

BOARD ACCEPT BID FOR DEVINE

WANDERERS have accepted an £80,000 bid from Exeter City for record striker Sean Devine.

The Blues hitman – who came off the bench to score two goals in Saturday's 3-1 win over Port Vale – was due to meet the struggling third division club's chiefs at a Reading hotel last night to discuss terms.

Blues boss Lawrie Sanchez confirmed yesterday that the board have accepted the shock bid for the 30-year-old, who is one of 12 Wanderers out of contract in the summer.

If Blues don't take the bid, Devine, who has scored 46 goals in

FOOTBALL By Dave Peters

93 starts for The Chairboys, could walk away for free at the end of the season.

Sanchez said: "We've had an offer. I passed it onto the board and they have accepted it. It is purely a financial decision.

"In the current football climate it's a fair bid for someone whose contract is running out.

"I cannot promise Sean anything beyond the end of the season and if someone like Exeter can, then he's got to look at it. It's in his lap."

Devine signed for Blues in a

record £220,000 deal in 1999 and in the following season he set a new Wanderers scoring record with 23 league goals.

He then spent two years out with a career-threatening knee injury but has shot to the top of Blues' scoring charts with eight goals this season.

Devine said: "I don't want to go. I love it here, but if the club want to cash in on me I've got to accept that.

"If I'm not wanted here I've got to look after my family and my future. I will talk to Exeter because players these days aren't in a position to barter. I will listen to what they say but I'm in no rush."

Sanchez knows the board's decision to cash in on the terrace favourite will be unpopular – particularly as he won't be given the cash to buy a replacement.

But the boss said: "If someone offers you money up front you've got to look at it. I can understand supporters being unhappy, but they've got to understand the financial situation. We played Port Vale on Saturday and they are going into administration. The world of football has changed."

Devine has been in and out of the side this year and if he decides to stay and battle it out for a new contract next season, he has already

been warned that any new deal will be on reduced terms.

Sanchez said: "It's the lad's decision. If he stays and gets on with it that's fine and if he goes we wish him all the best."

ISSN 0963-2344



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51