

Worthington Cup needs more fizz says boss

BLUES boss Lawrie Sanchez says the Worthington Cup must be revamped and made into a one-leg competition.

He said: "The drama of cup football is lost over two legs. The better team is always going to win over two legs and under the current format there aren't going to be many upsets."

"It needs to be revamped to bring back some drama and excitement."

He says fans have lost interest in the competition's current format and says a shake-up is need to woo them back.

He said: "Some of the gates have been horrendous. The fans are showing they are losing interest in it."

Birmingham slashed prices to just £5 for Tuesday's second leg but with their team 4-3 up and with

one foot in the next round fewer than 9,000 bothered with the second leg.

● Former manager Brian Lee will stand down as a director of the club later this month.

Lee, who managed Wanderers during the Seventies and was a forerunner in the club's conversion to a limited company in the Eighties will go at the club's AGM on October 16. He will continue to assist the board as an associate director.

Gordon Richards will also stand down at the meeting. He is retiring his directorship but Graham Peart, who is up for re-election, is hoping to stay.

Brian Kane, Rod Tomlin and Derek Vere will also have to go through the re-election process, a month after being brought onto the board, as a formality.

Rammell gets let off in red card appeal

ANDY RAMMELL has won his appeal against his sending off against Bristol Rovers and had his three-match ban overturned.

Tuesday's three-man FA hearing in London cleared the striker of any blame following the incident which saw Rovers keeper Nick Culkin stretchered off wearing a neck brace.

After watching video evidence, the committee agreed that Rammell, who was

making his debut for Blues, was trying to hurdle over Culkin when his trailing leg smacked the keeper in the jaw and knocked him out.

The hearing ruled: "There was no intent of violent conduct by the player."

Although they cleared him, the red-card remains on his record under FIFA rules, although there will be no further punishment for him.

The decision also means Wanderers escaped a £2,500

fine and will have their appeal cheque of £450 returned.

Blues boss Lawrie Sanchez said: "It was overturned because it was obviously a wrong decision despite the referee still not changing his mind. Common sense has prevailed."

Cleared Rammell played on Tuesday and is free to play at Port Vale tomorrow and against Notts next Friday.

BIRMINGHAM'S record signing striker Geoff Horsfield has admitted he did not score twice in the Worthington Cup first leg at Adams Park and says his first goal should have been credited to Paul McCarthy as an own goal.

Rammell's back but question mark over Baird for Vale clash

WANDERERS make their first ever visit to Port Vale tomorrow to tackle a side who have only picked up two wins since their relegation from Division One last season.

Wanderers travel up to the Potteries today with striker Andy Rammell available after winning his appeal against his three-match ban but Andy Baird doubtful after irritating his groin injury following his 30 minute appearance at Birmingham.

Boss Lawrie Sanchez says Baird will travel with the Blues, but they will wait until Saturday to make a final decision on whether he will play.

But it is at the back where Wanderers have been their most impressive and that may count

in tomorrow's clash.

The back four of Jamie Bates, Paul McCarthy, Mark Rogers and Chris Vinnicombe have been ever-present this season and along with Northampton's rearguard they are the meanest defence in the league, having conceded just five goals.

Vale have been trying to bring in a striker on loan this week to try and puncture Blues defence because they have only scored four goals all season.

Under pressure Vale boss Brian Horton said: "I need a striker. The crowd are getting on my back and I have to accept that we haven't won a game for four or five games."

Vale's spies were at St Andrews on Tuesday

watching Blues' bow out of the Worthington Cup but Wanderers striker Jermaine McSparran reckons it won't help them.

McSparran said: "We are always capable of winning away and we think we can go there and get a win."

Langford's son dies

THE son of former Wycombe Wanderers player Tim Langford has died of leukaemia.

Ten-year-old Adam Langford was diagnosed with the illness six years ago but lost his fight for life this week.

His father was a player at the club during Martin O'Neill's reign.