bonus to the club. It is unexpected income and will enable us to do things we have previously been unable to do. It would help towards ground maintenance and allow us to put a little bit more towards the playing side."

Just 18 months ago skint Saints almost quit the Ryman League and last season their shoestring side only won two games as they were relegated to the bottom division.

But with new boss George Goode at the helm and Southall's cash in the offing, they are confident better times are ahead.

Goode has been recruiting players and will hold an open-to-all-triallists training session at The Playing Fields on Tuesday at 7pm.

Leaders lose

MICKLEFIELD United's lead at the top of the Cressex Astroturf Summer League has been cut to just three points after Jabba's Palace ended their 22-match unbeaten run with a 1-0 win courtesy of a goal from Clemence.

Micklefield also dropped points when they were held to a 0-0 draw by FC Beaconsfield and, with two weeks left, second placed Tring West End are now on their tail.

But they didn't take full advantage of Micklefield's slip. After beating the Dreem Team 2-1, they were held to a 1-1 draw by Italia Unita.