

## Boss heaps praise on unlikely heroes

LAWRIE Sanchez saluted his heroes as they beat his old club Wimbledon in a dramatic penalty shootout.

And, in a rare public display of emotion, the normally ice-cool Sanchez took his five-year-old son Jack out onto the pitch to milk the applause with him in front of the 4,551 delirious travelling Blues fans.

Sanchez, who has brought Jack up alone since his wife Heather died of cancer, said: "I took him along because it was half-term and he didn't have to be up early. I told him that one day he will play there himself."

He wanted his son with him on his special night.

He said: "It's been a night when everyone who was there will be able to say that they saw it. It's a night they will be telling their children and grandchildren about."

"I think everyone who was in the ground has been privileged to see a magnificent game of football and a magnificent spectacle from both teams. Wimbledon gave their lot, but we were better."

He added: "As a manager that's by far and away the most dramatic game I've ever been involved in. We had ten men for the last hour, then a penalty against us in the last minute but we still came back."

"We fought for everything and fully deserved it. They have surpassed even my expectations tonight."

Sanchez, the player, provided Wimbledon's greatest-ever moment when he scored the goal which defeated Liverpool in the 1988 FA Cup Final, now he is making his mark in the dugout.

He said: "This is the best moment of my managerial career, it even surpasses winning at Lincoln on the last day of the season to stay up. Winning away from home with ten men against a Division One side is something special."

"Their players probably earn three or four times what our lads earn and to bridge that gap with ten men and come out as winners is fantastic."

As a player Sanchez helped patent Wimbledon's famous Crazy Gang spirit but he used that never say die attitude against them on Tuesday.

"I never thought we were finished. I always tell my players it's not over until the final whistle goes and they proved that."

"If you work hard enough in life you sometimes get what you deserve, and they got exactly what they deserved – anything but us winning would have been a complete aberration."

But Sanchez insisted this victory wasn't about him and his assistant, fellow Dons old boy Terry Gibson, putting one over his old club.

He said: "I've had my glory as a player now the glory is for the players and the supporters."

"This wasn't about me, it was about my players giving everything they've got and being magnificent over the two games."

## Burton goes for a moan after defeat

SULKING Wombles boss Terry Burton launched an attack on Wycombe's giant-killers after they left his first division side flat out on the canvas.

Burton, who was sent from the dug-out for arguing that Paul McCarthy's late leveller at the end of extra time should have been ruled out for offside, continued his strop afterwards and mocked Sanchez's earlier comments that Wanderers were worthy winners.

Sanchez had said: "Make no mistake the best team won that and we only had ten men. We fully deserved everything we got. We were the better team over the two ties."

But when that was replayed to Burton he guffawed with laughter and said: "Lawrie can say what he likes. They had ten minutes of the first game and 60 seconds tonight when they were a danger."

"There was never a time when I thought they looked like scoring."

"The goal they scored at the end came when the guy hit his own forward and the ball was deflected into someone else's path. I'm sure Lawrie will say they practise that every day in training."

He added: "I thought the goal they scored on Saturday was offside as well but anything I say will seem like sour grapes."

"There's been two great cup ties and the team that had two shots on target won."

"Good luck to Lawrie and we wish him and his team luck at Leicester," he added.

## Townsend comes of age

BEN Townsend stepped out of the youth team to score one of Wanderers' successful penalties in their dramatic spot-kick victory.

The 19-year-old, who is more used to playing at Molins in front of two men and a dog, kept his cool to send his spot kick past Dons keeper Kelvin Davis in the sudden-death part of the shootout.

When he stepped up to take Wanderers' seventh penalty, the match was being broadcast live on Sky Sports, Radio 5Live and Talksport Radio.

Townsend said: "I knew the pressure was on but I just tried to put it out of my mind."

"It was a long walk up to the spot so I tried to jog up there to get it over and done with as quickly as possible."

"I put the ball down and turned my back on the crowd behind the goal. When it went in the feeling of relief was just unbelievable."