

Blues open Walker talks

WANDERERS have opened transfer talks with Aston Villa in a bid to sign striker Richard Walker full-time.

The 24-year-old's three-month loan expires after tomorrow's FA Cup clash against Notts County (ko 3pm) and boss Lawrie Sanchez is keen to keep the hitman at Adams Park providing the price is right.

But in a divorce from his normal transfer tactics, Sanchez is leaving the negotiations to chairman Ivor Beeks.

Beeks has a special relationship with Villa boss John Gregory. He appointed him to the Wycombe hotseat when Gregory was taking his first steps on the management ladder and then released him to Aston Villa when the Midlands giants came calling for him.

Sanchez said: "I'm hoping we can do something. Richard is a player I would like to keep in my squad and hopefully Ivor will be able to get a reasonable deal.

"I've left it to him to do the talking and hopefully we will get somewhere before the end of the weekend."

Walker made ten first team appearances at Villa Park before coming on loan to Wycombe and the fact that he could walk away for free on a Bosman at the end of the season should be in Blues' favour.

Sanchez said: "I'm hoping Villa reflect that in the negotiations. I've got a little bit of money left to spend but I don't want to splurge it all on one player."



Lending a hand : Richard Walker hopes to become a full-time Chairboy

Walker has managed three goals in ten games for the Blues but his all-round contribution has been much more significant to the team. His arrival has brought the best out of leading scorer Andy Rammell, who has scored eight of his 11 games since Walker has been at the club.

Walker is keen to join the Blues. He even offered to waive

his wages for the time when he was suspended last month, following his sending off against Swindon.

But with strike duo Andy Baird back in training and Sean Devine returning to the fold this week, the price will have to be right if Walker is to continue his career in Buckinghamshire.

Blues midfielder Steve Brown

said: "I hope we sign him. His team play has been excellent and he has been brilliant for Rams. Strikers hunt in pairs and he's brought the best out of Rambo.

"I remember Steve Bull when he was scoring all the time at Wolves saying much of his success was down to Andy Mutch, who never scored anything like the same number."