

SANCHEZ SIMPLY CRAZY

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WE ARE LONG accustomed to picking up the Monday papers and reading the charges levelled by managers at refs, linesmen, cheating opposition — anyone who can deflect from the fact that their team lost 8-0 and had three sent off.

Well, it's payback time. This, though, is not about Arsène "I did not see zis" Wenger or Fergie and his clock-watching. They are much too easy a target.

I refer to some real gems from the Stone Age uttered by Lawrie Sanchez, manager of Wycombe Wanderers, after the 2-2 draw with Oldham Athletic last Saturday. Let me say at the outset that I am Oldham-born and bred, and a diehard Latics fan.

This fellow really is becoming something of a football Neanderthal. He has a team more suited to basketball and some of their niggly antics wouldn't be out of place in a ring, be it of the boxing or circus variety.

Julien Baudet, Oldham's French defender, was wound up to such an extent that, after being clocked on the nose right on half-time, he was sent off almost as soon as he came back on the field.

Then, at about the sixth attempt, Wycombe finally nailed Wayne Andrews, a lively forward and scorer of the first goal. He hobbled off disconsolately, having just come back from injury.

Sanchez made some inflammatory comments after the match between the sides last August and came up with some more classics here. "At Wimbledon we never whinged about being kicked because we spent all our time kicking other people," he said.

"I find it strange that a team that's built itself on being aggressive, like Oldham have, suddenly scream like shirking [did he mean shrinking] violets when one or two people tackle them."

Ah, Wimbledon. The Crazy Gang and all that. What fun they were. The club that put the romance back into the game some years back. I don't think.

Sanchez might do well to employ a dictionary to learn the difference between aggression and thuggery. And while he's at it, he might also stop to read the words that go under his name in the Wycombe programme.

"Welcome to Ian Dowey and his Oldham team" ran his opening words last weekend. That would have impressed IAIN DOWIE.

Neil Warnock's diatribes often come within spitting distance (ha, ha) of Sanchez's deluded utterings, and I saw quite enough of his tirades against officials during his short and unhappy tenure at Boundary Park. An essential difference between the two is that Warnock is able to laugh at himself and his public persona. Bloody good job too, I reckon.

The game needs characters, but can do without some of the less savoury ones. Sanchez should shed his Dons' mentality and perhaps think before he speaks.

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